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Arab World for Research & Development

TARABOT - Supporting Transformative Resilience in Palestine Programme

Mid-term Evaluation Report

14 November 2024

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Disclaimer

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Project and Evaluation Information Details

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List of Acronyms

ACAD	Arab Centre for Agricultural Development
ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
AWRAD	Arab World for Research and Development
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CRDP	Community Resilience and Development Programme
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EJ	East Jerusalem
EOI	Expression of Interest
ET	Evaluation Team
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FRO	Finland Representative Office
GRES	Gender Results Effectiveness Scale
HDP	Humanitarian-Development-Peace
IPCC	International Peace and Cooperation Centre
IPs	Implementing Partners
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoJA	Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs
MoTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
MoPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PA	Palestinian Authority
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PMU	Project Management Unit
PwDs	People with Disability
RBM	Results-Based Management
RRF	Results and Resources Framework
SC	Steering Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP/PAPP	United Nations Development Programme / Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

Executive Summary

Introduction

The TARABOT programme was designed as a three-year UNDP-managed and multi-donor-funded mechanism developed to address the issues necessary to support the building of transformative resilience in the vulnerable communities of Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip through sectorial and geographically integrated investments. The TARABOT programme was designed to improve the economic and social resilience of vulnerable communities that are considered especially critical to long-term economic growth. The reputation and expertise of the UNDP, led by the PA and funded by donors, would provide the management necessary to manage risks related to the investments.

Implementation started in January 2020, with initial funding from Austria of EUR 2.7 million. Finland joined the Programme in December 2021, with a commitment of USD 3.3 million. While the Programme was scheduled for completion by December 2023, its duration was extended to the end of 2024 to compensate for the delays related to COVID, the extended inception period, and to address the fallout from the war on Gaza,

This report represents the independent midterm evaluation of the Programme, conducted between June and July 2024. This Evaluation, commissioned by UNDP, assesses the TARABOT initiative at the macro level, the progress made towards achieving the outputs and outcomes, and provides concrete recommendations (strategic, operational, and financial) for designing a new phase of the Programme. The Evaluation capitalized on the findings of the final evaluation of the Community Resilience and Development Programme, which was the precursor to the TARABOT program. The evaluation aims to benchmark TARABOT's achievements to date, obtain insight into programme performance issues.

Evaluation Scope

The mid-term evaluation covered TARABOT programme's implementation from start (01 August 2020) to date including all output areas (outputs 1 and 2). The mid-term evaluation provides answers to the evaluation questions and the sub-questions to be detailed in the evaluation matrix (attached as Annex 2).

Geographically, the evaluation covered the locations where programme interventions took place, including East Jerusalem, Area C, and the Gaza Strip.

The scope of evaluation covered the Programme's results related to service provider capacities and quality of social/basic and economic services. The evaluation also focused on the Programme's role in assisting the government, mainly the PMO, and line ministries in achieving multi-stakeholder engagement and development of the cluster development plans, institutional support and technical assistance to ensure quality oversight by the national and local government in coordination, policy, and planning.

Evaluation Purpose

The overall purpose of this mid-term evaluation was to assess the progress and contribution made towards achieving the Programme's planned results as specified in the Project Document, and assess early signs of programme success, or failure, with the goal of identifying lessons learned to inform the design and implementation of the current and future phases of the programme. In particular, the mid-term evaluation aimed to:

- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the programme results in view of the national priorities and needs. This includes assessing the programme’s socio-economic interventions in line with national and cluster-based planning.
- Assess the programme’s contribution to the cross-cutting issues, including youth empowerment, gender equality and women’s empowerment, disability inclusion and environment protection.
- Identify evidence-based conclusions and recommendations to inform the programme implementation in the remaining period as well as to guide the design of future phases of the programme and similar interventions.

Evaluation Methodologies

To design the methodology, the ET reviewed key project documents, including project document, annual reports, annual workplans, baseline report, operational manual, implementing partner reports and others.

Mixed-method and participatory approach: The ET adopted a mixed-method and participatory approach. The team gathered and analysed both quantitative and qualitative data from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected from beneficiaries, implementing partners, donors, key stakeholders, and UNDP project staff.

Non-experimental theory-based approach: The ET followed a non-experimental theory-based approach; by following this approach, the team was able to assess the contribution of the programme thus far.

Gender considerations: Gender dimensions were integrated into the evaluation approach, analyses of primary and secondary data were disaggregated by gender whenever feasible, to understand gender dynamics and impacts. A GRES analysis was also conducted across 18 activities to assess the project gender responsiveness and contribution to gender transformation.

Disability and Inclusion: Disability and inclusion were integral components of the evaluation approach. Primary and secondary data analyses were disaggregated by disability status and age, allowing us to assess the level of youth inclusion wherever feasible.

Ethical considerations and do no harm: The ET adhered to the UNEG Code of Conduct, to ensure ethical integrity and protect the rights of informants. AWRAD’s approach emphasizes obtaining informed consent, safeguarding privacy, ensuring confidentiality, respecting cultural sensitivity, and upholding participants’ autonomy to foster an environment free from pressure or harm, with a commitment to universal values and fairness for diverse groups.

Summary of findings across evaluation criteria

Relevance: TARABOT is well aligned with – and has contributed well to - national development priorities, the needs of targeted communities, and global frameworks such as the SDGs and coherent with UNDP and donor strategies. The primary value-add of TARABOT has been to successfully address the issues of economic and social resilience through novel and innovative strategies. The programme has been less successful in addressing the issue of political resilience at a strategic level.

Effectiveness: The programme has contributed to impressive outcomes and outputs against the relevant indicators, but the strength of the contribution can’t be fully measured due to limitations in indicator alignment at the output level. The overall effectiveness of project interventions is assessed as high but the disconnect between the ToC, the results framework, and the results actually achieved on the ground continue to challenge the programmes’ ability to effectively report on the extent of achievement. The

programme's ToC is poorly aligned to national priorities and challenges in the area of resilience. Conceptualising TARABOT as a capacity-building programme has influenced all programme design documents with consequences for measuring the extent of achievement of programme objectives and goals.

The strategy of building diverse partnerships and consortium of partners has been well realised by the programme. Levels of stakeholder involvement at all levels of the project have been remarkably and consistently high over the period evaluated.

Efficiency: Allocation of financial resources has been strategic and has well supported results achievement. Allocation of human resources can be improved by increasing resources available and clarifying roles and responsibilities. The program generally delivered its expected results despite funding constraints and occupation-related challenges through a judicious use of cost-efficient implementation strategies and careful management of risk.

The implementation strategy and execution of the Programme have supported some impressive, high-value outcomes at reasonable cost resulting in significant value for money. Programme approaches have well supported result achievement with the use of the innovative and creative modality of EOIs. This method had distinct advantages in empowering local implementing partners (IPs), aligning the programme with national priorities, meeting community-specific needs and engaging diverse stakeholders.

Coherence: TARABOT exhibits a high degree of coherence with other UNDP and external actors' interventions, ensuring complementarity, harmonization, and coordination that contribute to the larger transformative resilience framework. TARABOT also has strong synergies and interlinkages with UNDP's broader project portfolio, which is focused on structural transformation, leaving no one behind, and building resilience.¹

Impact: The TARABOT interventions are positively impacting the targeted communities, but while the interventions have generally increased trust and satisfaction, disparities in impact across different groups suggest that the benefits are not equally distributed among all groups. The programme has made modest but important contributions to strengthening community resilience in the geographical areas targeted

Sustainability: Programme resilience achievements have mixed sustainability potential. Influencing factors include levels of ownership of the benefits, capacities of beneficiaries to maintain benefits, the extent of the equitable spread of project benefits within communities, the increasingly coercive operating environment, lack of funds to complete interventions which may negatively impact social cohesion in the communities targeted.

Cross cutting issues: Interventions have quite successfully targeted women, youth and the disabled as specific groups but have not yet been successful in mainstreaming the excluded and vulnerable more broadly into intervention design. In particular, the programme has not yet designed interventions with a clear gender transformative dimension but has addressed social and economic equalities in a deliberate and very successful way.

The programme missed an opportunity to mainstream gender and develop gender transformative approaches within intervention design. As a result, the programme has not been able to strategically

¹ https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-08/ppf_final_and_complete.pdf

address structural barriers through adjusting gender roles within intervention design, although the more gender-sensitive implementing partners have done some effective work on this aspect.

The inclusion of people living with disabilities (PWDs) within the UNDP program design and implementation was limited, and the program struggled to comprehensively address their needs. While there were some efforts to consider the needs of PWDs, these were not consistently integrated into the program's overall design and execution.

Conclusions

The TARABOT programme represents a significant and commendable achievement by all stakeholders, providing a solid foundation for continuous and sustainable efforts to enhance resilience in Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. The evaluation has been carried out under the challenging circumstances of ongoing armed conflict. Despite these difficulties, the evaluation team has drawn upon the experiences and models developed and implemented across the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip up to October 2023. These insights form a critical part of the analysis, offering valuable lessons for assessing the overall performance of the TARABOT programme. The Evaluation has identified four major strengths in the Programme²:

The Programme piloted a resilience strategy for Area C and EJ and Gaza, *which*:

- Further legitimized the need and urgency of investing in the sustainable development of Area C, EJ, and rather than providing only short-term, humanitarian assistance.
- Demonstrated that, with a focused mix of interventions, it is possible to support a transition from adaptive to transformative resilience³
- Demonstrated that flexibility of approach is key to achieving transformative resilience in three quite unique and challenging operational contexts (Area C, Gaza, EJ) and across a variety of sectors while maintaining alignment with overall project goals.

The Programme prioritised Capacity Building at the national level and the level of beneficiaries, *which*:

- Contributed to expanding planning and policy capacities within the PA, building capacities within line ministries (MoA, MoTA, MoJA) for cluster planning, the participation of MoA, MoTA and MoJA at the governorate level in project design and implementation.
- Increased local and national ownership of the development of Area C, the protection of EJ and the national narrative, (culture, housing and business revitalisation),
- Built skills and knowledge building of farmers, youth, women and entrepreneurs to expand their economic opportunities, earning potential and increase self-reliance
- Developed some gender and social inclusion sensitivity across a wide range of activities and contexts (e.g., development of business skills of female entrepreneurs and youth, increasing access of visually and hearing impaired to social and economic opportunities).

The Programme encouraged Innovation in Development Interventions, *which*:

- Tested new approaches for stakeholder engagement in the project design and implementation process.

² All findings are elaborated in the relevant text.

³ Adaptive resilience is defined as systematic adaption to shock by adjusting to the new reality e.g. by diversifying livelihoods, adopting floor-resistant framing methods, engaging in conflict resolution training; Transformative resilience is a systematic transformational move away from shock by, for example, changing laws (quotas for women participation on decision-making bodies, switching to the use of clean energy to protect the environment).

- Tested new models for collaborative business enabling environment in Gaza (Food and agriculture sectors) and service provision models (housing) East Jerusalem, multi-partner consortiums in agriculture (Area C), renewable energy solutions to support fishing and agriculture production (Gaza, Area C).
- Demonstrated that some risk-taking projects are possible and worth doing, even in the face of the Israeli government's restrictions and practices and settlers' harassment of the Palestinian population (East Jerusalem, Area C).
- Demonstrated the value of a multi-sector and multi-partner approach to resilience, to achieve more significant results and impact.

The programme employed efficient and effective implementation arrangements, which:

- Promotes a transparent allocation of Programme resources, following rigorous, well documented, and consistent procedures for selecting all projects taking account of the contextual difference in each area
- Fosters strong stakeholder collaboration and beneficiary consultation process to ensure alignment with national planning priorities and beneficiary needs.

The Evaluation has also identified five overall areas for improvement in the implementation of Tarabot to date:

Design

- The programme design process has been unable to provide a coherent framing of the programme, and, as a result, the programme lacks a functioning performance management framework and process that can provide evidence of the achievement of goals and objectives. The focus is on monitoring activities rather than results, and the data offers little relevant information for accountability in support of the overall programme objectives and goals. The true impact of individual projects and of the Programme is not sufficiently recognized, as it relies heavily on anecdotal information and misses valuable information from beneficiaries and stakeholders.
- Gender integration into the programme is weak. The context analysis does not contain any gender assessment of the differences between men and women in terms of access to resource,
- The sustainability of the individual projects and of the Programme is uncertain. Long-term provision to ensure the technical and financial viability of the project activities has been secured for some projects but not for others. For example, Tarabot has resulted in commitments through India, Brazil, South Africa (IBSA) for one million USD to support agricultural business. Potential partnerships with the EU for continued support in East Jerusalem are under discussion. As related to Gaza Strip, the future work in Gaza is uncertain given the ongoing crisis. ,
- Capitalization on the comparative advantage of UNDP and its sister organizations experienced development organizations and on the experience of various organizations and programmes operating in Area C and EJ is currently underway. Key informants reported new project in Agribusiness with funding from IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) and in partnership with MoA. Further synergies could be considered, particularly with ongoing and planned EU interventions and ongoing USAID programming in the economic sector and including broadening the partnership scope to expand the participation of the private sector and local government structure to promote additional sustainability and ownership.

Governance

- The current governance structure, under the supervision of the Steering Committee, provides invaluable support, but must improve its oversight responsibility around the gaps identified in Design issues above. A reduction in the levels of effort required from Steering Committee members may be needed to encourage other donors to sign onto TARABOT.
- The development of a Communications Plan has now been carried out which will be able to capitalise on the remarkable achievements of the Programme, hence improving UNDP's ability to raise resources from new and additional donors. The plan does not have a vital advocacy component to support the UN in addressing the critical and pressing issues of Israeli accountability for its increasingly belligerent actions in Gaza and the West Bank, nor does it acknowledge the Occupation as a root cause of Palestinian economic vulnerability, risk and shock through TARABOT, UNDP is well-positioned to document and disseminate the restrictions it faces in delivering development assistance and the consequences for the civilian population it serves.

Management

- The roles and responsibilities under the M&E function are not clear and are still the subject of discussion.
- While a small number of knowledge products were produced (e.g. booklets, videos), project implementation experience does not efficiently inform decision-making or strategy, as no formal learning system is in place to ensure capitalization of experience from one set of projects to the next. The gaps existing in the performance management process are hampering a timely understanding of implementation issues, and identification of where performance improvements are needed.

Resources

- The PMU is understaffed, specifically regarding M&E, but is receiving additional support from other UNDP staff.
- Funding is relatively small, creating risks regarding long-term impact and equity in project implementation.

Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the premise that there is a need to continue to support the achievement and efforts of TARABOT. The PA is very invested in TARABOT as a mechanism for moving their work forward on resilience, despite the recent reconfigurations of PMO staffing. The mechanism is seen as flexible and relatively rapid and the Evaluation Team believes that, if the report's recommendations are properly implemented, TARABOT-UNDP would be the appropriate mechanism for continuity. On the one hand, UNDP has the historical experience and institutional comparative advantage of working in Palestine and in development internationally. On the other hand, UNDP had accumulated rich experience during the past years, through managing the CRDP, and it would be more cost-effective to develop TARABOT based on the recommendations of this report, as opposed to venturing into other options.

The following recommendations are presented in four categories: recommendations for all stakeholders, followed by those for the PA, UNDP/PAPP, PMU and donors prioritized as 1 for immediate action; 2 to be actioned during the implementation process; 3 to be actioned at the most appropriate time in the project cycle.

For all stakeholders

- ✓ Recognize TARABOT as a true partnership between the PA, donors, UNDP and other international and local stakeholders, including beneficiaries. On that basis, the Evaluation team believes that it is important to recognize both the accomplishments and the weaknesses of the Programme so far and take equal responsibility for what has worked well and produced good results and what has not worked well. The stakes are extremely high for Area C, EJ, Gaza and for Palestine. It is worth striving to consolidate what has been achieved in the first phase of TARABOT. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Ensure that the PA's strategic directions, as stipulated in national strategies, be the main point of reference for decision-making on Area C, EJ and the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza. **Priority 3**
- ✓ Design a new project strategy (TOC) that fully embraces a gender transformative approach by undertaking a gender analysis of the operating context and an ex-ante analysis of the level of gender integration into the completed interventions to understand and critically assess the gender impact of past methodologies. **Priority 1**
- ✓ The new project strategy should fully embrace the transformative resilience approach elaborated in the Sumud Background paper of 2022 i.e. that has as its goals (1) fostering national unity and cohesion (2) providing vulnerable communities with services and investment (3) Increasing access to needed socio-economic resources and (4) Improving the capacity of Palestinians to use resources.⁴ Develop outcomes and outputs sequentially from an understanding of what results are necessary to support the goals and outcomes and develop indicators which can provide evidence of the extent to which the results are being achieved. **Priority 1**
- ✓ If significant additional funds become available, give consideration to expanding the scope of Tarabot with the revisions provided for in the Sumud Background Paper page 3 which would include interventions additional to those already implemented which would invest in economic resilience, expand financial inclusion particularly for women, safeguard and promote mental and psychological health, and interventions which would prepare and support a shock responsive social protection system. **Priority 3**
- ✓ Complete a conflict sensitivity and full gender analysis of the operating context for TARABOT so that areas of potential conflict in the environment and opportunities for gender transformative activities can be proactively identified and mitigated for in intervention design so that the Do No Harm principle can be effectively operationalized. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Design a new performance measurement system process (RFF and MEAL plan) that is simple but rigorous, with measurable results (outputs and outcome), and sufficient indicators that can provide evidence of the changes the programme plans to achieve. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Analyse thoroughly the lessons from TARABOT Phase 1 and hold groups discussions with key stakeholders to try an answer the following questions. Answering the below questions can act as a roadmap for re formulating the theory of change, RFF, MEAL plan and determine how the next phase will look like: **Priority 1**
 - **Pre-conditions:** Is it realistic to envisage sustainable development activities, so long as any peace process is stalled and progress towards the two-state solution is stalled? In the context of building resilience in the Palestinian context, does this matter?
 - **Size:** TARABOT received about USD 7.5 million but the original budget was set at USD 40 million. What should the size be for another three-year implementation period? USD 40 million? If funding continues to be limited, should TARABOT focus all the funds in one intervention package targeting one geographical area?

⁴ Resilience document

- **Content:** Should the Programme continue to be an activity-based, flexible, responsive, small-grants programme, or should it aim at larger multi-year development projects? What should be TARABOT's comparative advantage, as compared to other donor-supported programmes?
- **Scope:** How should Tarabot deal with the problem of unequal distribution of resources within interventions? Should it reduce the number of issues it deals with? Narrow its geographic focus? Reduce the number of interventions?
- **Cross cutting issues:** Are gender and inclusion essential components of a resilient approach? If so, how to better integrate them into interventions?
- **Operating modalities:** Can the RBM's capacity be expanded? Or should UNDP add an additional staff specialized in M&E? What kind of implementing partners (IPs), should be used? Should the partnership scope be expanded to include local government entities and an increased number of private sector entities? What is the best organisational arrangement to implement the Programme? Should consortia arrangements be mandated in the EOI?

For the PA

- ✓ In the next national planning round, ensure that resilience and gender are integrated into strategies and that planning documents continue to support institutional and other development interventions, necessary not only for 'resilience' building, but also for the sustainable development of Area C, and Consider expanding the adoption of projects and models that promote direct joint planning between sectoral actors across the CSO/NGO landscape and government entities. This approach not only enhances relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and sustainability but also fosters positive perceptions of institutional actors. **Priority 3**
- ✓ Provide strategic guidance on national needs while providing technical support and oversight at the operational level, strengthen synergies and avoid duplication of support. **Priority 3**
- ✓ Formalize the role of the newly revived Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) as the true, leading entity for planning for Area C, EJ, and Gaza in partnership with other line ministries, to ensure that all work -- including donor-funded work -- in Area C, EJ and Gaza is coherent with the National Policy Agenda and the sector strategies. **Priority 2**
- ✓ As a co-chair, MoPIC must convey national priorities during the steering committee meetings and ensure that there is no duplication of projects. **Priority 3**

For UNDP/PAPP

Measures to improve TARABOT performance towards objectives include the following:

- ✓ As TARABOT is considered an experimental project in many respects, for the next round of interventions, the question of sustainability should be a key part of the design and addressed activity by activity. An ex-ante analysis of each intervention should be carried out to assess what would be the components of sustainability. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Further clarify the division of roles between RBM and the PMU around M&E, so that the PMU is empowered to be accountable for its efforts to deliver a quality programme in full compliance with UNDP quality standards. **Priority 2**
- ✓ Facilitate adequate staffing, top quality gender and resilience mentoring of PMU staff currently in place. Either recruit a dedicated M&E staff person for the PMU - or expand the current capacities of the RMB, so that the Results and Resources Framework (RRF) can be revised with an effective hierarchy of results, outcomes, and impact indicators, and the methodology, which informs these indicators, can be designed and adopted (Systematic before-and-after interviews with beneficiaries, or After Action Reviews would be a significant improvement and is an example of a better methodology that employs well-tested M&E tools). A re-designed MEAL will be integral to informing

PMU management and enabling the adjustment of implementation based on real-time feedback and performance data. **Priority 1**

- ✓ Bring a gender expert on board who can undertake a gender audit of the interventions already underway or completed to assess the level of gender integration and how to improve it. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Engage proactively in knowledge dissemination with all stakeholders in Palestine to improve project/activity design and provide documentation that donors and other stakeholders can use to mobilize their electorates to advocate for their governments to continue or start engaging in TARABOT and to advocate. A robust and systematic approach to resource mobilization should be continued with the support of the recent Communications plan. **Priority 2**
- ✓ Prepare, in partnership with the PMU and the PA, a Proposal Document for the continuation of TARABOT, based on the critical lessons learned from TARABOT phase 1. This Proposal Document should include a review and documentation of lessons learned to inform the next phase of TARABOT. It should also include an implementation structure and implementation modalities with clear objective criteria against which oversight can be performed and evaluated, including transparency and accountability measures in the selection of project/activities and implementation partners. Capacity building of MoPIC and relevant PA line ministries should remain a core objective for the long-term sustainability of the Programme outcomes and impacts. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Further utilize the technical experience and lessons learned accumulated from other existing programmes implementing similar interventions, including those that have successfully used gender transformative and inclusive approaches in their design (e.g., cluster-based agricultural development, skills training, enabling the business environment, in addition to the experience of previous programmes (e.g., World Bank implemented area development programmes, NDC resilience programmes). **Priority 2**
- ✓ Engage in advocacy in support of the UN's and ICJ's attempts to increase international awareness on the illegality of the occupation and its impacts on resilience and other development and humanitarian planning, the obligation of member states to act in accordance with international law, and the urgent need for a ceasefire, and free passage of aid into Gaza. **Priority 2**
- ✓ Complete a staffing proposal for M&E person. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Network with other specialized UN agencies and other development actors through the UN cluster system [LACs?] to identify potential cooperation and complementarity. **Priority 2**

For Donors

- ✓ Agree as a unified group on implementation modalities and arrangements and how they want to exercise their oversight responsibility over TARABOT within the parameters of their contracts signed with the PA and UNDP. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Clearly establish any changes in reporting needs and agree on unified reporting requirements. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Commit to funding the next phase of TARABOT. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Assist UNDP mobilise resources for the next phase of the programme from additional donors. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Increase engagement in advocacy for Area C, EJ and Gaza at the international level and with the Israeli government. **Priority 1**

Improvement Suggestions for the ToC

Reformulated theory of change would need to be realigned with the actual activities on the ground, validate key assumptions, and ensure that the RFF and MEAL plans are fully aligned with the ToC. Such an

approach would be invaluable in capturing activities related to capacity development, measuring outputs at various levels, including capacity, policy, planning, and service provision. It would also provide clear monitoring and documentation of changes in trust levels, as well as insights into the consortium partnership models. Furthermore, it would incorporate measures of socio-economic resilience at the beneficiary level.

In the future, UNDP must take the time to engage in a reformulation of the Theory of Change (ToC). If the project context or activities deviate from the original plan, it is crucial to trigger a reformulation and validation process to maintain alignment between learning, accountability tools, and project implementation. Additionally, this opportunity must ensure vertical alignment, creating clear logical linkages from activities to outputs, and from outputs to outcomes. This process should address the following points and involve participatory activities to help formulate and later validate them:

- ✓ Clearly define the goals and objectives of the TARABOT program.
- ✓ Identify the necessary outcomes to achieve these goals and objectives.
- ✓ Restate the outcomes as measurable results.
- ✓ Determine the outputs needed to achieve the outcomes.
- ✓ Restate the outputs as measurable results.
- ✓ Develop indicators that provide strong and reasonable evidence that your results are being achieved.
- ✓ Create clear and precise measures for your indicators that anyone can implement.
- ✓ Reconsider the context through a gender lens, identifying the gaps between men and women related to the development challenge (e.g., legal context and institutional practices influencing men's and women's actions and decisions; cultural norms and beliefs; gender roles, responsibilities, and time use; access to and control over resources; patterns of power and decision-making).

1 Introduction

The main purpose of this report is to present the results of the mid-term evaluation of the “TARABOT - Supporting Transformative Resilience in Palestine Programme,” and to assess its contributions towards achieving predetermined outcomes and outputs outlined in the Project Document, adhering to the OECD-

DAC as specified in the ToR. This evaluation covers TARABOT Programme's implementation from 01/08/2020 to March 2024.

1.1 Evaluation Features

The midterm evaluation aimed to identify issues encountered in the design, implementation, and management of TARABOT and identify opportunities to reinforce, expand, or scale up successful initiatives that show promise for achieving sustainable impact and outcomes. The main objectives of the evaluation were to: 1) inform decision-making processes by providing evidence-based insights into TARABOT's performance and effectiveness to date, 2) identify valuable lessons learned from the initial phases of implementation, facilitating adjustments and improvements for future project phases, and 3) assess the programme's contribution to the cross-cutting issues including youth empowerment, gender equality, women empowerment, disability inclusion, and environment protection.

The evaluation was executed over a six-month period, from end of February 2024 to July 2024. The inception phase was completed in May 2024, following which the data collection and analysis phase began from June to August of 2024. The evaluation and reporting, phase, which involved the synthesis and reporting of the mid-term evaluation findings, was concluded in August/September 2024. The subject of the mid-term evaluation is the TARABOT Programme which is being implemented in the West Bank – Area C, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Primary data collection was conducted with the UNDP team, the donors, implementing partners, beneficiaries in the West Bank (Area C and East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip.

The primary users of the mid-term evaluation findings and recommendations are the UNDP, the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and the Finland Representative Office (FRO), and government actors such as the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs (MoJA) and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA).

The mid-term evaluation was led by Dr. Nader Said, an experienced national researcher and evaluator with extensive knowledge of social policy and evaluation methodology in Palestine. The report was authored by a set of experienced team members mainly Ms. Kirsty Wright, an experienced national evaluator, along with Ms. Roula Jamil and Mr. Abdelmuni'em Saleh. The team also included Mr. Samer Said, a researcher, analyst and evaluator, and Ms. Tala Barham, a researcher and manager.

The senior experts were supported by Arab World for Research and Development's (AWRAD) team for coordination, research, evaluation, data analysis, and production of final deliverables. The team brought together a range of perspectives and expertise to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the project.

1.2 Description of the Intervention Evaluated

Background

TARABOT builds on the Community Resilience and Development Programme (CRDP) launched in 2012 which was a first attempt by donors to recognize the importance of Area C within the 2-state solution framework and to try to seriously shift the focus of aid policy and programmes away from humanitarian assistance and provide development aid. A three year 'pilot' initiative was launched in (2012-2015) supported by four European donors. As a result of a midterm review the programme further focused its project interventions to create additional synergies and multipliers, by centring interventions in Area C in two governorates in the West Bank and was extended to 2017.

In 2016, UNDP were pushing to evolve the definition of resilience to a more ambitious, rights-based definition. Proposing المرونة التحويلية (*almurunat altahwilia* - transformative resilience), UNDP/PAPP tasked

resilience programming with “stimulating and promoting genuine and long-lasting empowerment for Palestinians to live with agency and dignity.” As UNDP noted, resilience must come from a place of strength, rather than weakness⁵.

The classical resilience framework is about “the aftermath of sudden stress, Sumud (resilience in the Palestinian context) is about the unceasing effort, within a hyper-chronic crisis, to live a productive, meaningful, and community-based life on the land of Palestine. Sumud is sustained resilience that is only possible because of the interdependent commitment of the people, the community, and the cause to the land.”⁶ Transformative resilience is thus a long term goal for TARABOT and acts as a framework through which a free, independent, and resilient Palestinian state with an empowered, liberated population can be achieved by improving the delivery and access to services and economic opportunities for vulnerable groups in Area C, East Jerusalem and Gaza, particularly women and youth; To enhance political, cultural, economic and social cohesion and improve inclusion of most vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth. TARABOT built national capacities through targeted socio-economic interventions in Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza in line with national strategies. The Palestinian government’s strategic directions were the main point of reference for decision-making in the programme, through the leadership of the Palestinian Authority’s (PA) Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) until March 2024, when leadership – and the staff capacitated by TARABOT interventions - moved to a newly emergent Ministry of Planning and International Coordination.

Capacity building has remained a core objective of the programme through its intervention approach in the targeted geographical areas and through planning and aid coordination capacity building of select staff in the PMO.

Civil society actors have remained the preferred implementing partners given the PA’s government’s lack of operational remit in Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. There has been a need to focus on strengthening their service delivery capacities, despite this being one of the key programme outputs.

Preparation of the programme

The programme was launched in December 2020. The inception period of 18 months following project launch was executed through close collaboration between the PA through the PMO, the United Nations Development Programme/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP), and donors.

TARABOT was one of the government’s approaches to strengthen:

- National ownership and leadership in the sustainable development for East Jerusalem, Area C and Gaza.
- Building blocks for self-reliance.
- Social cohesion and Palestinian identity.

The programme was structured around two main outputs:

- Enhanced capacities of service providers to deliver relevant and high quality basic social and economic services.
- Strengthened national and local role in coordination, policy, and planning.

Which would lead to two desired outcomes:

- Improved responsiveness of national and local decision-makers and service providers, and
- Enhanced access of the most vulnerable to quality socio-economic services in East Jerusalem, Area

⁵ Sumud Background paper, February 2022, Elizabeth Price

⁶ Ibid

C and Gaza.

The program was to be implemented through projects to be identified and selected through a competitive system of calls for proposals.

An institutional structure was adopted for the program execution:

- i) A Steering Committee co-chaired by the PMO and UNDP, composed of heads of PMO, UNDP/PAPP and heads of donor agencies to provide the program's overall policy direction.
- ii) A Technical Group chaired by UNDP, comprising representatives from PA line ministries, the PMU and donor agencies, was to make decisions on the selection of projects.
- iii) A program implementation unit (PMU) was to be set up to undertake the overall program management and field supervision.
- iv) Private sector entities, Local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) were expected to develop and implement projects at field level.

In addition, technical support to the PMU was to be provided by the technical staff of UNDP from East Jerusalem. Periodic monitoring reports would be prepared by field-level implementers, collated, and sent to the members of the Steering Committee by the PMU. At the end of each project, a completion report would be prepared to assess the project's achievements, impacts, and lessons learned.

The current funding for the program amounts to US\$ 6.5 million of which \$3.2 million from Austria, US\$ and US\$ 3.5 from Finland. Implementation started in December 2020 and was originally scheduled for completion in December 2023 but was extended to December 2024 because of the war on Gaza and the associated fall-out in the West Bank including East Jerusalem. There are plans for an extension of the programme into phase 2 for an additional 2 years.

TARABOT- supported research on resilience during implementation

Thinking and research on resilience continued to be supported by TARABOT and European Member States during the implementation period. TARABOT's knowledge products in this area are intended to feed into the next round of national planning efforts.

These products take a perspective that goes beyond the classical resilience framework and recognise that Palestine is trapped in a chronic crisis which regularly spikes into extreme shock. And only by removing Occupation will this chronic crisis end, leading to immediate recovery and growth across all sectors. The implications for resilience programming which takes the Palestinian situation into full consideration implies an ambitious addition to current programming - that of working to prevent external shocks to the local economies in Gaza, West Bank Area C and East Jerusalem, while providing responsive multi-sectoral support to enable those in the region most vulnerable to economic shocks to work together to evolve away from risk where possible, adapt to prevent exposure to risk and recover from shock, when needed.

The consequences of such an approach – the recognition of a Palestinian state - has already been seen through the recent expulsion of Norwegian diplomats from the Representative office in the West Bank. As was recognized during CRDP's implementation period, without progress towards a two-state solution – the sustainability of investments of the programme will always be in doubt.

Programme portfolio

The majority of programme funds were allocated to activities under output 1 (64% of funds) aimed at improving social and economic conditions in targeted areas of intervention and providing cross-sectoral investments to vulnerable groups. Investments in output 2 (27% of funds) focused on building national capacities required to support output one investments through aid coordination (ensuring donor funds

were allocated in line with national resilience priorities) and national planning which addressed these priorities in a consistent and coherent manner.

The programme was implemented through a range of local partners, experienced in assessing local and community needs, developing programmes which addressed vulnerable groups (women, youth, disabled), having previous joint implementation experience with government entities. To support additional sustainability of interventions, private sector actors were also involved in design and implementation of interventions, particularly in the Gaza Strip.

Below we present the following figures:⁷

- Allocation of intervention funds by region
- Implementing partner by partner type (NGO, CSO etc.)
- Share of total programme funds by Output

Figure 1: Allocation of funds per region

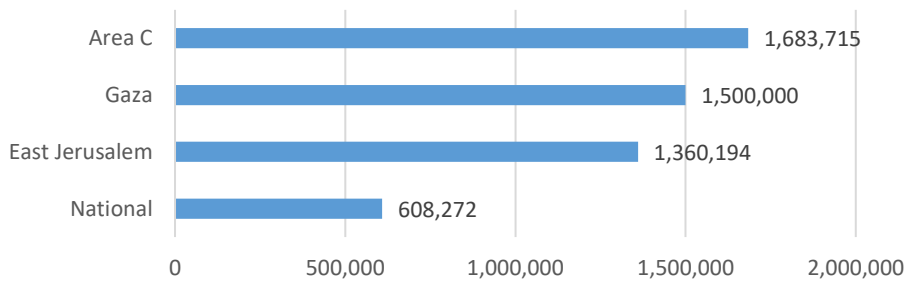


Figure 2: TARABOT implementing partner by type

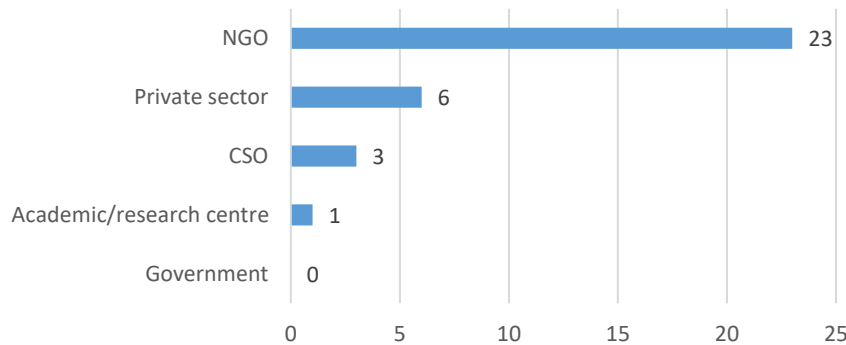
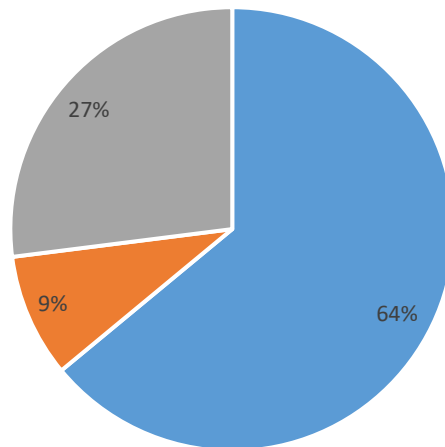


Figure 3: Share of total programme funds by output by output

⁷ Annex nine includes description of the project by partner by type by sector by area by output by budget.



■ output 1 ■ output 2 ■ operating and management support costs

Understanding the context of TARABOT

The Palestinian economy is burdened by restricted access to national resources, geographic fragmentation, and severe constraints on the movement of people and goods due to Israeli occupation and the blockade of Gaza. The limited access to resources hinders the development of crucial sectors such as agriculture, water resources, and energy. At the same time, geographic fragmentation impedes Palestinians' mobility and access to markets and essential services. Furthermore, these restrictions on resources and trade also hamper export opportunities and investment, resulting in economic stagnation, job scarcity, and a deepening cycle of poverty and dependency. As a result, Palestinians below the poverty line and in rural areas face heightened vulnerabilities, limited access to basic services, and reduced prospects for upward mobility, with youth and women bearing the brunt of these challenges.⁸

The events of October 7 significantly altered the context for any project in Palestine, particularly in Gaza. The escalation of violence, following a large-scale conflict, has led to unprecedented humanitarian crises, widespread displacement, and infrastructure destruction.⁹ These conditions have disrupted the normal functioning of government institutions, service delivery, and community activities, complicating data collection¹⁰ and limiting access to affected areas. The ongoing conflict also introduced new priorities and challenges for both humanitarian actors and local authorities, making it essential to reassess the relevance, feasibility, and timeliness of the project in light of the rapidly changing situation.¹¹

The most recent government change in Palestine occurred in the context of heightened political and socio-economic challenges, exacerbated by ongoing tensions with Israel and internal divisions between the West Bank, governed by the Palestinian Authority, and Gaza, controlled by Hamas. This transition, following years of political stagnation, was marked by the appointment of new ministers and leaders tasked with addressing critical issues, including economic instability, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and

⁸ Sumud Background paper, February 2022, Elizabeth Price

⁹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/humanitarian-situation-update-207-west-bank-enarhe>

¹⁰ <https://reliefweb.int/blogpost/fews-net-confronts-data-challenges-war-gaza-obscures-understanding-food-needs#:~:text=Lack%20of%20staff%20access%3A%20Due,collectors%20physically%20present%20in%20Gaza.>

<https://www.undp.org/press-releases/new-un-report-impacts-war-have-set-back-development-gaza-much-69-years> ¹¹

the broader struggle for Palestinian statehood.¹² The change aimed to reinvigorate governance¹³ and align with the Palestinian leadership's evolving strategy in response to regional dynamics and international pressures.¹⁴ This entailed the creation of new Ministries such as the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and dissolving the planning unit from the PMO. MoPIC is still formulating its human and operational structure, mandate and core functions which affects the capacity of the evaluation team to capture the full scale of the engagement and its effects on the PMO given the new government that is just stepping in during this evaluation.

1.3 Evaluation Scope and Objectives

Scope of Work

This mid-term evaluation covers TARABOT programme's implementation from 1 August 2020 to March 2024. The evaluation covers the programme's implementation sites including Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip.

Evaluation Objectives

The specific objectives of the midterm evaluation are to:

- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of the programme results in view of the national priorities and needs. This includes assessing the programme's socio-economic interventions in line with national and cluster-based planning.
- Assess the programme's contribution to the cross-cutting issues, including youth empowerment, gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion and environment protection.
- Identify evidence-based conclusions and recommendations to inform the programme implementation in the remaining period as well as to guide the design of future phases of the programme and similar interventions.

Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The evaluation adhered to the OECD-DAC criteria: relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. The questions contained in the ToR were reviewed. The evaluation matrix is found in Annex 2.

2 Evaluation Approach and Methods

2.1 Approach

The methodology for this evaluation was developed during the Inception Phase. The evaluation team (ET) carefully reviewed and scrutinized the evaluation questions for their logic, fit, coverage, and clarity and built on the existing questions in the ToR. To design the methodology, the ET reviewed key project

¹² <https://pcpsr.org/en/node/987>

¹³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/28/palestinian-authority-announces-a-new-cabinet-amid-israeli-assault-on-gaza>

¹⁴ <https://www.idea.int/democracytracker/report/palestine/march-2024>

documents, including project document, annual reports, annual workplans, baseline report, operational manual, implementing partner reports and others.

Mixed-method and participatory approach: The ET adopted a mixed-method and participatory approach. The team gathered and analysed both quantitative and qualitative data from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected from implementing partners, donors, key stakeholders, and UNDP project staff. Data from all sources was triangulated to provide a comprehensive and representative perspective on the project.

Non-experimental theory-based approach: The ET followed a non-experimental theory-based approach; by following this approach, the team was able to assess the implementation and outcomes of the project and its various activities thus far against a predefined set of indicators and results established.

Gender and disability considerations: Gender dimensions were integrated into the evaluation approach, analyses of primary and secondary data were disaggregated by gender whenever feasible, to understand gender dynamics and impacts. Moreover, the team ensured a gender-balanced selection of interviewees and capturing perspectives from both males and females. The team navigated social norms sensitively, creating comfortable environments for women to express themselves, sometimes through women-only group discussions. The evaluation and data collection team were gender-balanced and assigned to gather data based on the primary gender of the groups involved.

Ethical considerations and do no harm: The ET adhered to the UNEG Code of Conduct, to ensure ethical integrity and protect the rights of informants. AWRAD's approach emphasizes obtaining informed consent, safeguarding privacy, ensuring confidentiality, respecting cultural sensitivity, and upholding participants' autonomy to foster an environment free from pressure or harm, with a commitment to universal values and fairness for diverse groups.

2.2 Data Collection Tools

2.2.1 In-depth Document Review

A systematic review of the project documentation was conducted using the evaluation matrix to guide the review. A list of the reviewed documents can be found in Annex 3. The ET conducted a comprehensive review of national policies and plans, secondary literature in relation to the resilience of Palestinian community, the situation of the agriculture, tourism, and economic sectors in Palestine in general, and in West Bank (Area C and East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip.

The ET also reviewed the projects documents, such as the project document, baseline report, annual reports, annual workplans, implementing partners reports, the results framework, the ToC, among others.

The team used the different data sources to inform the design of the tools and evaluation matrix and contrast them with evidence extracted from other primary data sources. The desk review enabled the team to conduct a beneficiary and stakeholder mapping to better understand the types, characteristics, and distribution of key stakeholders across the region. Moreover, it provided a large amount of qualitative and quantitative secondary data which was then triangulated with the primary data garnered from KIIs, FGDs, most notable change cases and beneficiary survey. This allowed the ET to validate and formulate evaluative judgements based on the comparison of the two sets of data. The desk review enabled the team to analyze monitoring data and assess the performance of project activities to date, while also supporting analysis and triangulation with primary data.

2.2.2 Key informant interviews (KIIs)

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) involve individual interviews with knowledgeable and reliable sources on specific topics or those directly impacted by an intervention. AWRAD conducted interviews with relevant UNDP staff and management, key informants, experts, donors' representatives, UNDP consultants, service providers, and ministries. A total of twenty-four (24) interviews were conducted, eleven (11) of which were conducted by UNDP team, donors, and government actors, and thirteen (13) with implementing partners. The list of KIIs is found in Annex 5. The KIIs allowed to gather rich and contextual information about the programme implementation, lessons learned and what went well and what did not to inform decision-making, and policy development.

2.2.3 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The ET conducted four FGDs with direct beneficiaries in the West Bank and East Jerusalem: two in Jayyus, Qalqilya, and two in East Jerusalem. A total of thirty-two participants (25 males, seven females) took part. Originally, the plan was to conduct eight FGDs (4 in the West Bank and four in East Jerusalem). However, instead of holding separate FGDs for the beneficiaries of each implementing partner, the team combined beneficiaries from two implementing partners into one FGD. No focus groups were conducted in Gaza. The FGDs provided views on outcomes and highlighted the beneficiaries' experiences, challenges, and areas for improvement. The list of FGDs is found in Annex 6.

2.2.4 Beneficiary Surveys

The survey targeted a representative sample of programme beneficiaries, community projects and intervention. A random sampling approach was applied to select beneficiaries from the lists to ensure geographical representation and that every eligible participant had an equal chance of being included in the survey. The ET collected quantitative survey from 233 beneficiaries (177 males and fifty-six females; 136 from the West Bank, 79 from East Jerusalem, 18 from Gaza Strip). The ET utilized beneficiary lists provided by UNDP to identify potential participants. These lists served as the sampling frame to select beneficiaries. The sample distribution is found in Annex 8.

2.2.5 Most Significant Change Cases

To reflect the voices of beneficiaries in Gaza Strip, the ET conducted five in-depth interviews with beneficiaries to understand their stories and to gain valuable insights into the project's impact and success in Gaza despite the impact of the Israeli War since the 7th of October 2023. Annex nine includes a description of the cases. This approach was adopted as an alternative to FGDs. By engaging with beneficiaries, the ET gained valuable qualitative insights into how the project has contributed to improving their lives, their coping strategies amidst ongoing conflict, and any barriers or unmet needs. Annex Nine provides detailed descriptions of each case, highlighting the diversity of experiences and the unique challenges faced by the beneficiaries in Gaza. The list of most significant change cases is found in Annex 7, and the description is found in Annex 9.

2.3 Limitations

Ongoing war on the Gaza Strip: The ongoing war in Gaza presented a significant limitation to the mid-term evaluation process. The vast destruction caused by the war destroyed many of the programme's achievements and hindered the ET ability to assess the effectiveness and impact of the interventions. The displacement of residents and the overwhelming challenges they faced made it difficult for some of them

to engage fully in the mid-term evaluation, and some struggled to recall specific details related to our questions. Despite these challenges, the evaluation team reached some of the beneficiaries and implementing partners through phone calls to incorporate their insights. During the inception phase, the ET adjusted the data collection tools and approach to suit the situation in the Gaza Strip. For example, instead of planning to conduct face-to-face FGDs with beneficiaries, the ET opted for virtual in-depth interviews with beneficiaries.

Limited participation from beneficiaries from Jerusalem: The evaluation process faced limited participation from respondents in Jerusalem. Those who received housing support were hesitant to participate due to the sensitivity of the issue, fearing that sharing information could lead to repercussions from Israeli authorities. To overcome this challenge, the evaluation team conducted additional conversations to convince them to participate, guaranteeing that their identities would be kept confidential, and without recording the discussion.

Limited participation from beneficiaries from Qalqiliya: Furthermore, the team faced difficulties in securing participation from women in the focus groups targeting beneficiaries from the Qalqilya area, due to the conservative nature of the society. To address this, we sought assistance from local committee leaders in the targeted area, which ultimately led to a representative of women in the discussions.

Inaccurate Contact Information: During the survey process, the evaluation team encountered challenges due to inaccurate phone numbers provided for some of the beneficiaries. In several instances, the phone numbers listed belonged to individuals who had not participated in the program. This might be an indication of change in mobile ownership or just carrying the mobile phone by a number of family members who are not all familiar with the project¹⁵. In addition, we were only able to reach a limited number of beneficiaries in Gaza. These led to a reduced sample size. Additionally, the research team struggled to reach actual beneficiaries among the traders in the Old City, both due to inaccuracies in the phone numbers provided and their inability to dedicate time to participate in the FGDs or interviews.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis involved a series of steps using both quantitative and qualitative investigation techniques to ensure comprehensive triangulation of evidence. The team analysed primary and secondary structured by evaluation questions. The ET compiled interview and field notes into a single compendium, allowing for easy searching by topic and enabling triangulation of different perspectives to validate and formulate evaluative judgements. Quantitative data was cleaned and checked to ensure the accuracy of responses; the percentages of questions were calculated from the responses in the survey. The ET conducted a thematic analysis of the KIIs, FGDs, most significant change cases and surveys, consolidated this work through a brainstorming session to address each question with evidence from data.

2.5 Quality Assurance

Quality control measures included verifying that interview took place, interview durations were feasible, and all guidelines and standards were followed by ET. AWRAD, committed to high ethical standards, preserved clients' confidentiality and privacy. The ET members have also signed the Pledge of Ethical Conduct (Annex 14). The quality control of interviews was managed by monitoring their completion and reporting any issues encountered. Additionally, ET shared their experiences with each other's using the guides, discussed problems with questioning or participant engagement, and review any necessary

¹⁵ More on the needed improvement of lists of beneficiaries is provided throughout the document. UNDP must do more work to align and systematize the lists of beneficiaries to ensure accuracy, but also transparency and accountability.

revisions. Qualitative data was recorded (after getting participants' consent) with either a recorder or MS Teams and transcribed as soon as possible after the interviews, with notes included to ensure maximum reliability in recall and interpretation. Once transcriptions were completed, the audio files were deleted to ensure confidentiality and protect participants' privacy.

3 Findings

3.1 Relevance

1.1 To what extent is the project in line with the national development priorities, needs of the targeted communities, as well as SDGs, UNDP/PAPP, ADC and FRO strategies in the Palestinian territories?

Finding: TARABOT is highly aligned with national development priorities, the needs of targeted communities, and global frameworks such as the SDGs.¹⁶ It is also coherent with the strategies of UNDP/PAPP¹⁷, ADC¹⁸, and FRO¹⁹.

Alignment with national development priorities

TARABOT was developed in consultation with the Palestinian Prime Minister's Office and is well-aligned with national policies under the National Policy Agenda 2017-2022²⁰. Specifically, the project aligns well with National Priority 6 'Economic Independence' and National Priority 10 'Resilient Communities.' It directly contributes to key policies such as creating job opportunities (Policy 12), improving the business environment (Policy 13), promoting Palestinian industry (Policy 14), and escaping poverty (Policy 15). Additionally, the program supports gender equality and women's empowerment (Policy 18), promotes youth engagement (Policy 19), and contributes to environmental sustainability and climate change adaptation (Policy 28). Furthermore, it aligns with policies aimed at revitalizing agriculture and strengthening rural communities by increasing agricultural production, supporting farmers, and enhancing value chains (Policy 29).

"As we undertake our journey to freedom, this Agenda sets out a plan that will ensure the safety and security of our people, institutionalize democratic principles, enforce fairly the rule of law, preserve our shared identity and cultural heritage and strengthen the resilience of all Palestinians, while providing concerted support to citizens in Area C, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem"²¹

TARABOT concentrated its interventions in Area C, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem. Under Output 1, these efforts were implemented through targeted initiatives and projects within these three regions. For Output 2, the focus was on enhancing the capacity of the Government, particularly the Prime Minister's Office, to engage in strategic planning based on a unified and operationalized definition of "Resilience." Output two, along with specific activities, particularly knowledge-based efforts such as the Background

¹⁶ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

¹⁷ <https://www.undp.org/papp/about-s#:~:text=Under%20the%20rubric%20of%20the,as%20well%20as%20gender%20equality>.

¹⁸ The Austrian Development Cooperation promotes health care and water supply projects as well as emergency aid and support for refugees. Austria especially focuses on strengthening women and youth as well as interlinking humanitarian, development policy and peacekeeping measures <https://www.entwicklung.at/en/countries/palestinian-territories#:~:text=The%20Austrian%20Development%20Cooperation%20promotes,development%20policy%20and%20peacekeeping%20measures>.

¹⁹ In 2021–2024, Finland's bilateral development cooperation will focus on improving the quality of education, strengthening Palestinian state-building and civil society, and building resilience of Palestinian communities in the most vulnerable situations, https://um.fi/development-cooperation-palestinian-territory/-/asset_publisher/gdcAaTdKIdU1/content/suomi-ja-palestiinalaishallinto-iatkavat-yhteistyota-opetus-maa-ja-vesisektoreilla/35732#:~:text=In%202021%E2%80%932024%2C%20Finland's%20bilateral,2024%20is%20EUR%2028%20million.

²⁰ NPA, 2017-2022: Putting Citizens First. <https://www.palestinecabinet.gov.ps/WebSite/Upload/Documents/GOVPLAN/NPA%20English.pdf>

²¹ Ibid.

Paper on Strengthening Sumud²² are regarded as valuable resources for any actor interested in engaging in resilience programming in these areas.

The program is closely aligned with the key sectors outlined in the Capital Development Cluster strategy for East Jerusalem²³ supporting the Palestinian government's priorities. It strengthens cultural identity and community engagement by enhancing arts education and supporting cultural events, directly addressing the government's goals for cultural development. It promotes economic empowerment by providing training for traders and legal support for businesses, aligning with the focus on sustaining livelihoods in the city. Social cohesion is fostered through life skills training and educational activities that bring together various community groups, contributing to efforts to build unity within East Jerusalem. Additionally, the program addresses housing challenges in the city by offering legal and technical support to help secure and protect Palestinian homes, consistent with the government's priority of maintaining the presence of residents in the city.

Furthermore, TARABOT provides strategic planning support to the Palestinian Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs, helping to strengthen its capacity in coordinating and implementing initiatives that align with the broader strategic goals for the city.

Alignment with needs of the targeted communities

TARABOT has shown a significant alignment with the needs of the targeted communities. This alignment is evidenced through detailed need assessments, direct beneficiary consultations, and targeted interventions that address specific challenges faced by various communities.

TARABOT is meticulously guided by a comprehensive suite of strategic documents and studies to ensure alignment with the specific needs of the targeted communities in East Jerusalem, Area C, and Gaza. The CRDP, with its extensive engagement with civil society and local institutions, provides valuable lessons that are integrated into TARABOT's approach, ensuring that national priorities are consistently aligned with local needs. Additionally, the National Economic Recovery Plan and the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan 2021-2023²⁴ guide the programme's economic interventions, particularly in response to the compounded crises of occupation and the pandemic. The programme's adherence to UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards²⁵ and the Palestinian Environmental Strategies²⁶ and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) ensures that its initiatives are not only socially inclusive but also environmentally sustainable. By incorporating data and insights from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Labour Force Survey, World Bank Economic Monitoring Reports, and other critical studies, TARABOT is well-equipped to address the socio-economic disparities and enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable communities, ensuring that the programme's interventions are both contextually relevant and impactful.

In addition to these guiding documents, the programme placed a strong emphasis on **direct beneficiary consultations**. By engaging directly with the communities, the programme identifies their most pressing needs and challenges, ensuring that the interventions are responsive and grounded in the realities faced by these communities. The project team has demonstrated a strong commitment to partner engagement through continuous consultations and meetings. This approach has ensured that the project remains highly relevant, well-aligned, and responsive to the needs of beneficiaries. This collaboration has involved

²² Background Paper on Strengthening Sumud, Submitted by Elizabeth Price, February 2022

²³ https://www.nad.ps/sites/default/files/east_jerusalem- economy_custer_repor_2019.pdf

²⁴ <https://pmo.pna.ps/public/files/server/mother-5.pdf>

²⁵ <https://www.undp.org/accountability/social-and-environmental-responsibility/social-and-environmental-standards>

²⁶ https://environment.ps/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Environment-Sector-Strategy_Executive-Summary_en.pdf

key institutional partners, including the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, local civil society organizations, and direct beneficiaries.

Key examples include addressing agricultural needs in Gaza Strip and Qalqilya by providing solar energy solutions to operate water wells, tackling severe water salinity and scarcity issues, and supporting local industries in Gaza by establishing a Packaging and Labelling centre, which enhanced production capabilities and improved product standards and marketability. In East Jerusalem, the program addresses the need to preserve Palestinian identity and cultural heritage in the face of ongoing threats of cultural erosion and displacement. A threat that peaked during the outbreak of Covid-19. It focuses on enhancing arts education and supporting cultural events to strengthen community cohesion and help Palestinians resist the pressures of occupation. Additionally, the program tackles the need for legal and technical assistance to secure building permits, protect homes, and combat the Israeli occupation's policy of house demolitions.

The program's interventions were designed and implemented in an integrated manner through the creation of implementing partner consortia, which aimed to create synergy and achieve multiplier effects that extend beyond what individual partners could accomplish alone.²⁷

Consistency with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The TARABOT program closely aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)²⁸ by addressing critical needs such as poverty reduction (SDG 1) through job creation and support for local businesses, promoting affordable and clean energy (SDG 7) with solar-powered solutions, fostering economic growth (SDG 8) by capitalizing on the unique comparative advantages of each targeted area, and promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization (SDG 9) through initiatives like the Packaging and Labelling Centre in Gaza. The program also targets reducing inequalities (SDG 10) by focusing on marginalized regions and supports sustainable communities (SDG 11) by enhancing resilience against land expropriation and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. Overall, TARABOT is well-aligned with global development priorities.

Alignment with UNDP/PAPP, Austrian development cooperation (ADC) and the Finland Representative Office (FRO) strategies

TARABOT's strategic focus is closely aligned with the overarching goals outlined by the UNDP Program of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP). By emphasizing national ownership and leadership in sustainable development for East Jerusalem, Area C, and Gaza, TARABOT supports the empowerment of local institutions and communities to take control of their development processes, a priority that mirrors UNDP/PAPP's objective of building strong, effective Palestinian institutions. Furthermore, the project's commitment to strengthening social cohesion and reinforcing Palestinian identity is in direct alignment with UNDP/PAPP's goal of fostering social harmony and cultural solidarity as essential components of resilience and nation-building. Together, these strategic elements ensure that

Additionally, TARABOT's strategy of moving beyond relief to laying the foundations for self-reliance aligns with UNDP/PAPP's emphasis on transitioning from short-term aid to long-term development, focusing on capacity-building, economic empowerment, and sustainable growth.

TARABOT not only addresses immediate

²⁷ While the consortium approach was intended to be consistent across all areas of intervention, it was not as fully realized in Gaza. This variation will be further analysed in the effectiveness section.

²⁸ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

challenges but also contributes to the sustainable, long-term development and stability of Palestinian communities, fully supporting the broader objectives of UNDP/PAPP.

The program aligns with UNDP's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan²⁹ by focusing on resilience-building, which is central to UNDP's mission of enhancing countries' and communities' ability to withstand and recover from shocks, such as conflict and socio-economic crises. The program's strong emphasis on vocational training and capacity building, particularly targeting women and youth, directly supports UNDP's commitment to fostering inclusive development and ensuring no one is left behind. Furthermore, TARABOT's initiatives to promote sustainable agricultural practices and renewable energy solutions advance UNDP's environmental sustainability and climate action goals, this demonstrates alignment with the overarching objectives of the UNDP Strategic Plan.

TARABOT closely aligns with the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and the Finland Representative Office (FRO), as highlighted in the Team Europe Initiative Joint Analysis: Economic Resilience in Palestine. The project prioritizes economic resilience in areas like Gaza, East Jerusalem, and Area C, consistent with the emphasis on sustainable development. By integrating the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus, TARABOT ensures that immediate relief relates to long-term development and peacebuilding, aligning with the focus on resilience in fragile contexts. The project also emphasizes strengthening national ownership and building the capacity of Palestinian institutions, supporting efforts to empower local leadership. Additionally, TARABOT's multi-sectoral and inclusive approach, which addresses economic, governance, social, and environmental needs, mirrors FRO & ADC's comprehensive development approach. This alignment ensures that TARABOT effectively addresses both immediate needs and long-term resilience in the region.

TARABOT also aligns closely with the broader strategic objectives of Finland and the European Union in Palestine, as outlined in Finland's Country Strategy for Palestine and the European Joint Strategy³⁰ in Support of Palestine. The program's focus on resilience-building in vulnerable areas such as Gaza, East Jerusalem, and Area C reflects Finland's commitment to supporting and protecting Palestinians in the most vulnerable situations. This includes contributing to state-building efforts grounded in a two-state solution and upholding human rights and international law.

Moreover, TARABOT's multi-sectoral approach, which integrates economic development, governance, and social cohesion, is directly aligned with the European Joint Strategy's³¹ goals of promoting Palestinian statehood, supporting sustainable Palestinian development, and reinforcing effective and accountable governance. By improving service delivery and enhancing access to socio-economic resources, TARABOT advances the European strategy's priorities of strengthening institutional capacities and fostering a resilient Palestinian society, ultimately contributing to the overarching goal of a viable two-state solution.

Implications for TARABOT of the government changes in March 2024

Incoming staff of the PMO say that resilience is on the governments agenda but that it will be dealt with through the different line ministries rather than centralized in the PMO. The new government's overarching priority is reform, recovery, and reconstruction with a focus on dealing with corruption, securing Waqf land in Palestine, and solar energy. Future projects will need to synergize with these new priorities.

²⁹ <https://strategicplan.undp.org/>

³⁰ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/palestine-occupied-palestinian-territory-west-bank-and-gaza-strip/european-joint-strategy-support-palestine-2021-2024-implementation-report-2022-2023_en?s=206

³¹ Austria considers the EJS its main strategic document as Austria has no country strategy for Palestine.

The program has been responsive to post-pandemic challenges in Palestine by prioritizing support for tourism sector and vulnerable micro, small and medium sized enterprises, protecting and creating jobs, particularly for women and youth. With 95% of Palestinian working women negatively impacted by COVID-19³², the program focused on economic recovery through business development and capacity-building.

1.2 To what extent has the Program been responsive to emerging changes in Palestine, and the corresponding changing needs and priorities of partners and national constituents (men, women, and other groups) in areas of intervention?

Finding: TARABOT program has shown good responsiveness to emerging changes in Palestine and the corresponding changing needs and priorities of partners and national constituents

The Risk Management Matrix in the TARABOT project document considers emerging changes in the needs and priorities of project partners and beneficiaries. The matrix identifies various risks, such as changes in the government, security deterioration, and operational challenges, with specific mitigation measures of regular monitoring, engagement with local and central government, and updating strategies in response to situational changes. Additionally, the matrix is designed to be regularly updated based on ongoing assessments, indicating a commitment to adapting to emerging changes.

Sometimes even the most complete mitigation measures have not been able to address the increasing difficulties in securing permits. At the time of this writing, implementing partners have been unable to secure the necessary permits to provide tanks and solar energy in targeted agricultural areas of Area C.

In East Jerusalem, the strategies to manage security and political risks, such as maintaining strong relationships with local institutions and leveraging UN and donor pressure, remain relevant.

In Gaza, the ongoing war has caused widespread damage to many of the project's achievements, bringing the limitations of the current risk management plan into sharp focus. The plan's emphasis on contingency planning and adaptable programming is crucial, but the scale of the destruction will require a more comprehensive approach to emergency response and recovery which UNDP recognizes and has been part of the development of the national Gaza recovery strategy³³. Strengthening the program's capacity for rapid response, securing alternative supply chains, and ensuring the safety of personnel and beneficiaries are now more critical than ever. The current war also highlights the need for stronger partnerships with humanitarian organizations to facilitate immediate relief efforts and longer-term recovery plans.

Although the risk management matrix has been updated several times, the war in Gaza and its implications in the West Bank have negatively impacted the relevance of the type and scale of the mitigation measures. Further, thoughtful, and updated risk analysis and mitigations measures must be continuously pursued to ensure the maximization of the effectiveness of donor support within such a precarious operating environment.

In Jerusalem and the West Bank, TARABOT successfully engaged a diverse range of grassroots institutions and governmental bodies that had not previously collaborated, fostering a new level of cooperation that significantly enhanced the program's effectiveness. However, in Gaza, the program encountered unique challenges due to the limited governmental presence, necessitating a different implementation strategy. This required closer collaboration with local NGOs and community organizations to directly manage

³² WFP Palestine. 2020. https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/WFPCBNOV20_221220.pdf

³³ <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/early-recovery-approach-and-action-plan-for-gaza-unsco-25sep24/>

interventions, enabling the program to adapt to the region's specific political and operational context while relying on non-state actors to achieve its objectives.

The program has been described as a "lifeline" and "lifesaving" by the Palestinian Prime Minister's Office (PMO), underscoring its critical role in enabling the PMO to continue its work effectively. TARABOT facilitated the PMO's ability to swiftly procure services, hire consultants, and address crucial information gaps related to key agendas such as anti-corruption measures, Waqf land management, solar energy initiatives, and recovery and reconstruction efforts. The COPLAN dimension of the project has been particularly valuable in enhancing the PMO's planning capacity, especially as these responsibilities are transitioned to the newly established Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. Additionally, the TARABOT project has played a pivotal role in the development of a national strategy for managing Al Awqaf land, further demonstrating its alignment with the current government's priorities on reform, recovery, and reconstruction.

The change of government 5 months ago has resulted in most of the trained staff in the planning and policy unit being transferred to the reemergent Ministry of Planning (MoPIC).

1.3 What is the best approach for TARABOT to strengthen resilience what is the primary value-add of TARABOT?

Finding: The primary value-add of TARABOT has been to successfully address the issues of economic and social resilience through novel and innovative strategies. The programme has been less successful in addressing the issue of political resilience at a strategic level.

One of the key value-added elements of TARABOT is its strong emphasis on national ownership and leadership, especially in the challenging contexts of East Jerusalem, Area C, and Gaza. TARABOT is designed to ensure that local institutions and Palestinian authorities are at the forefront of driving sustainable development initiatives. This focus on local leadership ensures that the interventions are culturally relevant, politically appropriate, and sustainable in the long term. The CRDP also aimed to involve local actors, but TARABOT has taken this further by embedding national ownership as a core principle of its design. TARABOT's approach is more structured in ensuring that local entities participate and lead the development processes, which enhances the sustainability and effectiveness of the interventions.

Indeed, output two focuses on empowering the Prime Minister's office to be involved in cluster planning, and more recently in regional planning. Moreover, under output one, especially in the West Bank they worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to ensure that activities are planned and implemented with high involvement from local offices (directorates) as well as active and prominent local NGO's.

The TARABOT project document defines the programme's approach as one of 'societal resilience'³⁴ which intends to contribute to transformative outcomes to improve conditions for sustainable development. This means going beyond the recovery stage of the resilience continuum to the transformative stage, where society evolves away from risks, which have been mitigated and avoided in the prevention and adaptation stages of resilience and launches towards sustainable development.

³⁴ Resilience in the Palestinian context is defined in the Sumud Background Paper of February 2022 as "the unceasing effort, within a hyper-chronic crisis, to live a productive, meaningful, and community-based life on the land of Palestine. (It) is sustained resilience that is only possible because of the interdependent commitment of the people, the community, and the cause to the land." Economic resilience is where the most vulnerable economic actors are able to recover from shock, sustain and advance towards sustainable economic development, (Team Europe Initiative Joint Analysis: Economic Resilience in Palestine, 2022).

TARABOT introduces specific initiatives aimed at fostering self-reliance among Palestinian communities. This includes capacity-building programs, support for local enterprises, and the development of local infrastructure that communities can manage independently. By focusing on creating self-sustaining systems, TARABOT ensures that the communities are less dependent on external aid and more capable of sustaining their own development. While CRDP included elements of capacity building, TARABOT places a greater emphasis on creating tangible, long-lasting outcomes that lead to self-reliance. The program's design is more comprehensive in its approach to equipping communities with the skills and resources needed to maintain their resilience independently.

TARABOT places a strong emphasis on social cohesion and the reinforcement of Palestinian identity. This is particularly important in the fragmented and politically sensitive areas of East Jerusalem, Area C, and Gaza. TARABOT supports initiatives that bring communities together³⁵, foster a sense of collective identity, and strengthen social bonds, which are crucial for resilience in the face of external pressures and internal divisions. The CRDP addressed community resilience but did not place as strong an emphasis on social cohesion and identity as TARABOT does. TARABOT's focus on these areas represents a value-add.

The value added that TARABOT brings in the context of this approach has been to successfully address issues of economic and social resilience through the piloting of a series of thoughtful and effective strategies, and to some lesser extent the issue of political resilience.

Strategies for Economic and Social Development:

The TARABOT project has implemented a series of strategic interventions to address the economic and social challenges faced by Palestinian communities. Through a comprehensive evaluation of the project, the following key strategies have been identified as instrumental in its success:

Focus on High-Need Areas: The project effectively targeted regions with the most significant resilience deficits and development gaps, including Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. By concentrating efforts on these areas, TARABOT addressed the most pressing vulnerabilities, thereby maximizing the impact of its interventions.

Localized, Multi-Sectoral Interventions: One of the project's strengths lies in its ability to tailor interventions to the specific needs of each region. In Area C, the integration of agriculture, water, and social cohesion initiatives provided a holistic approach to development. In Gaza, the combination of agriculture and employment opportunities addressed both economic and food security needs. Meanwhile, in East Jerusalem, the emphasis on culture, employment, and social cohesion supported both economic growth and community resilience.

Collaborative Approaches: TARABOT successfully fostered collective action among Palestinian implementing partners. By utilizing consortium and collaborative frameworks, the project ensured that interventions were grounded in local expertise and benefited from a shared commitment to common goals.

Empowerment Through Local Ownership: The project placed a strong emphasis on empowering Palestinian communities by basing interventions on locally identified problems and solutions. This approach not only increased the relevance and sustainability of the interventions but also strengthened local ownership and commitment to the outcomes.

³⁵ Concerts in East Jerusalem and Christmas markets in East Jerusalem, attended by over 60,000 beneficiaries; Qalqiliya land rehabilitation activities which brought the farming community in the area together during workshops to identify beneficiaries.

Alignment with National Development Goals³⁶: TARABOT strategically aligned its programming with national development objectives, thereby contributing to broader socio-economic progress. The project's focus on fostering national leadership and aligning with governmental priorities ensured that its impacts were both locally significant and nationally relevant.

Cultural Strengthening: The project's cultural activities played a vital role in reinforcing the Palestinian national narrative. By celebrating and promoting cultural heritage, TARABOT strengthened community identity and cohesion, contributing to a more unified national consciousness.

Reinforcing Governance and Trust: Finally, TARABOT made significant strides in strengthening the social contract between the government and citizens. The strong and visible engagement of PA line ministries in the execution of local interventions not only enhanced the effectiveness of the project but also fostered greater trust and collaboration between the government and the communities it serves.

1.4 To what extent does the program's ToC respond to the relevant national priorities and challenges? How can the ToC be adjusted/improved, considering the newly produced resilience and gender analysis?

Finding: The program's ToC is poorly aligned to national priorities and challenges. Conceptualising TARABOT as a capacity-building programme, that pilots' projects through service providers and local and national authorities. This conceptualisation has influenced all programme design documents with consequences for measuring the extent of achievement of programme objectives and goals.

In the original project document, the overarching goal was stated as contributing to the government priorities of:

- National ownership and leadership in the sustainable development of East Jerusalem, Area C and Gaza.
- Building blocks for self-reliance; and
- Social cohesion and Palestinian identity.

The objectives of the TARABOT programme were defined in the same project document as:

- Improving delivery of services to vulnerable groups (not communities)
- Improving access to services and economic opportunities to vulnerable groups (not communities) in Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza, particularly women and youth.
- Enhancing political, cultural, economic, and social cohesion, and
- Improving inclusion of most vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth.

The objectives did not explicitly include improving activities to foster national ownership and leadership, nor improving skills and knowledge within communities, nor the improving of access to socio-economic resources, which would seem to be fundamental requirements of programming and project design focused on building self-reliance and resilience.

The Theory of Change as a result has very weak linkages to relevant national priorities and challenges, prioritizing the capacity of service providers and national and local entities in providing more responsive, high-quality services to the most vulnerable. The team was unable to find a clear articulation of the

³⁶ <https://pmo.pna.ps/public/files/server/mother-5.pdf>

programme’s targets as vulnerable communities and the essential elements of building sustainable self-reliance (transformative resilience). A clear articulation of transformative resilience was only developed in 2022 as part of project activities and after years of consultation and operationalization efforts with stakeholders.

This disconnect has consequences for accountability and decision-making in support of the overall project objectives and goals which are analysed under effectiveness. The ToC can be strengthened by incorporating key adjustments from the Team Europe Initiative (TEI) and the excellent UNDP-commissioned Background Paper on Strengthening Sumud of February 2022, where resilience in the Palestinian context is clearly conceptualized as *a collective experience and depends on four interdependent factors: belief in cause, community cohesion, ability to access and use resources, and individual capacity.*

The results framework remained in place as a formal reference for the entire period covered by the MTE, but the actual interventions in Area C, EJ and Gaza were disconnected from this framework already in the first year of implementation. As a result of current conceptualization of the Theory of Change, results framework and baseline were developed which focused on improving the capacities of service providers to provide high quality services in addition to improving the Government’s capacities in aid management, coordination, and alignment. TARABOT was thus conceptualised – under Output 1- as a classical capacity development project, with only a very weak link to the resilience priorities established by the PMO.

If a ToC is to be attempted again as programme design framework, then beyond better articulating the result chains and their linkages up the goal level, a narrative should accompany the figure detailing the implications for implementing strategies including adopting a systems-based approach to address the interconnectedness of different sectors, implementing a multi-sectoral and multi-level strategy to ensure ³⁷interventions are responsive to various economic actors, focusing more on building local capacities for resilience, linking a national leadership role to the process, and clearly defining equitable outcomes, particularly for marginalized groups.

As the ToC does not addresses cross cutting issues of gender equity and inclusion, there is also a need for more explicit strategies to tackle deep-rooted socio-cultural norms and legal barriers in the form of transformative gender approaches and inclusive programming.

Theory of change for the Sumud Strategy, February 2022

- **If** the Government 1) fosters national unity and social cohesion, 2) provides vulnerable communities with services and investment, 3) increases access to needed socio-economic resources, and 4) improves the capacity of Palestinians to use those resources to build a productive life in their community,
- **Then** Palestinians will be able to build a sustainable and meaningful life in Palestine and will consider the Government to be an effective and responsive partner in national Sumud.

1.5 To what extent has the program been appropriately responsive to political, legal, socio-economic, and institutional changes in the Palestinian territories?

Finding: TARABOT program has been appropriately responsive to changes in the Palestinian territories, supporting recovery efforts after COVID and the war in Gaza. Changes in institutional arrangement consequent upon the change in national government.

TARABOT has been actively engaged in emergency planning, providing vital support to the Palestinian Government across various critical areas. The challenges posed by COVID-19, the ongoing war in Gaza,

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escalations in the West Bank, and the recent change in government have significantly altered the political, legal, and institutional landscape in Palestine. The project has effectively adapted to these changes.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, TARABOT played a crucial role in supporting the tourism sector and promoting decent work initiatives within the agricultural sector. The project also swiftly extended support to cultural centres and institutions in East Jerusalem, preventing many from the threat of closure. This timely intervention helped several organizations in East Jerusalem keep their doors open and continue providing essential services.

In response to the October 7 War, TARABOT has been instrumental in assisting the government with the development of a Gaza recovery operational plan.³⁸ In the West Bank, the program has ensured the continuation of essential socio-economic interventions in Area C, despite the ongoing conflict. Recognizing the urgent needs of targeted communities, such as the Bedouin communities in Area C—who were severely impacted by settler attacks and faced dire economic and humanitarian conditions—TARABOT shifted its focus to conduct an in-depth assessment over the last three months of 2023. This assessment aimed to fully understand the crisis's impact on these communities, as well as on businesses and other marginalized groups in the region.

Additionally, due to the inability to transport solar panels into Gaza because of the war, TARABOT reallocated these resources to Qalqilya, benefiting farmers who had previously received support under the project. This adaptive approach highlights TARABOT's commitment to addressing immediate needs while continuing to support long-term resilience and recovery efforts.

The program has also shown flexibility in its regional planning efforts, particularly in response to changes within the Palestinian government. TARABOT has successfully navigated the recent change in government by continuing to support the planning capacity and addressing the needs of the new PMO. This includes ongoing support for reform planning, as well as planning efforts related to Gaza's reconstruction and recovery. As the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) is a newly established entity with an unclear staffing structure, TARABOT is currently exploring how to align ongoing consultancy arrangements with Co-plan to support the planning efforts of the current PMO. The dissolution of the Aid Coordination and Planning unit within the PMO and the absorption of TARABOT supported staff into MOPIC highlight another area of the program's responsiveness. The program is considering how best to utilize resources to support MOPIC.³⁹

3.2 Effectiveness

2.1 To what extent did the programme contribute to the country programme outcomes and outputs, the SDG's, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and national developmental priorities?

Finding: The programme has contributed effectively to the SDG's, UNDP Strategic Plan, and national development priorities in all areas of intervention. TARABOT has also contributed to outcomes and outputs against the relevant indicators, but the strength of the contribution cannot be fully measured due to limitations in indicator alignment at the output level.

TARABOT interventions directly contribute to eleven of the 17 SDGs, demonstrating the programme's significant alignment with global development goals as shown in the previous section (relevance).⁴⁰

³⁸ <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/early-recovery-approach-and-action-plan-for-gaza-unsco-25sep24/>

³⁹ (Technical Committee Meeting).

⁴⁰ A more detailed analysis of this is included in Annex 10.

TARABOT has effectively contributed to the PA's national and development priorities and implementation modalities as articulated in NDP 2021-2023 and relevant sectoral priorities. This contribution is evident in two ways: the utility of the programme model created through the programme, and the alignment of the interventions with the detailed results expected per policy area as delineated in the NDP and NPA.⁴¹ All TARABOT interventions have contributed to the relevant policy areas.

TARABOT interventions have contributed to the UNDP Strategic Plan Output 1.1.2 - *Marginalized groups, particularly the poor, women and PWD, and the displaced, are empowered to gain universal access to basic services and financial and non-financial assets to build productive capacities and benefit from sustainable livelihoods and jobs.* (Analysis of the programme portfolio to see to what extent financially).

TARABOT has contributed to **all** Country Programme outcome areas and **six of the 11** Country Programme Output areas. How the programme implementation influenced the output and outcome achievement will be dealt with in 2.4 below.

2.2 To what extent have the planned outputs (as defined in the project document/results framework/Theory of Change) been achieved considering the causal link between the inputs and the outputs?

Finding: Inputs have been effectively transformed into outputs under both output categories (1 and 2) but with only limited alignment with TARABOTs strategic design documents - project document, results framework, ToC. Development of additional sector output indicators during EOI's for Area C and Gaza indicators has facilitated the reporting for output one activities but has not yet solved the continuing problem of accountability for achieving project goals.

Under output one, the first EOI for Jerusalem was launched before a revised MEAL plan with sector indicators was developed. The Annual Report notes that *"The expedited package commenced before the finalization of the results framework. As such, the results from the expedited package were modified to fit overall programme indicators."* This retrofitting exercise was continued for the next two years. Output reporting for EJ was based on data from the implementing partners themselves against indicators that each IP designed themselves. By the time of the launching of the EOI process for Gaza and Area C, a total of twenty-eight sector indicators had been developed by the PMU, and partners were asked to report against these in their reporting. **However, none of these twenty-eight indicators were aligned with TARABOTs programme design documents.** Table 1 below presents a summary of output achievements under output one using the sector indicators developed by TARABOT for reporting purposes for Area C and Gaza.

Indicators have been developed as project activities have evolved so that a clear understanding of outputs is available, which donors, at this point, seem satisfied with. However, this data offers little relevant information for accountability and decision-making in support of the overall project objectives and goals.

These indicators provide evidence of levels of activity, but do not show how this translates into increasing resilience as defined in the project goals, whether the implementation approach chosen was the best in the context, and how the exclusion of other community members from project benefits has impacted community cohesion.

Donors have repeatedly requested at steering committee meeting, that UNDP undertake a reformulation of the ToC, the results framework, and the project document, and - on occasion – add an M&E staff member to the PMU to bring coherence to the performance management system at the level of M&E and enable better reporting on results. These recurrent requests are reported in steering committee meetings

⁴¹ For full analysis of these linkages, see Annex 13.

minutes which took place over the project period, but UNDP has not yet produced a reformulation of these programme design documents.

Analysis of the documents developed to guide and manage interventions under output 1 – the EOI’s for EJ, Gaza, and Area C - present an unclear and inconsistent understanding of intervention purpose under output one, which is an inevitable consequence of the limited clarity of the programme design documents. For example, in the EOI for Gaza, projects which clearly fall into the sector of Agriculture, are further subdivided into several categories including (1) Agriculture (2) Agriculture development for employment (3) water for agriculture. Further in the EOI for Area C, the interventions are divided into three pillars rather than sectors, which are not clearly aligned with the sector priorities that were very clearly presented in EOI, round 1 of February 2022.

These challenges can be solved with mentoring, assistance, and additional staff. Going forward, TARABOT must clarify its purpose and intent (goals and objectives) and reconsider its outputs and outcomes in this light. The precise nature and content of the interventions cannot be predicted in advance because of the nature of EOI process. Which means that the new indicators developed will reflect the elements which are constitutive of resilience: an inspiring cause, a sustainable community, accessible resources for livelihood, and useful life skills.⁴²

Under Output 2, TARABOT is achieving the planned outputs with the transfer of competencies from existing senior PMO staff to existing staff in the policy and planning unit. Within the PMO, it was not easy to find the right staff, who were carefully selected to be part of the capacity building process based on their desire and commitment to remain within the PMO at the completion of the project, when they would be shifted from project contracts to government contracts.

PMO senior staff involved in the building of competencies with the staff embedded in the PPU estimate that 60% of the increased capacity came from the intentional transfer of already existing planning and donor coordination expertise in the PMO and 40% from the work of 3 short term consultants, who were contracted to provide technical expertise in the field of gender and planning for resilience. PMO staff also note the significant role that UNDP staff themselves have played in helping to develop capacities in their staff through the close working relations that UNDP staff have enjoyed with the PPU.

As part of the capacity building approach adopted, targeted PMO staff have attended TARABOT steering committee meetings and meetings of the Technical Group to familiarise them with donor issues, project management issues, and technical issues. The staff have also received mentoring and job-shadowing support in planning with line Ministries focused on national planning, Area C and Gaza, master planning for local communities with local government entities, and the cluster approach. In the area of donor coordination, a similar approach has been adopted to capacity building in the developing marketing plans and strategies for donors.

PMO staff have noted “an increase in growth” of the staff and have tested this through transferring new responsibilities to them, which PMO managers say they have successfully managed. When the government changed in March 2024, the three staff were transferred out of the PMO to the re-emergent Ministry of Planning (MOPIC).

Incoming PMO staff of the new government have assured that the staff transferred to MoPIC will have more influence in the planning process. They also say that MoPIC will reemerge as a strong line ministry to centralize and minimise all the fragmentation of the current planning process. They wish to keep the

⁴² Sumud Background document, February 2022

contract with Co-plan to support planning capacity of the current PMO to push the reform agenda around corruption, Waqf land, solar energy, recovery, and reconstruction.

2.3 To what extent has progress been made towards achieving the programme outcomes and outputs and their respective indicators?

Finding: The programme has achieved impressive results at output and outcome level. Nevertheless, output results are not always aligned with the programme design documents (ToC, RFF, project document and original MEAL plan).

The impact of the interventions and the programme overall is not known except for some anecdotal information as the M&E framework has not been effectively designed and the necessary M&E tools are not in place. An analysis of how and why interventions have contributed to resilience, and if and how interventions have created synergistic and multiplier effects systematically are not being systematically assessed for future project design methodologies. An emerging understanding of beneficiary and community behaviours around livelihoods, natural resource management and social capital investments are critical components of future sustainability, but this needs to be well documented and synthesised.

Although donors and the PMU – and in the case of donors, repeatedly – requested additional M&E staff and additional clarity and reformulation of the key TARABOT design documents, nothing has been produced and no M&E staff have been recruited for the PMU. UNDP’s rationale for keeping the M&E function within the RBM team makes sense as way of ensuring that all UNDP projects are aligned with the UNDP/PAPP overall strategy. However, the level of support which the RBM unit can provide is heavily compromised by its own limited number of M&E staff.⁴³ The PMU also has limited functional knowledge of M&E and no coherent guidance or system to follow up M&E issues including data collection and systematic analysis and learning.

As explained above, and to reduce duplication in the narrative of this report, the programmes RRF is not well aligned with output one results. As a result, progress towards achieving output results cannot be measured using TARABOT tools designed for this purpose. In addition, no targets were set for output one activities so progress made towards achieving the outputs cannot be reasonably stated. What can be said is that the interventions are essentially complete, and they have achieved several goals. The evaluation has therefore adopted an approach which attempted to combine reporting from the IPs, beneficiaries, and project coordinators to present a picture of output1 results.

Outcome achievement evidence draws on figures in the Annual Reports, the evaluation's own surveys and interviews, and anecdotal evidence from KIIs.

Progress towards output achievements – output one

The indicators used in estimating output achievement are developed by the IPs themselves and are not part of the RRF. Most of output one indicators in the RRF are not aligned to the actual activities/interventions undertaken.

As no targets were set for the indicators developed by the IPs, progress at mid-term has been estimated based on the known completion rates of the interventions. All East Jerusalem projects are completed. With a few suspensions of work in Area C, other projects in Qalqilya are complete. Tourist projects in Bethlehem are 50% complete. The current state of outputs in Gaza is uncertain. However, based on

⁴³ Currently the RMB unit has one full time expert supported by one UNV.

programme reporting and partner interviews, a summary of the number of beneficiaries as of October 7, 2023, is provided below.

Table 1: summary of output data under output one interventions⁴⁴

Area of intervention	sector	direct beneficiaries	provided with skills enhancement/improved competitiveness in market	supporting job creation	initiatives enhancing communities' capacity to utilize water	events/workshops	knowledge products disseminated	
Area C	Agriculture	1,350	TBD				3	
	Water	151					20	
	Employment	TBD						
Gaza	Agriculture	135	260	20				
	Water	20						
	Employment	140						
East Jerusalem	Culture and tourism	65,760				410		
	Employment	1,767						1,767
	Housing	172						
Total		69,495	2,027	20	20	410	4	

Progress towards achievement of outcomes

The beneficiary survey conducted by AWRAD as part of the evaluation quantitatively measured two of the six⁴⁵ programme outcomes (share of respondents satisfied with the services delivered, share of respondents who believe that the intervention responds to their needs) that were relevant to the interventions. The survey also measured some of the emerging outcomes across interventions.

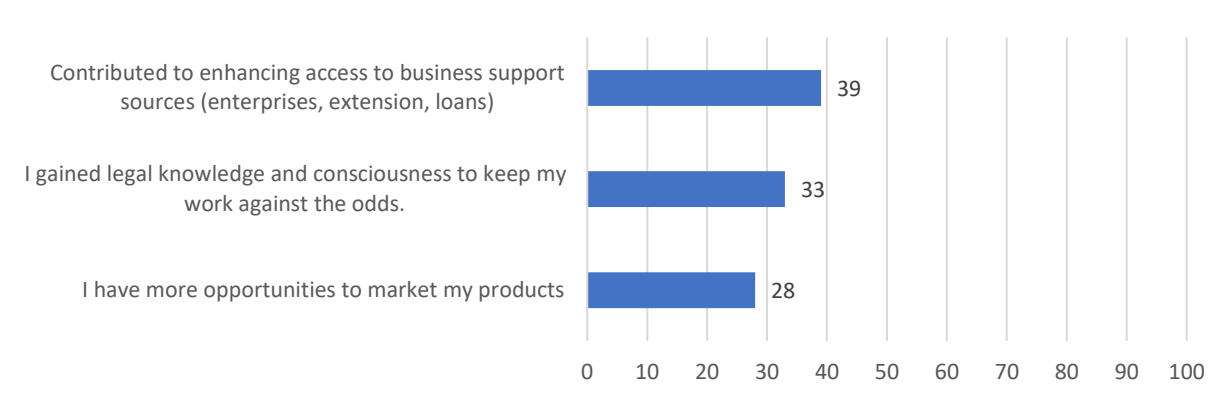
Employment and entrepreneurship

Project outcomes for business owners are the least positive of all activity areas with only a minority saying that the project helped them access business support services (30%), 33% reporting that they gained knowledge in legal issues, and only 28% saying that opportunities to market their products increased. These outcomes can be attributed to the seemingly intractable problems that East Jerusalem entrepreneurs face as a result of Israeli policies in the city, aimed at strangling economic activities. Business owners themselves were difficult to recruit to the TARABOT activity, citing previous disappointments with other promised donor initiatives which did not materialize.

⁴⁴ All data taken from TARABOT Annual Reports.

⁴⁵ The third outcome of relevance – number of beneficiaries benefitting from programme interventions – has already been estimated as part of TARABOTs output reporting, and is reported in the previous section other outcomes were assessed using methods beyond the beneficiary survey or were not directly targeted at beneficiaries.

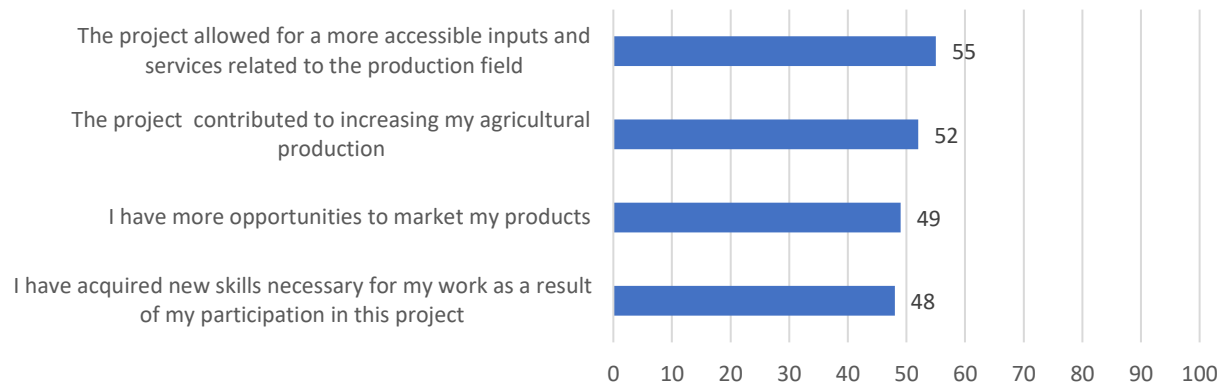
Figure 4: Project outcomes for business owners



Agriculture

A slight majority (from 55% to 52%) of all farmers reported positive improvements in access to inputs and production. A slight minority reported better marketing opportunities and skills. Unexpected outcomes were the increase in environmental awareness reported by 53% and another 50% reporting a reduction of child labour in agricultural work.

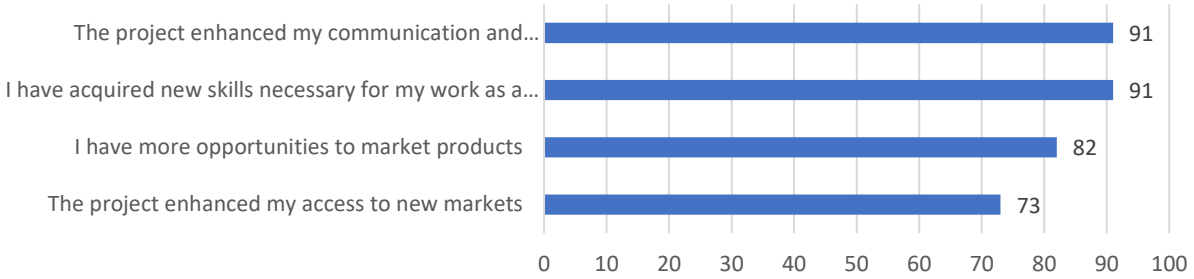
Figure 5: Project outcomes in agriculture and water



Female entrepreneurs

Outcomes for female entrepreneurs were extremely positive with 90% of those surveyed reporting an increase in skills and networking capacities. This group of beneficiaries have low expectations because of their marginalization. The very positive outcomes reported should also be seen in these lights.

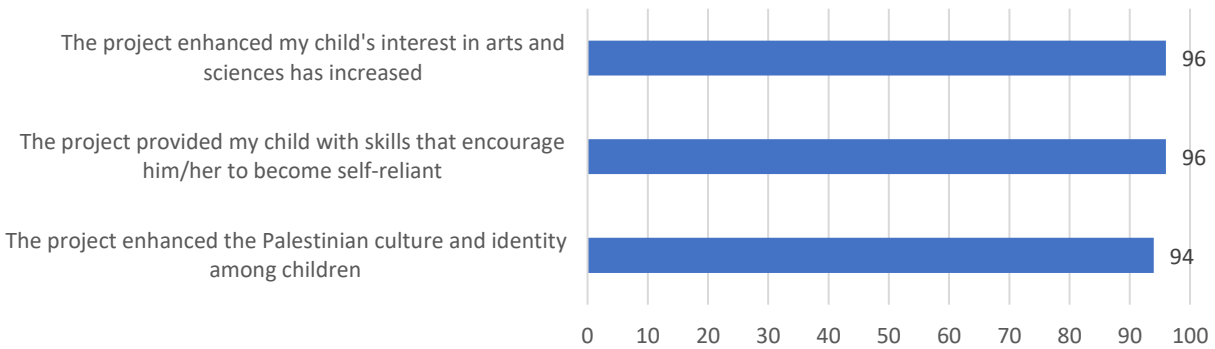
Figure 6: Project outcomes for female entrepreneurs



Culture and Identity

Positive outcomes in culture and identity were reported by over nine out of ten indirect participants in the project’s activities – parents of the children involved.

Figure 7: Project outcomes for culture and identity



Progress towards output achievement – output two

The activities in output two were refined in the first year of implementation to enhance national coordination and planning, provide technical assistance to the PMO, improve data collection and analysis, support coordination activities, and strengthen government capacity in knowledge production and dissemination.

In Y1, the project laid the foundation for assessing the PMO’s needs and identifying expertise for TARABOT’s resilience programming. They also reviewed national plans, participated in stakeholder meetings, and identified four functions to strengthen the PMO’s institutional capacity. In Y2, the program supported the Ministry of Jerusalem Affairs (MoJA) in developing a policy paper for the Jerusalem Conference, enhancing national capacities in policy planning and cluster development for sustainable development in East Jerusalem. The program also supported a resilience concept paper to feed into national planning and supported a gender analysis of current national plans to guide future national planning in 2024/5. In Y3, twelve national plans and cluster plans were developed for future NDP planning, complementarity mechanisms between agricultural development and tourism were finalized, and experts were brought on board to develop regional planning mechanisms. The table below, which summarizes this progress, shows that work in some areas has greatly exceeded expectations.

Table 2: Progress against indicators for output two

Output indicator	Measure description	Target to midterm	Actuals to midterm	Percentage achievement
2.1	Number of policy initiatives introduced to facilitate investment in the area-based development approach	3	15	500%
2.2	Existence of a mechanism to monitor and assess progress of strategy/plan implementation	1	0	0%
2.3	Existence of a functioning mechanism to coordinate and promote complementarity amongst the ministries and key stakeholders in the geographic area	4	2	50%

Reporting

Reporting on the project was captured in the Annual Progress Reports. Donors had no remarks on the availability of reporting, but the Evaluation Team did not receive the last report for 2022/2023 until August of 2024, which seems too late in the project cycle to be of much use for reflection and projecting forward for the next year. Reporting was focused on the details of project activities and programmatic issues rather than providing a status update on whether and how the programme's objectives were being met, and how the project was performing overall.

Narrative and quantitative reporting on Output 1 activities did not align with the Output 1 indicators (for the reasons explained above). As a result, it was impossible to critically assess progress towards meeting outputs. Lessons learned were summarised in the report, but there is no evidence that there is a lessons-learned process within the performance management system that would allow for reflection on the lessons and subsequent adjustments to the implementation process.

2.4 To what extent have the programme interventions been effective in the following areas:

- Support to the PMO in coordination, policy, and planning of the national planning endeavours.
- Capacity building for service providers and civil society organisations to provide quality and responsive services.
- Support to business creation, incubation, or development, including small grants, provision of production inputs and technical support to strengthen self-reliance in the agricultural sector and food production, in line with agricultural cluster development plans.
- Support skills development interventions to reduce barriers for women and youth to access economic opportunities.

Finding: Overall effectiveness of project interventions is assessed as high through interviews and desk review. The disconnect between the ToC, the results framework, and the results actually achieved on the ground continue to challenge the programmes' ability to effectively report on the extent of achievement.

Overall effectiveness of interventions has been supported by a careful process of intervention design in the geographical and institutional areas of intervention through the development of integrated, sectoral, and cross sectoral, multi-stakeholder models attuned to the very specific and unique contexts of each intervention area – Area C, EJ, Gaza and the PMO. These models have integrated the essential elements of resilience - building the skills of Palestinians to more efficiently use the socio and economic resources provided to build a more productive life and fostering social cohesion based on the Palestinian narrative through cultural, social, and economic activities.

Evidence of the effectiveness of interventions cited by stakeholders have included:

- Linking the PA line ministries with the PMO through the implementation process.
- Linking of directorate office focused on regional implementation with central Ministries.
- Linking civil society organizations with ministries and directorates.
- Linking civil society organizations with each other.
- Embracing of the larger dimensions of resilience like transforming access to productive resources but also the smaller dimension of protecting fields from offensive animals and settler activity.
- Improving - and reducing the cost of - access to productive resources in Qalqilya through road rehabilitation and renewable energy solutions to water pumping.
- Creating a process for more affordable housing in East Jerusalem.
- Building hope for young Jerusalemites for staying in East Jerusalem.
- Helping organizations in Jerusalem survive the pandemic through expedited assistance.
- Helping the Ministries quickly respond to needs related to decent work.

Although it is not known at this point how many of the interventions have survived in Gaza, the implementation models have been tested and have produced some excellent results testified to by the UNDP Gaza coordinator.

Support to the PMO in coordination, policy, and planning of the national planning endeavours

TARABOT's interventions with PMO under output two has strengthened the connection between the PMO and the line Ministries on the one hand and the Ministries and their Directorates on the other. Directorates now feel a strong sense of agency as supervisors of TARABOT interventions under output one and are heavily invested in the outcomes of the interventions – in short, they feel ownership of the process and its outcomes. This model for consultation between PMO and other stakeholders has now been successfully tested in practice. A lightly different process has been followed in East Jerusalem as PA ministries are not permitted to function officially there. TARABOT through its support to the MoJA has influenced the portfolio of programmes and projects targeting EJ.

Within this process, MoA has asserted constructive leadership over the NGOs in the agricultural sector by creating a coalition around a set objective, reducing competition, leveraging knowledge sharing, and improving operational efficiencies.

TARABOTs support to work on resilience has:

- Provided a national operationalization and a strategic framework for understanding resilience. Showing that national frameworks and community level work can be coherent.
- Integrated transformative resilience principles into national and UNDP programming.
- Provided evidence and justifications for resilience in policy and planning to maximize programming options while being mindful of political constraints and negotiations with development partners.
- The Sumud background paper was developed as an advocacy tool for resilient programming, intended to be a resource that the new government, donors, and other interested stakeholders can leverage in their planning and fundraising efforts for resilience-focused initiatives. However, it remains unclear to what extent the current Prime Minister's Office (PMO), or the newly established Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) will utilize this paper in their strategic planning and decision-making processes.

Support to business creation, incubation, or development

- The innovative intervention models developed in Gaza have enabled the business environment in general by partnering with private sector unions and associations to establish a business accelerator clinic, a packaging centre targeting the food processing sector, a furniture paint booth to support a ray of small carpentry manufacturing and a centre for aluminium fabrication and training. These clinics and centres have provided services to their members and other entrepreneurs to increase market competitiveness, expanded market-demanded skills creating job opportunities, promoted local production skills.
- In EJ, a collaborative model between the Jerusalem Chamber of Commerce and Al Quds University successfully supported the revitalisation of local business incubation and development capacities through the provision of financial and legal services.

'The program has created job opportunities for young people to return to work on the land and earn income from it' ... 'Income and production have increased thanks to the fencing, land protection, and road construction, which facilitated easier access to the land.' – Jayyus farmers focus group.

Provision of production inputs and technical support in the agriculture sector

- In Area C, TARABOT invested economic resources in the form of solar panel, water tanks, irrigation systems, land rehabilitation, fencing and agricultural road construction costs in a small agricultural areas of 2000 dunums in Jayyus behind the wall in Qalqilya to successfully reduce the impact of access restrictions, improve access to land and natural resources, and create an agricultural zone of self-reliant farmers with increased social cohesion through the establishment of a farming cooperative.
- In Gaza, TARABOT invested production inputs and technical assistance in private sector nurseries, dairy and poultry companies to produce low cost, climate-change resistant seedlings for farmers, increase the production of milk for the market and improve its quality, and cheaper, locally reared robust chicks for poultry farmers.

"We wanted to create an enabling business environment rather than working on small projects directly" - UNDP Gaza Coordinator

"Many factories in Gaza relied on imported packaging, but with this centre, they could produce packaging locally. It created job opportunities for local printing presses and companies. When the centre designed products, these firms executed the designs, enhancing their business." – Representative, Palestine Federation of Industries.

Supporting skills development to reduce barriers for women and youth to access economic opportunities

- In Gaza, TARABOT improved access to TVET skills and business skills development through a model centre, training of women and youth and licensing their initiatives, and providing services to the electronics sector. Two interventions targeted women-run SMEs through provision of equipment, financial services, business skills training and marketing support.

'Integration was key. We didn't just establish a training centre but included business skills training, aiming to equip people with job skills for self-sufficiency' - UNDP Gaza coordinator.

2.5 To what extent has UNDP's partnership strategy been appropriate and effective to achieve the desired results?

Finding: The strategy of building diverse partnerships has been well realised by the programme. The partnership profile is still dominated by NGOs, a growing influence of private sector representative bodies, limited linkages with academic and research institutions, and no representation of local government entities as implementing partners.

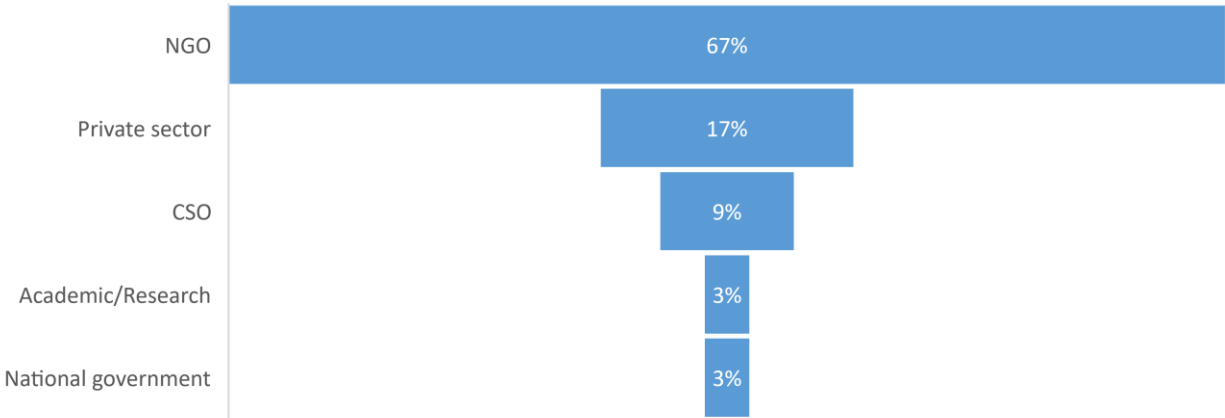
The programme aimed to build diverse partnerships between the State of Palestine, donors, the UN, and various stakeholders to achieve resilience goals in Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. TARABOT selected implementing partners based on the type of intervention, capacity, outreach, and expertise required. UNDP facilitated partnerships and synergies with relevant national and international stakeholders, including community representatives. Additionally, the programme was designed to integrate with development and humanitarian efforts, enhancing geographical outreach and coverage.

TARABOT’s partnership profile is dominated by NGOs first and with private sector unions/federations second, but considerably lower by percentage. By geographical area of intervention, East Jerusalem shows the greatest mix of partners, followed by Gaza. All areas show that the most common partner across interventions are NGOs.

This partnership profile is assessed as fully appropriate for TARABOT as a flexible small grant mechanism and has been able to support the results effectively⁴⁶ in a brief period of time across very different operational contexts.

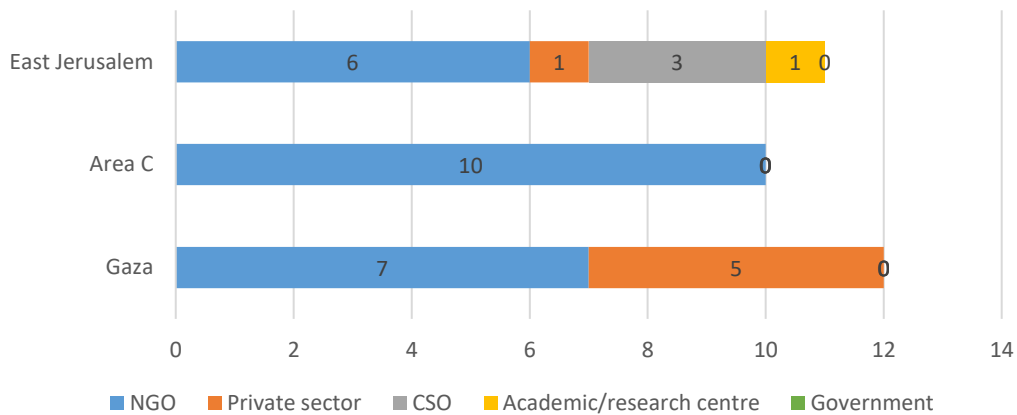
Using NGOs was an appropriate partnership strategy, providing the space for these organizations to continue their vital work and presence in the communities. The baseline has shown that NGOs have the highest levels of confidence among the communities sampled in terms of service delivery and the equity and inclusiveness of their programming.

Figure 8: TARABOT partner type across interventions as a % of total partnerships.



⁴⁶ These results are not aligned with the programme objectives as explained above, but they reflect strong elements of increasing self-reliance among farmers (noted by the MoA and farmers themselves during focus group discussions), increasing access to the skills needed to utilize agricultural and financial investments,

Figure 9: Partner type by geographical area



Area C partnerships were defined by the PA MoA, who have long-standing experience and working relationships with all the NGO partners. The MoA recognised that consortium formation among the NGOs would have its problems, but they – and the NGOs themselves – have recognised the significant practical advantages of working in this fashion including efficiencies of scale and time through joint procurement, and effectively sharing experience, skills and knowledge during the implementation process through regular consortium meetings.⁴⁷

Partners capacity, knowledge of context, alignment with programme vision and communication channels

With the exception of Co-Plan, all expertise used to support the planning and policy unit under Output 2, partners were local. All have great familiarity with the challenges of the operating context and have varying degrees of understanding of resilience in the Palestinian context.

Partner capacity, resources and experience was evaluated as part of the EOI process, and there was a remarkable degree of ownership felt by partners of the outcomes produced by their efforts. Regular and free communication channels between partners were established as a result of the consortium meetings during implementation, and partners, particularly in the Area C intervention, spoke warmly of the quality of relationships among collaborating partners during implementation.

Implementation strategies provide excellent examples of cost and operational efficiencies achieved. The use of renewable energy solutions for powering water pumping in Area C, and Gaza and the powering a cold room for 24-hour production of flake ice for Gaza’s fishing industry are good examples. Interventions in the agricultural and manufacturing sector in Gaza focused on reducing the costs of inputs for farmers and manufacturers by improving access to higher quality, lower cost production inputs which are produced locally.⁴⁸

Scalability of partnership models

There is strong potential for scaling up these partnership models as part of the cluster approach in Area C and East Jerusalem.

⁴⁷ Intervention beneficiaries have also recognised the added value of the consortium approach. They see one implementation body in the field that is mutually supportive, providing additional levels of beneficiary confidence in the TARABOT approach.
⁴⁸ these strategies also increased job opportunities and enabled a disengagement from the Israeli economy towards self-reliance.

2.6 To what extent have different stakeholders been involved in programme implementation?

Finding: Levels of stakeholder involvement at all levels of the project have been remarkably and consistently high over the midterm period evaluated.

The implementation modalities and governance model assume a significant investment of time and efforts by stakeholders. Levels of involvement by stakeholders have been consistently high as revealed in attendance at the steering committee meetings, participation levels in the technical groups and engagement of line ministries in the implementation process.

The PMO, who co-chaired the steering committee meeting, were only involved at the macro level of the project through the steering committee and the technical groups but retained a strong involvement at these levels throughout the period of evaluation. The PMO staff noted that one of their key priorities was to be heard in the programme process, and they feel that this was well achieved. They also note that although they were involved in the process of selection of project interventions, they felt their involvement was not as successful, as decisions were often reached through compromise among all stakeholders.

Implementing partners – including the PMO- report that UNDP project managers have been ‘tirelessly engaged’ in stakeholder coordination, the project implementation process and resource mobilisation. Implementing partners themselves have remarkably strong ownership of their intervention results.

Donors report that they have been kept very well informed on project developments and have always been invited to join UNDP in project site visits. Donors have visited Gaza projects during the evaluation period.

3.3 Efficiency

3.1 To what extent has the programme delivered its expected results to date, including budget allocation and cost-efficiency of activities? And in case of challenges/issues, has the programme been able to solve these in an efficient way?

Finding: The program generally delivered its expected results despite funding constraints and occupation-related challenges through a judicious use of cost-efficient implementation strategies and careful management of risk

TARABOT aimed to align its actual spending with planned spending, demonstrate cost-efficiency through strategic partnerships, flexible budget management, an efficient implementation modality, and proactive risk management.

Financial management

The financial documentation available to the evaluation reflected alignment between actual and planned spending. Documents shows clear allocation of funds per budget category, ensuring that resources are directed appropriately to various programme components.

The budget allocation and cost-efficiency of activities have been closely monitored and adjusted to reflect the available funding and exchange rate fluctuations. demonstrating proactive financial management to ensure efficient resources use⁴⁹.

However, beneficiaries in Jayyus, Qalqiliya had some concerns about the timeliness of payments (disbursements) which "was a barrier especially given the wartime circumstances and low income". This delay in financial transactions impacted the smooth implementation of activities, suggesting a need for improved financial management to ensure that resources are not only allocated strategically but also disbursed promptly to maximize their impact.

Cost efficiency of implementation modalities

The Operational Manual was a key tool in assuring a consistent and transparent process of selection of implementing partners, the best possible beneficiary selection process with consideration of time, and a transparent intervention selection process with the involvement of the PMU and technical experts from the relevant ministries. The choice of Expressions of Interest was also strategic. It allowed the government and its ministries to assert leadership and control at the critical point of sector choice and intervention content to ensure alignment with national priorities. It promoted – but did not mandate – the formation of collaborative consortiums, which led to operational efficiencies and cost savings.

The roll-out of the EOI process with implementing partners, beneficiaries and other stakeholders was innovative, enabling the utilization of implementing partner skills in beneficiary selection and the structured engagement of stakeholders and the Steering Committee (SC).

Resulting interventions were well structured and often collaborative, multi-partner initiatives, maximising impact with the limited resources available, re-allocating surplus funds creatively within project budgets, reducing operational costs through collective procurement (Area C), and the full exploitation of local skills and knowledge through sharing of skills and technical knowledge during implementation through the regular project committee meetings in Area C and East Jerusalem, and the knowledge sharing platforms created in Gaza to improve synergies and multiplier effects. As one respondent highlighted, "Information sharing reduced costs for them".

Incoming staff to the PMO, although not familiar with all the details of the TARABOT design and implementation history reported that TARABOT "is a rapid model, as efficient as the private sector and civil society that has enabled the PMO and our new planning efforts to keep moving forward."

The program's operational manual specifies that yearly priorities, target areas, sectors, and budget allocations are submitted to the Steering Committee by January 7th and endorsed by January 17th. This systematic approach ensures that the annual work plan is effectively integrated with the overall implementation strategy. As detailed in the Operational Manual, "The PMO, with the support of Programme technical experts and UNDP, will review national planning documents and analyse ongoing funding and projects through the PMO's aid coordination platform".

Challenges to cost efficiency

The project faced challenges related to the mobilization of additional resources. Delays in the inception phase were attributed to the need for in-depth analysis and resource mobilization efforts that did not

⁴⁹ For example the Annex A – TARABOT Sectoral Priorities document noted that "following discussions with the Steering Committee and after conducting a budget analysis to manage a potential decrease in financial resources for the whole programme due to the EUR-USD exchange rate, it was agreed that some resources under the programmable amounts for each targeted area under the programme (East Jerusalem, Gaza, and Area C) will be put aside for contingency purposes".

always yield the expected contributions from other donors, an extensive consultation period with the PMO to define clear operational procedures and criteria for interventions, and the ongoing operational delays created by the context of COVID 19 which impacted movement and necessitated increased virtual coordination mechanisms to be developed.

Budget constraints were a significant challenge, particularly in the inception phase. The initial budget was deemed unrealistic, with expectations that other donors would contribute. This led to a longer inception phase and the need for a no-cost extension. The resource mobilization efforts were only partially successful, resulting in delays and the need to reallocate resources within the existing budget. There was no Communication and Advocacy plan developed to address this issue more efficiently and effectively.

Managing risk

In terms of risk management, the programme has executed robust mechanisms to identify and mitigate potential risks. Regular risk assessments and the establishment of a risk log are integral parts of the monitoring plan, allowing for proactive management of financial and operational risks. as highlighted in TARABOT Expression of Interest - Gaza + Evaluation Criteria. The project also benefits from the oversight of a Steering Committee to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and to avoid duplication of efforts⁵⁰.

Challenges

Despite overall efficiencies in budget management and cost-efficient implementation approaches, the program faced significant challenges in securing necessary permits and managing delays caused by external factors such as political barriers and occupation-related issues. UNDP facilitated the entry of project materials into Gaza but in the West Bank, daily difficulties in accessing project sites due to political barriers impacted significantly on efficiency, creating significant delays in implementation, reflecting the coercive and difficult environment in which the program operates. This underscores the strength of UNDP and the PMU's capacity to utilize adaptive management strategies to maintain delivery. The program, through the judicious use of its own resources and networks, managed to mitigate these issues and is on track to deliver final activities for farmers in Area C.

Area C implementations issues

- 'Permits were withdrawn or not issued on time'
- 'Obtaining installation permits posed a significant hurdle'
- 'We faced challenges getting materials into the land and high transportation costs'
- KIIs and FGDs

The genocide in Gaza introduced unforeseen obstacles with both UNDP and partner staff killed⁵¹ and project equipment destroyed, or solar panels re-used for emergency electricity production in camps hosting displaced people. The war impacted implementation activities throughout the West Bank as the Israeli authorities introduced additional movement restrictions, fragmenting the landscape even further and reducing access to project sites.

⁵⁰ Annex iv. Results and Resources Framework final.

⁵¹ The manager of the packaging unit was killed.

A significant challenge was less than expected levels of funding, which weakened programme impact. To address this, the programme has implemented measures such as re-programming according to the available funds, prioritizing actions which can have a quicker and deeper impact, with on-going resource mobilization efforts with potential additional donors.

The lower-than-expected levels of funding obliged the programme to limit choices and focus on a limited number of interventions.

3.2 To what extent has the allocation and use of resources to target groups taken into account the need to prioritize certain groups, who are specially marginalized and/or discriminated against?

Finding: TARABOT interventions have quite successfully targeted women, youth and disabled people as specific groups but have not yet been successful in mainstreaming the excluded and vulnerable more broadly into intervention design. In particular, the programme has not yet designed interventions with a clear gender transformative dimension.

The intervention in Qalqiliya experienced funding crunches during implementation. The budget allocated to the nine institutions wasn't sufficient to cover all the necessary requirements in reality. Primary activities like road rehabilitation completed 6-7 kilometres even though 12-13 kilometres were actually needed in the area. Additional funding of about USD 100,000 have been provided by UNDP/PAPP to meet the set target, but this hasn't been implemented yet. Key aspects of the overall intervention, such as connecting key agricultural lands, were prioritized to ensure the minimum necessary linkage between activities and to enhance impact.

The allocation and use of resources under the TARABOT programme have been directed to vulnerable communities which have included marginalized and traditionally excluded groups including women, youth, and people with disabilities.

Project interventions intend to improve the access of vulnerable communities to social and economics investments and improve their skills to use these resources. As stated in the programme document, "Interventions in these areas must be multisectoral to address complex challenges and overlapping needs...Where women tend to experience higher socio-economic vulnerability...interventions towards resilience-building must adopt a gender-responsive approach."⁵²

This approach, which is inclusive in its aim, has not been efficiently mainstreamed in interventions, but has rather targeted women, youth, and people with disabilities with their own interventions. Indeed, out of the thirty-five interventions implemented only four have specifically targeted women and disabled people, three in Gaza and 1 in East Jerusalem.

The gender analysis of projects carried out in Gaza by the gender expert hired in 2022 provides some useful insights into the extent of gender mainstreaming and inclusion in the interventions designed. Of the 13 projects designed in Gaza, only 2 were rated as gender inclusive, 1 was gender-sensitive, 4 were gender blind and 6 were gender neutral.⁵³ Actions plans developed for the Gaza interventions were adjusted to ensure gender integration going forward but one week later, the war started. The gender expert has developed gender sensitive indicators for integration across TARABOTs initiatives which UNDP has committed to incorporating into programme performance systems.

⁵² TARABOT - Annual Progress Report 2021.

⁵³ Action Plan for Gender Inclusion in TARABOT Programme, January 2023 – 31 July 2024

The impact of the work of the consultant has resulted in, for example, private sector interest in establishing a Women’s Business Association, and in some agricultural value chains, ways are being explored for women to move from their current role as labourers into administrative and decision-making roles. A more equitable distribution of roles within value chains and processes was the focus of the gender inquiry so that transformative change in gender roles could be achieved. Additional recommendations from the consultant include training for PMU staff in gender perspectives, for UNDP technical staff, and for gender to be fully integrated into planning and implementation documents and frameworks.

3.3 To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the desired results?

Finding: The allocation of financial resources in the TARABOT program has been strategic and has well supported results achievement. Allocation of human resources was less successful in this respect and there is room for improvement by increasing resources available and clarifying roles and responsibilities.

Financial Allocations

The only complete figures we have for global financial allocations per intervention area and across outputs come from the financial report of 2023. Below are the percentage allocations per output and per intervention area, (see table 3 below), and some findings from focus group discussions of the baseline survey.

As the table show, the allocations are quite evenly distributed across Area C, Gaza, and East Jerusalem with a much lower percentage for the PMO Ramallah.

Table 3: Financial Allocation

Intervention areas	Total funds allocated	Percentage of budget
Distribution per intervention area		
Area C	1,600,314.1	33.4%
East Jerusalem	1,180,610	24.6%
Gaza	1,400,864	29.2%
PMO Ramallah	608,272	12.7%
Total	4,790,060	100%
Distribution per output		
One	4,181,788.1	87%
Two	608,272	13%
Total	4,790,060.10	100%

However, a beneficiary survey conducted as part of the Baseline study reported that only "half of the organizations focusing on Gaza confirmed having sufficient funds, compared to 41.7% in Area C and 26.7% in East Jerusalem"⁵⁴. Several factors could account for this including price fluctuations impacting materials and equipment between intervention design and implementation

⁵⁴ TARABOT Baseline Report, 2023.

, unforeseen adjustments created by lack of availability of materials on the market, increase in costs due to delays of getting equipment and materials into Gaza (or into Area C), and irregularity of permit issuance for farmers, implementing partners and the private contractors involved in implementation.

Human resource allocations

The staffing levels in the PMU have been far from ideal. The project budget included allocations for

- A project manager
- Three project coordinators
- One MEAL officer

The project manager was not in place until June 2021, 18 months after the project launch, and the two project coordinators for the West Bank not until March 2022. During the entire period up to the MTR, there was a significant gap in the M&E staffing, which proved the biggest challenge to the assessment of results. The RBM is not positioned or designed for undertaking project level M&E work. RBM staff are responsible for supporting the evaluation work on 35-45 projects simultaneously. The PMU should be adequately staffed to be able to support efficient and effective implementation and measurement of results. Limited staffing has directly impacted the efficiency of overall programme performance management in the areas of data collection, tracking, and reporting.

Expertise

Under output one, the expert skills and knowledge used in implementation – including the gender expert – were all local. This is a good strategic choice as all project partners are familiar with the operating context and factor the challenges detailed above under 3.1 into their intervention designs and working methods.

However, the delay in providing gender expertise to the programme may have negatively influenced the outcomes and emerging impact towards transformative resilience. We do not have access to the work plans from Gaza which were adjusted to ensure better gender integration, and these documents may no longer exist. But it is possible that more equitable gender roles could have been developed within the interventions allowing for greater empowerment for the women involved and possibly promoting higher levels of access to skills training across interventions.

Time efficiency of implementation

While activities at the beneficiary level were carried out in a timely manner, issues related to staffing, extensive consultations, and unforeseen events contributed to delays in overall time efficiency. According to survey data, an overwhelming 79% of beneficiaries—nearly 4 out of 5—expressed satisfaction with the speed of implementation. Implementers echoed this sentiment, with some even describing the project as being as efficient as the private sector. However, beyond the direct implementation of activities, the project experienced delays from its original timeline due to a combination of internal and external factors.

Internal Factors:

1. **Staff turnover and delays in staffing:** the TARABOT program experienced challenges with staffing, including high staff turnover early on and delays in recruitment, which hindered continuity and momentum. The process of transitioning finding qualified personnel to fill key roles affected project timelines and delayed the effective implementation of planned activities. The RBM officer who

worked on the project during planning left UNDP/PAPP and the current project manager was only hired more than a year into kick-off.

2. **Prolonged period in operationalizing and defining resilience:** A significant delay occurred due to the prolonged time required for all stakeholders to operationalize the concept of resilience and align it with national strategies. This required extensive coordination and consultations, slowing down the project's ability to implement interventions in line with its objectives.

External Factors:

1. **COVID-19 Pandemic:** The global COVID-19 pandemic caused severe disruptions to TARABOT's progress. Lockdowns, travel restrictions, and health risks delayed fieldwork, community engagement, and service delivery. The pandemic also created new socio-economic challenges that demanded immediate attention, redirecting resources and efforts from long-term goals.
2. **Delays in Israeli approvals:** The Israeli occupation posed major logistical hurdles, especially in gaining necessary approvals to deliver materials and aid to Area C and Gaza. Israeli restrictions on movement and the blockade of Gaza resulted in prolonged delays in transporting supplies and executing key project activities, severely impacting the project timeline.
3. **War on Gaza:** The recent escalation of the war in Gaza further exacerbated delays. The conflict not only caused physical damage to infrastructure but also diverted resources towards emergency relief, postponing development-focused initiatives. This destabilized efforts in Gaza and impacted the overall project's ability to progress in a timely manner.

3.4 To what extent were resources used to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular?

Finding: While the programme has addressed social and economic equalities in a deliberate and very successful way, the programme continues to face challenges in using resources to address gender inequalities.

Reducing social and economic inequalities

The programme's multi-sectoral interventions aimed at improving socio-economic conditions and supporting national leadership of the overall development process, aligned with promoting equitable access to opportunities and resources and addressing some of the strategic issues associated with the policy and planning of the development process in Palestine.

The programme has a strong focus on sectors that directly impact livelihoods and socio-economic resilience, helping to reduce economic inequalities. Interventions invested in youth, who suffer the highest levels of unemployment, rural farming and Bedouin communities in Area C and Gaza, whose productive abilities are constrained by lack of access to economic resources, merchants and other small-scale entrepreneurs in East Jerusalem whose business were severely compromised by COVID and the ongoing restrictions on access to the Old City,⁵⁵ and private sector associations in Gaza who helped to create a more enabling environment for current and new entrepreneurs. Creating economic opportunities was a significant focus, aiming to enhance skills and technical capacities, particularly for youth and women. This is evident in the Gaza expression of interests, where major emphasis was placed on enhancing beneficiaries' skills and technical capacities, coupled with services to expand local industries.

⁵⁵ Discussions with merchants and housing beneficiaries all noted the reduction in the number of parking spaces available in East Jerusalem as part of a deliberate policy to discourage shoppers and tourists from spending money there.

"The goal of the EOI was to promote inclusive and sustainable development in the agricultural sector for increasing the 'earning power' as a powerful tool to fight poverty and stimulate economic growth"⁵⁶. The sector allocations in the first EOI are also indicative of this focus (see Table 4 below).

Table 4: Sector allocations in Round One of Expressions of Interest February 2022

Sector/Area	Total (USD)
Agriculture	1,150,000
Water	450,000
Local Governance	250,000
Employment	983,715
Culture Tourism	350,000
Support to CSO's	0
Total (USD)	3,183,715

The programme also aimed to reduce social inequalities through investments in cultural institutions who train children and youth in performing arts and sport activities, promoting connections across communities, and promoting the transfer of skills across the social divides in the city. Evidence of the overall outcomes of these endeavours have been presented in the effectiveness section.

Changing genderized roles

The strategic intent of integrating gender into the program was significantly hindered by the delayed involvement of gender expertise, which occurred after most interventions had already been planned and implemented. Despite this setback, efforts to incorporate gender considerations into the interventions were well-organized and executed, mainly through training and capacity-building activities. The gender consultant emphasized that while the project had been designed with a comprehensive approach to gender integration, there was a need to review program design and intervention documents to identify any gender gaps. They stated, "I collaborated to provide recommendations and suggestions to address these gaps."

The gender consultant provided training on gender integration, which was well-received, particularly by the private sector. However, challenges arose due to external factors such as the conflict in Gaza, leading to a halt in progress across all operational areas.

Women were frequently targeted in the program, with specific interventions aimed at empowering women. One respondent stated, "We focused on gender issues and prioritized training women in specific skills like mobile repair and film production". However, despite these efforts, the program faces foundational challenges in integrating gender across all sectors.

The programme's inclusion of a Gender Advisor at a late stage in the implementation has meant that changes recommended have not yet been incorporated into the interventions or the results framework, including the training of PMU staff in a gender perspective and other UNDP technical staff who provide strategic support to the programmes.

⁵⁶ ANNEX C – Expression of Interest – Gaza.

3.5 To what extent have the implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?

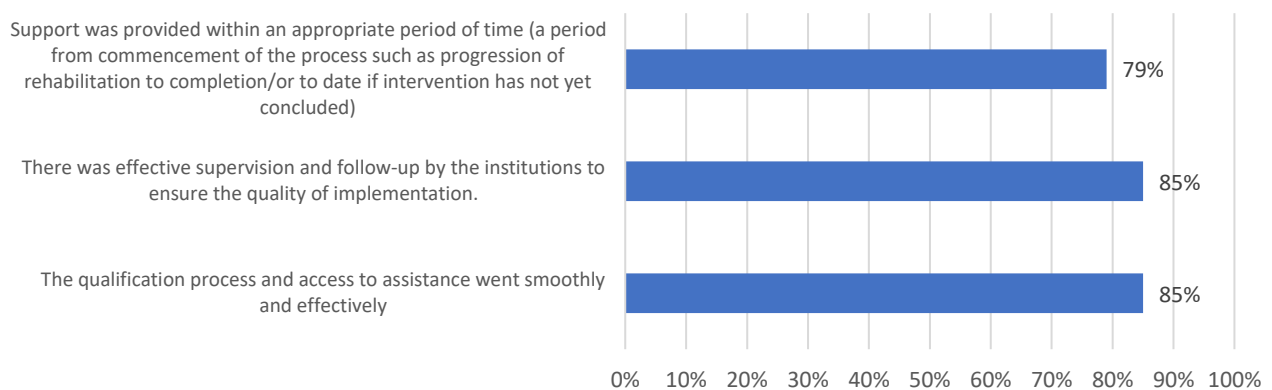
Finding: The implementation strategy and execution of the TARABOT Programme have supported some impressive, high-value outcomes at reasonable cost. In short, significant value for money has been achieved by the programme.

In 3.1 above, we explained the approaches employed by TARABOT to minimize waste of programme resources and maximise productivity. Here, we focus on the outcomes generated by these approaches which show that the project has been able to deliver value for money through the strategic prioritization and cost-saving measures employed.

Beneficiaries in focus group discussions reflected on their experience with the efficiency aspects of the programme delivery. Payment delays and difficulties in material transportation due to external factors, like Israeli imposed movement restrictions and political instability, were evident. These obstacles occasionally hindered the timely execution of the interventions. This indicates that despite some logistical challenges, the project efficiently utilized its resources to achieve substantial and lasting outcomes. Key informants also noted the significant role played by 'collective efforts' promoted by the implementation modality. Farmers reported the presence of more than one NGO in the field at the same time working together, which inspired them to mobilize their own collective efforts. This NGO collaboration was, for them and the NGOs involved, an innovative and creative departure from previous experience where one NGO was responsible for the entire implementation.

The beneficiary survey conducted by AWRAD as part of the evaluation asked questions on the beneficiaries' experience of efficiency of the project implementation process. The figure 7 below shows that an overwhelming 79%, or nearly four out of every 5 beneficiaries was satisfied with the speed of implementation. This level of satisfaction is even a little higher on the issues of effectiveness of supervision and beneficiary selection process overall.

Figure 10: Beneficiary feedback on efficiency issues during implementation



These findings, while remarkably positive, show that improvement can still be made to the efficiency of the process in all these areas.

3.6 To what extent has the programme adopted the right approaches to ensure results achievement?

Finding: The programme approaches have well supported result achievement with the use of the innovative and creative modality of EOIs. This method had distinct advantages in empowering local

implementing partners (IPs), aligning the programme with national priorities, meeting community-specific needs and engaging diverse stakeholders.

The efficiency of implementation modalities, particularly the EOI, was evident in the detailed process outlined in the project documents. For instance, in Gaza, the SC identified agriculture, water, and employment as critical sectors, followed by extensive consultations with stakeholders to ensure decisions were based on participatory processes. This approach allowed the programme to streamline resources and focus on impactful areas. As noted, "Stakeholders included civil society, industrial unions, and the private sector, ensuring a holistic understanding of context and possible responses."⁵⁷ Similarly, the process in Area C was marked by technical consultations and field visits to validate interventions, ensuring they addressed real community needs efficiently: "Field visits were organized to validate the scope of intervention and meet the farmers directly."⁵⁸ Moreover, "strengthens the role of local IPs and meets the needs of specific communities."⁵⁹ This approach allowed for tailored interventions that addressed localized issues, thereby enhancing the relevance and impact of the projects.

- **Budget constraints and prioritization led to selective interventions:** The program operated under significant budget constraints, which affected its ability to address all necessary activities comprehensively.
- **Strategic allocation of limited resources increased efficiency:** The program demonstrated high efficiency in utilizing its limited resources by concentrating efforts in specific areas rather than spreading them too thinly. The partnership with Ministry of Agriculture in Qalqiliya focused the available budget on a limited area, investing approximately \$1.5 million in about two thousand dunams of the total area which covers around 7000 to 8000 dunams in Jayyus. This strategic concentration of resources ensured maximized effectiveness and impact, as emphasized by a key informant: "If we were to scatter it across the entire West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, its impact would not be noticeable. We tried to focus on this area as much as possible." This focused approach allowed the program to meet objectives efficiently and overcome the impact of financial constraints.
- **Flexibility and collaboration improved budget utilization:** Regular reviews of the budget and tracking achievements through constant conversations between partner organizations and UNDP allowed for flexible reallocations to maximize efficiency. For example, when a surplus was identified in the media budget, it was reallocated to provide farmers with protective uniforms instead of adding another solar energy system, thereby addressing immediate needs efficiently. This adaptability in budget management ensured that resources were directed toward the most impactful areas.

The importance of in-depth analysis to support impact: Although there were delays in the project's initiation due to the need for comprehensive analysis during its inception phase, these delays ultimately contributed to the program's success. As noted by a donor representative, "There was a delay in the inception phase, which was marked and flagged, but there were reasons for that. The reason was that the analysis and in-depth analysis were needed to create a successful program." This underscores the project's commitment to ensuring buy-in, evidence-based decision-making, and exhaustive consultations during the planning stage.

Project management invested significant effort in operationalizing the concept of resilience, with substantial involvement from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). These efforts were particularly challenging given the various disruptions during the project timeline, including the outbreak of COVID-19

⁵⁷ (Annex C – Expression of Interest – Gaza).

⁵⁸ (Annex B – Expression of Interest - Area C).

⁵⁹ TARABOT - Project Document.

and the seven-day war in Gaza in May 2021. Despite these challenges, the program's thorough approach to planning and stakeholder engagement has been pivotal to its overall success.

While the multi-partner collaborations were innovative and impactful, the program recognized that "organizations require more guidance and support to address gaps and challenges strategically and collaboratively."⁶⁰ As a result, the project prioritized working collaboratively with a diverse set of partners. However, this approach revealed that managing multiple partnerships demands more time and effort from all involved parties. These lessons learned underscore the importance of providing adequate support and strategic guidance to partners to ensure effective collaboration and successful outcomes.

3.4 Coherence

4.1 To what extent is the program coherent with other UNDP and other actors' interventions? This includes complementarity, harmonisation and coordination with others which is adding value in the larger transformative resilience framework.

Finding: TARABOT exhibits a high degree of coherence with other UNDP and external actors' interventions, ensuring complementarity, harmonization, and coordination that contribute to the larger transformative resilience framework.

TARABOT complements various UNDP projects by aligning its interventions to the extent possible with ongoing initiatives across the West Bank and Gaza. For example, TARABOT's work in improving agricultural infrastructure - rehabilitating roads and installing solar-powered water pumps - supports the "Facilitating Access to Infrastructure Resilience in Area C and East Jerusalem (FAIR)" project. Similarly, TARABOT's vocational training and capacity-building efforts, particularly for women and youth, enhance the objectives of the "Start-Up Economic Empowerment and Development (SEEDS)" program. In East Jerusalem, TARABOT's cultural initiatives align with the "Safeguarding Cultural Heritage in the Old City of Jerusalem" project, strengthening community engagement and preserving cultural identity. Additionally, TARABOT's promotion of sustainable energy solutions complements the "Photo Voltaic Solar System for the Rafah Wastewater Treatment and Reuse Plants (RWWTP)" project, contributing to environmental sustainability and improved water management.

Moreover, the program's coherence is reinforced by active coordination with other actors, as evidenced by the collaboration between TARABOT and UN partner organizations like FAO. FAO's interventions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip included protecting fishing livelihoods and agriculture-based livelihoods. For fishing, FAO provides essential equipment. FAO also supports the installation of solar-powered pumping systems for irrigation wells, as well as solar energy units. Additionally, FAO rehabilitates underground wells, rainwater harvesting cisterns, and irrigation ponds, alongside the repair of conveyance pipes at the farm level.⁶¹ TARABOT complements these efforts by helping to improve the income of fisher households through sustainable ice production, promoting economic growth of small farmers, and land protection and rehabilitation.

This strategic coherence is further strengthened through implementing partnerships with specialized local institutions that have deep experience in various developmental fields. These institutions integrate TARABOT's support with their ongoing or previous interventions, ensuring that the program's activities complement other projects in the targeted areas. For example, The Economic & Social Development Centre built its intervention within TARABOT to complement its projects focused on fishers in Gaza, leveraging its deep understanding of the community's needs and its ongoing assessment work of the

⁶⁰ Gaza, EOI.

⁶¹ (FAO Palestine - Humanitarian Response Plan 2022).

needs of this target group. Another example of strategic coherence is seen in Ma'an Centre's intervention in the rural area of Tulkarem, near the areas targeted by TARABOT. Funded by the Australian government, Ma'an Centre's activities, including the rehabilitation of agricultural lands and roads, water pipelines for farmer groups, and the construction and rehabilitation of agricultural wells, align closely with TARABOT's initiatives. This complementary approach maximizes the impact in the region. Additionally, Ma'an Centre's work in Gaza with poultry farmers under TARABOT can be viewed as a second phase of a previous intervention conducted in partnership with Danchurch Aid, where the earlier phase involved research and prototyping, and TARABOT facilitated the full implementation.

3.5 Impact

5.1 How has the programme contributed to strengthening the resilience of the targeted communities, improving access to socio-economic services, and increasing social cohesion and engagement in these communities?

Finding: The TARABOT program has made modest but important contributions to strengthening community resilience in the geographical areas targeted. Addressing the gaps highlighted under the effectiveness section will help to improve the resilience of the communities targeted.

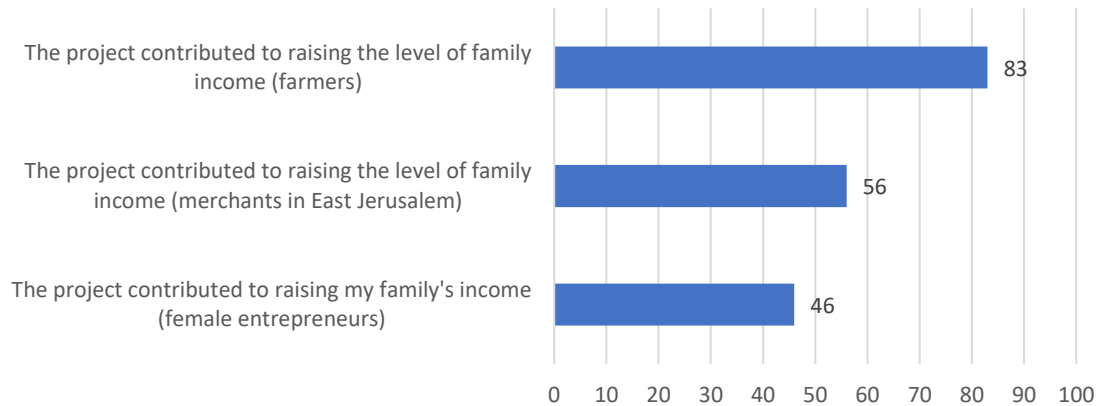
The TARABOT Programme has made modest but notable strides in enhancing community resilience through improving socio-economic conditions, fostering social cohesion, and promoting national leadership of the development process. It could also be argued that TARABOT's intervention in the Qalqiliya area has also begun incrementally to change the political economy of Jayyus by improving access to resources and the skills needed to use them and that the programme has contributed to creating a stronger social contract between the Palestinian government through its ministries, directorates, Palestinian civil society and citizens.

TARABOT has achieved this across its targeted regions of Gaza, Area C and East Jerusalem and national government institutions. The programme's focus on the foundational and growth sectors of agriculture, water, culture, tourism, and employment has led to tangible improvements detailed in the effectiveness section, such as increased agricultural productivity, better access to essential services, and the empowerment of marginalized groups, including women and youth. Initiatives like the establishment of cooperative associations and the implementation of solar energy systems have not only boosted local economies but also strengthened community bonds and promoted sustainable development. Additionally, the program has successfully integrated its efforts with other UNDP interventions, creating synergies that amplify its overall impact.

Impacts of programme interventions are evidenced in interviews with beneficiaries, the observations of implementing partners, and the quantitative evidence from the beneficiary survey. Programme interventions have contributed to the following impacts:

- **Enhanced food security and livelihoods** by improving income from agricultural production and increasing business revenues. Survey data confirms that farmers and entrepreneurs have achieved increases in incomes, with farmers being most positively impacted and female entrepreneurs the least.

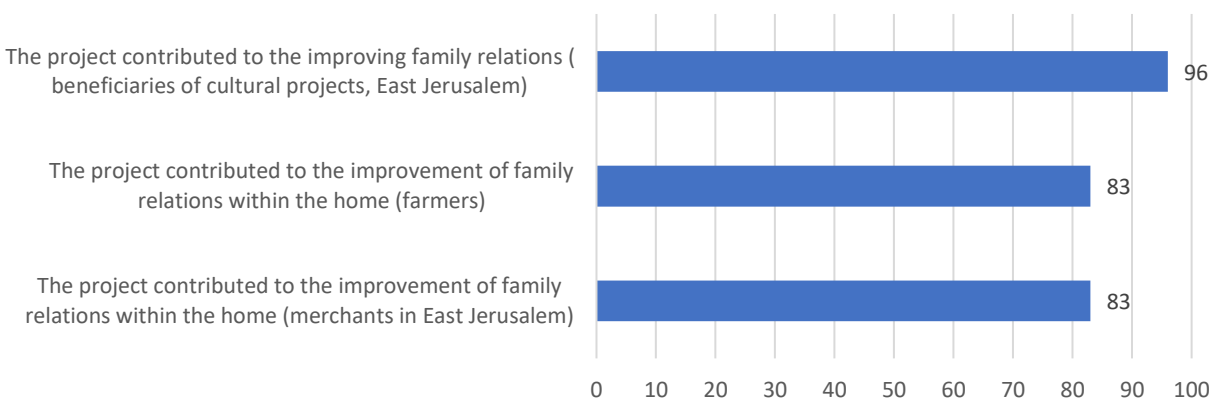
Figure 11: Beneficiaries reporting increases in income- all figures in percentages - (to a high extent and to some extent)



- Increased social cohesion.** There is strong evidence for the increasing social engagement and cohesion among farming communities in area C, the private sector in Gaza, and in East Jerusalem, across the socio-economic divide, enhancing social connections, sense of community belonging, confidence and breaking social anxiety for children involved in cultural and sports pursuits in East Jerusalem. Cultural projects in East Jerusalem had a particularly significant impact, as the figure below shows.

"This was the first time since long ago that we convene collectively and reflect in such a manner" – beneficiary, Gaza

Figure 12: Reported improvement in family relations across beneficiary groups - responses applicable to a high and some extent

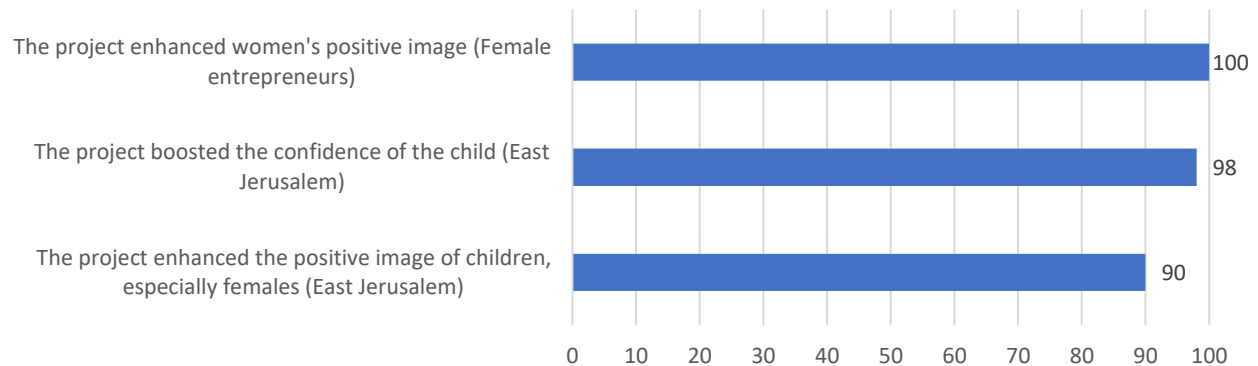


- Models for disengaging from dependence on Israel:** Using solar energy, improving access to the skills and knowledge needed to navigate Israeli housing policies in East Jerusalem to get to affordable housing for young couples. The International Peace and Cooperation Centre (IPCC) contributed by engaging in activities that countered restrictive Israeli plans, promoting urban development and enhancing housing accessibility which are crucial for socio-economic resilience and producing introductory documents *"Analysing the planning process, the schemes, the regulations and Impediments for urban regeneration of the city centre and Inner neighbourhoods"*
- Personal empowerment:** Beneficiaries reported personal empowerment across different dimensions including improved self-image and levels of confidence.

"The intervention with solar energy not only saved money but also allowed farmers to be independent from Israeli water, reducing the cost by about 75%" - Implementing partner

Survey data shows that this has been achieved at an extremely high level with the beneficiary groups of female entrepreneurs in general and children and youth in East Jerusalem.

Figure 13: Reported levels of personal empowerment across beneficiary groups and geographical locations - all figures in percentages - responses applicable to a high and some extent



While the data presented above highlights the highlights of the programmes' impact on resilience, the data on outcome achievement – which are a pre-condition impact – has some gaps which led us to conclude that programme impact is notable but still modest. Addressing the gaps, which are highlighted under the effectiveness section will be critical for ensuring that positive impacts are sustained and that all community segments are effectively engaged and supported.

5.2 How can TARABOT leverage its impact through stronger interlinkages and complementarities with other UNDP (and potentially other) interventions?

Finding: TARABOT has established interlinkages and complementarities with various UNDP interventions and other project activities which have leveraged TARABOTs impact in supporting transformative resilience in targeted communities, amplifying its overall impact on the community. Opportunities remain to improve impact through linkages and complementarities.

The TARABOT program has leveraged its impact by complementing, building on and integrating with other UNDP interventions, particularly in sectors of agriculture, water, and employment, aligning closely with national and local development priorities.⁶² The approach includes not just immediate agricultural support but also broader economic development and infrastructure improvement, such as water and energy systems, which are crucial for long-term resilience and productivity.⁶³ Another case in point is the attempt to increase access to affordable housing in Jerusalem an initiative which complements other UNDP efforts by directly addressing the infrastructural and regulatory challenges faced by the Palestinian community in East Jerusalem.⁶⁴

⁶² For instance, in the EoI for Gaza, TARABOT is described as enhancing "local service delivery and socioeconomic activities for households and communities," emphasizing complementarity with other development efforts in the area.

⁶³ TARABOT Expression of Interest. - Gaza + Evaluation Criteria

⁶⁴ Other examples of project activities being integrated with broader UNDP efforts, which synergize its overall impact., The MAAAN Development Centre's collaboration in land rehabilitation aligns with UNDP's sustainable development goals, ensuring both environmental and agricultural benefits. This is highlighted by their joint work with the Ministry of Agriculture and local councils, emphasizing a unified approach to sustainable agricultural practices, which is a core component of broader UNDP initiatives aiming at environmental conservation and community development. Furthermore, the integration of training programs and capacity building for desert guardians under TARABOT, managed by Bedouins without Borders, complements UNDP's emphasis on community empowerment and skills development. This interlinkage is particularly significant as it directly contributes to the sustainable management and promotion of desert tourism, a sector critical for the economic development of marginalized communities⁶⁴

The strong lead taken by the government in defining intervention sectors and initiatives helps to ensure that TARABOT's efforts are synergistic with government priorities and other donor interventions.⁶⁵

TARABOT's own impact has been enhanced by subsequent complementary efforts. One such example is TARABOT's contribution to the revitalization of local markets in East Jerusalem particularly in the context of online sales and e-payments, through essential marketing training. This impact was complemented by subsequent initiatives that reinforced the skills gained during the project, demonstrating the importance of continuous adaptation and support. One respondent noted, "The project fostered lasting relationships between merchants and various organizations. This network facilitates continuous support, providing merchants access to marketing expertise and platforms to showcase their products".

Other opportunities have been identified during the evaluation which suggests that TARABOT's impact can be further leveraged by complementing similar energy-saving initiatives, cultural activities, establishing of cooperative farming associations, potentially coordinated with other donor or UNDP interventions.

Gaps

While TARABOT has formed effective linkages with other UNDP programs and local initiatives, challenges remain, particularly in ensuring the sustainability and scalability of these efforts. There are, however, limits to the efficiency and effectiveness of multi partner collaboration, which require a significant investment in coordination time, which for a relatively small programme like TARABOT will be challenging. But more could be done to more fully realize the potential synergies between TARABOT and interventions of UNDP and other donors, while at the same time reducing any duplication of effort.

Donor structures exist (LACS, Sector Working Groups) which could be tapped for information on other ongoing donor initiatives. Expanding the scope of partnerships to be more inclusive of the private sector to diversify the expertise and resources available, enhancing the programme's ability to address challenges more effectively could also be explored.

5.3 What are the effects (positive or negative) of the interventions on the targeted communities so far? And are any population groups more affected than others?

Finding: The TARABOT interventions are positively impacting the targeted communities, but while the interventions have generally increased trust and satisfaction, disparities in impact across diverse groups suggest that the benefits are not equally distributed among all groups.

TARABOT's own reporting illustrates some of these positive effects, citing beneficiary satisfaction with the investments provided, increased trust in service providers, and improved community engagement in planning. Community members have reported a heightened sense of being heard and having their needs prioritised in national planning.⁶⁶

In Area C where the issue of access to natural resources has been mitigated through road rehabilitation and solar energy, the impact on the productivity of farming communities has been marked.⁶⁷ The East Jerusalem community has experienced a celebration of its cultural centring.⁶⁸ This has fostered a sense of unity and resilience among the local population.

⁶⁵ EoI document - Area C - Final

⁶⁶ "Engaging communities in project planning and decision-making has been pivotal in ensuring their perspectives are considered, fostering trust, legitimacy, and ownership among diverse stakeholders," TARABOT – Draft Progress Report # 1 – Area C – MAAN

⁶⁷ A community representative from Area C expressed satisfaction with the integrated rural development model, noting, "The focus on agriculture has not only improved our livelihoods but also ensured we have a sustainable water supply, which was a significant concern", TARABOT Annual Report, 2021

⁶⁸ "The project strengthened Jerusalem's cultural scene and reinforced our commitment to defending cultural institutions," key informant.

Despite these very positive community impacts, evidence also suggests that while projects are generally well-received, there is room for improvement in making engagement and benefits more inclusive. *"Despite the progress, women and youth report feeling less involved in the decision-making processes, which impacts their trust in these initiatives."*⁶⁹⁷⁰ This suggests that there may be need for more inclusive approaches that ensure all community voices are heard and integrated into project planning and implementation

3.6 Sustainability

6.1 To what extent is it likely that the achievements of the Programme can sustain after the end of donor funding? What are the main factors influencing this? What could be done to strengthen the possibility of sustainability of the interventions?

Finding: Programme resilience achievements have mixed sustainability potential. Factors which positively influence this are levels of ownership of the benefits, capacities of beneficiaries to maintain benefits, and the extent of the equitable spread of project benefits within communities. Negative factors are predominantly associated with the increasingly coercive operating environment but also include lack of funds to complete interventions which may negatively impact social cohesion in the communities targeted.

The Evaluation team has limited grounds for assessing the likelihood that TARABOT interventions will be viable over the long-term, when it is a productive activity, or whether the impact will be lasting for example for projects that support social cohesion, service provision, or capacity building. Beneficiary perspectives, implementing partner reporting and anecdotal evidence suggest a mix of situations. Activities centred on productive investments or paid services have more chance to continue – provided Israeli settlers or the Israeli army does not destroy the capital investments and reasonable levels of access can be negotiated with the Israeli authorities to access farming land in Area C -- than projects providing services (cultural, social, educational, housing, business) which do not have a stable revenue base and need a longer time to create an impact.

The benefits of projects which have provided skills and knowledge training, have allowed participants to experience cultural affirmation, and teamwork, are already institutionalized in some way in the individuals participating. The impact of some of these projects has been described in the Impact section above. These benefits are a key element of resilience building.

UNDP mandated that prospective implementing partners include sustainability assurances/asures in their project applications during the EOI process and some partners have been sensitive to these requirements. For example, the well operators/accountants know how to calculate water usage and cost so that reimbursements will sustain operations. It is not clear if similar arrangements have been made for the maintenance of roads and fencing, but beneficiaries have raised it as a concern.

To improve project sustainability, project managers must focus on sustainability assurances and measures as part of the EOI review process. The project application form could be adjusted to ask more focused questions on the intervention's social, environmental, technical, and economic sustainability and risks. Answers must be given due weight in the evaluation stage. Intervention partners should assess sustainability as part of their project reporting. If changes are made to the intervention design and

⁶⁹ Annex C – Expression of Interest – Gaza.

⁷⁰ Annex C – Expression of Interest – Gaza

allocation of budgets during implementation, project managers must satisfy themselves that these changes do not negatively affect the overall sustainability of the intervention.

In addition, lack of budgets for completing interventions, or to scale them up are negative factors for sustainability. For example, more land was rehabilitated in Area C than originally planned due to cost savings, but there was not enough money in the budget to procure and install all the needed water lines on the expanded area of rehabilitated land, leading to a potential inequality in the distribution of project benefits in the farming community.

TARABOT has been highly successful in raising additional funds for similar programmes in East Jerusalem and Area C, but these have not been directed at the TARABOT mechanism itself.

Future steps

6.2 To what extent does the Programme play a role in supporting dialogue with all different parties, including the engagement of beneficiaries, CSOs, CBOs and overall civic participation?

Finding: The Programme has successfully employed diverse mechanisms to support dialogue and engaged a wide range of stakeholders, fostering comprehensive civic participation and ensuring meaningful collaboration in project activities although challenges in resource allocations may limit its long-term effects.

The Programme's engagement strategies propose a proactive approach to involving various stakeholders in the planning and execution of activities. The MEAL plan proposes several mechanisms to gauge beneficiary satisfaction and input on service delivery as well as stakeholder surveys.⁷¹

In the event, the surveys planned under MEAL activities were not conducted (see more on this under effectiveness and efficiency), but the programme has facilitated inclusive community engagements and utilized technical advisory groups to maintain a high standard of participation and consultation throughout the intervention design and implementation process to support needs identification and efficient implementation.

“More resources would have been beneficial. A key issue was the lack of some machines, which we planned to acquire for the centre through funding agencies to make it fully operational.”- Partner reporting, Gaza

The programme has positively impacted civic participation and community resilience by fostering a sense of ownership among local stakeholders, though challenges in resource allocation and political constraints may have limited its long-term effects.

The lack of resources (smaller than ideal budgets) for the completion of agricultural, business enabling infrastructure and other project activities⁷² has been a persistent issue. This is compounded by the challenges of securing long-term agreements for project sites⁷³ and maintaining critical infrastructure like agricultural fencing and roads. Interventions have utilized mechanisms to engage different parties, fostering robust dialogue and ensuring the active participation of various stakeholders, including beneficiaries, CSOs, and CBOs. Implementing partners have engaged a range of CSOs in their implementation process.

⁷¹ MEAL plan. For example, a satisfaction and accountability survey were planned to be conducted bi-annually among all direct beneficiaries and a representative sample of end-beneficiaries, ensuring their voices are integrated into the Programme's processes and modifications. This was to be complemented by thematic reviews and learning sessions that further discuss annual findings and adjust strategies, accordingly, showcasing a dynamic and responsive engagement mechanism.

⁷² The Catholic Scouts group in East Jerusalem reported an overspend of 50% on their activities which they had to cover from their own funds.

⁷³ Bedouins Without Borders reported that a large part of their efforts was used to secure an appropriate site for the location of the Oasis tourist centre.

Overall, civic participation, has been an important pillar of TARABOTs implementation strategy. Several key informants highlighted that the Programme facilitated significant interactions between the Palestinian Authority (PA), ministries, and civil society. One stakeholder noted, *“Coordination efforts between the PA, the Prime Minister, and civil society have been enhanced through TARABOT. This is particularly crucial in Palestine where such coordination is often weak.”*

This level of engagement supports TARABOT’s sustainability, as it fosters a shared responsibility among stakeholders.

3.7 Cross-Cutting

7.1 To what extent has the Programme been effective and responsive in addressing gender equality, ‘Leave no one behind’ and human rights considerations?

Finding: The programme has been responsive to overall inclusion issues but did not consider gender as a strategic design issue. Well-designed attempts to address the issues mid-stream have been stymied by events. The more gender-sensitive implementing partners effectively addressed gender equality, but overall, the programmes response has only been weakly effective.

The programmes commitment to structured beneficiary involvement during the design phase have not supported the integration of the needs and perspectives of both male and female beneficiaries into intervention design (see Efficiency section 3.2 above for more analysis on this). The gender analysis undertaken in 2022 highlighted that "the project document is gender-sensitive but it does not distribute percentages of beneficiaries based on gender in the different interventions" which indicates an awareness of the need for gender inclusion, though further specificity was needed to ensure comprehensive integration.

A major challenge is the prevailing patriarchal culture and norms within the implementing organizations themselves, which sabotage the effective implementation of gender-sensitive interventions.⁷⁴ The practical aspects of gender integration have not yet been incorporated into interventions, but excellent groundwork has been done.⁷⁵

Some interventions specifically targeted women and the outcome and impact data in previous section show the powerful impact on the women involved. Some partners in Gaza also included gender-sensitive criteria in the selection of their beneficiaries, ensuring that women were given priority in situations where candidates had equal qualifications. *“If we had two beneficiaries with the same qualifications and conditions and one was a woman and the other a man, we favoured the woman,”* Gaza implementing partner. This is positive discrimination in action, which is a big step towards parity for women within projects and a remarkable step forward in the thinking process of NGO partners. Traditionally, women would not be chosen if men were available.

The Program's responsiveness to the 'Leave No One Behind' principle was demonstrated by its deliberate inclusion of vulnerable groups such as women, children, and those with disabilities. During the selection process, priority was given to households with large families, children, or members with disabilities. The programme also targeted disabled people in two interventions out of the 35.

⁷⁴ “There is limited interest in spreading awareness around gender power relations and decision-making at various levels within the local partner institutions” as highlighted in the TARABOT - Gender Action Plan - Gaza.

⁷⁵ TARABOT Gender Action Plan - Gaza outlines various interventions to ensure gender inclusion across sectors. “The plan was prepared to help guarantee gender inclusion in the three sectors targeted by the TARABOT program in Gaza Strip namely agriculture, water, and employment.”

7.2 How has the Programme contributed to addressing structural barriers to gender equality, influencing social norms and patriarchal attitudes?

Finding: The programme missed an opportunity to mainstream gender and develop gender transformative approaches within intervention design. As a result, the programme has not been able to strategically address structural barriers through adjusting gender roles within intervention design, although the more gender-sensitive implementing partners have done some effective work on this aspect.

The Programme's efforts to remedy this situation have been well designed through the production of a Gender Action plan with noticeably clear guidance. The actual implementation of the gender action plan was halted by the war in Gaza, and subsequent work in the West Bank was not completed.

Some work done by implementing partners has been instrumental in increasing women's participation in the workforce, particularly in sectors traditionally dominated by men. The intentional focus on gender equality in selection processes by some partners reflects a conscious effort to address structural barriers that typically limit women's access to opportunities.

From a resilience perspective, the integration of a gender transformative approach into overall programme design and the interventions produced is key to influencing systemic changes. The TARABOT - Gender Action Plan, has identified significant discrepancies in gender integration across partner institutions and notes the need for more specific interventions to ensure women's access to resources and decision-making processes. Cultural and social norms continue to pose significant barriers because gender perspectives are not central to programme or project design in general, and in TARABOT in particular.

7.3 What is the likely positive impact of the interventions towards changing traditional gender structures and upholding women's right to access services and actively engage in social cohesion?

Finding: The evaluation team has limited grounds to assess this.

Data shows that the impact of programme interventions focused on improving women's access to economic opportunities has been remarkable in terms of personal empowerment. However, a deeper gendered analysis of programme data would be needed to extract evidence of structural gender change. Impact data also shows that family relations have improved within households, but deeper analysis will be required to understand how actively women have engaged in this process.

7.4 To what extent did UNDP consider the needs of people living with disabilities within the Programme design and implementation? What are the recommendations to enhance inclusion?

Finding: The inclusion of people living with disabilities (PWDs) within the UNDP program design and implementation was limited, and the program struggled to comprehensively address their needs. While there were some efforts to consider the needs of PWDs, these were not consistently integrated into the program's overall design and execution.

UNDP's commitment to inclusion is evident in the program design, as it prioritizes mainstreaming the inclusion of PwDs. According to the TARABOT Project Document, "*In accordance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards, the programme will prioritise mainstreaming the inclusion of PwDs throughout the programme outputs via guidance and capacity building for IPs to ensure inclusion of PwDs in project activities*".

The commitment to inclusion in the TARABOT Programme was actualized through specific initiatives aimed at improving the lives of people with disabilities. Implementing partners with a commitment to inclusive programming.⁷⁶ were able to integrate the UNDP vision, with some interventions focused exclusively on PWDs.⁷⁷

UNDP programme staff affirmed that the intended elements of an inclusion strategy were not effectively operationalized. “Although the project intended to be inclusive, specific measures for people with disabilities were not sufficiently integrated into the program design” .and at “The focus was more on general vulnerabilities rather than the specific needs of people with disabilities.”

3.8 Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES) Analysis

The evaluation examined the degree to which gender and power relationships including structural and other causes that give rise to inequities, discrimination, and power relations, change as a result of the intervention using a process that is inclusive, participatory and respectful to all stakeholders. The following analysis provides information on the way in which TARABOT have considered gender in its programming.

The assessment of the project activities using the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES) revealed that an equal portion (50%) of activities were categorized as **Gender Blind**, indicating a lack of gender-specific considerations or strategies. These activities did not adequately address the distinct needs, roles, or challenges faced by different genders, missing opportunities to tackle gender inequalities. However, 50% of the activities showed some level of gender awareness, with 35% identified as **Gender Targeted** and 18% as **Gender Responsive**. This demonstrates progress toward integrating gender considerations, with certain activities actively aiming to include or benefit specific gender groups. Nonetheless, there is room for improvement, and future efforts should aim to advance more activities toward a Gender Responsive or even Gender Transformative approach to ensure equitable impact across all genders.

Table 5: GRES Scale

Scale	# of activities assessed	% of total activities assessed
Gender Negative	0	0%
Gender Blind	9	50%
Gender Targeted	6	33%
Gender Responsive	3	17%
Gender Transformative	0	0%
Grand Total	18	100%

Gender considerations were integrated into the project from the outset, with the project document establishing outputs marked as "GEN 2," indicating gender equality as a significant objective. ⁷⁸ The project document clearly outlines both structural factors that form the foundation for gender-based discrimination, as well as contemporary challenges at the time. Structural issues identified include the acknowledgment of power dynamics and other root causes that contribute to inequities, such as unequal opportunities. These inequalities manifest in several ways, including the disproportionate burden placed

⁷⁶ The Gaza Culture and Development Group (GCDG) specifically mentioned the inclusion of vulnerable groups, stating, "The Department of vocational training seeks to be a pioneer in this field as it has implemented many programs and projects that directly targeted families and vulnerable groups in the Palestinian society", TARABOT Progress Report # 1 – GAZA– GCDG.

⁷⁷ Atfaluna PWD hub for the hearing impaired in Gaza, Nur Al Ean Society for the Blind in East Jerusalem.

⁷⁸ The Gender Marker measures how much a project invests in gender equality and women’s empowerment. Select one for each output: GEN3 (Gender equality as a principal objective); GEN2 (Gender equality as a significant objective); GEN1 (Limited contribution to gender equality); GEN0 (No contribution to gender quality)

on women and girls, increased domestic violence against women, and reduced economic opportunities, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting movement restrictions. Additionally, the document recognizes the heightened socio-economic vulnerabilities women face in marginalized areas due to numerous factors.

The project effectively differentiates between the needs of women and men, emphasizing the necessity of adopting a gender-responsive approach in resilience-building interventions. As stated in the document: “Interventions towards resilience building must adopt a gender-responsive approach and recognize the importance of supporting women to overcome livelihood barriers and produce a more equitable flow of financial and non-financial opportunities and benefits, based on their own needs” (Taraboot Project Document, p. 9).

Moreover, the document highlights the significant limitations of data collection, particularly in relation to gender, and points out that these gaps are especially pronounced in targeted areas such as East Jerusalem, Area C, and Gaza. To address these challenges, the project plans to engage gender experts to bridge these gaps and ensure the program remains gender responsive. It further stipulates that this approach will be reflected in the structure of the PMU, where resilience, data, and gender experts, along with advisory groups, will support evidence-based, data-driven programming.

While the project demonstrated hands-on involvement in gender-responsive service provision, it faced challenges in fully integrating gender responsiveness at broader levels, such as policy-making and beneficiary engagement. Despite significant investments in assessing gender capacity at the NGO level and developing sectoral profiles in areas such as tourism, culture, employment, entrepreneurship, agriculture, and water, the project's efforts to mainstream gender were constrained by limited capacity and a lack of dedicated gender resources.

The project also struggled to incorporate sufficient gender-focused indicators into its results framework, which limited its ability to measure achievements and progress in gender equality. Although the framework included separate indicators for women and other marginalized groups, such as youth, as well as indicators related to the capacity of implementing partners (IPs) and service providers to integrate gender strategies, there was a lack of follow-up on these indicators. For example, the framework featured indicators like the number and type of service providers who improved their technical skills and gender capacities (1.5) and the percentage of women starting new businesses (1.8).

Despite its focus on gender responsiveness at the service provision level, the project engaged less comprehensively on gender at the policy-making level and with beneficiaries. For instance, while responsive interventions were provided to all beneficiaries in Gaza, this approach meant that women's needs were addressed incidentally, rather than through targeted, purposeful interventions. In contrast, initiatives in Area C and East Jerusalem were more intentionally gender-targeted, while at the policy level, gender responsiveness was less pronounced.

At the policy level, the project aimed to improve disaggregated data collection, analysis, and monitoring frameworks for resilience in collaboration with relevant national and international stakeholders. However, the project's capacity to fully mainstream gender at this level remained a challenge throughout its implementation. On the GRES scale the project was found to be:

Table 6: GRES analysis for the project

#	Aspect	Scale	Rationale
1	Planning	Gender Responsive	Result addressed the differential needs of men, women, or marginalized populations and focused on the equitable distribution of benefits,

			resources, status, rights, etc. but did not address root causes of inequalities.
2	Activities related to service provision at the government level and policy work	Gender Blind	Result gave no attention to gender, and failed to acknowledge the diverse needs of men, women, girls and boys, and other marginalized populations.
3	Knowledge products	Gender Targeted +	Result focused on the number of women, men, or marginalized populations that were targeted (e.g. 50/50 representation).
4	Dedicated human resources	Gender Blind	Result gave no attention to gender, and failed to acknowledge the diverse needs of men, women, girls and boys, and other marginalized populations.
5	Dedicated budget lines	Gender Blind +	Result gave no attention to gender, and failed to acknowledge the diverse needs of men, women, girls and boys, and other marginalized populations.
6	Gender Technical Capacity Activity	Gender Responsive	Overall Assessment: The report demonstrates a Gender Responsive approach, as it actively addresses gender inequalities and works towards equitable participation and distribution of resources. While the efforts are comprehensive in identifying and integrating gender considerations, they do not appear to reach the level of Gender Transformative, which would involve fundamentally challenging and changing gender norms, power structures, and the root causes of gender inequality.
7	Communication Plan	Gender Targeted +	Overall Assessment: The TARABOT Communication Plan exhibits a combination of Gender Targeted and Gender Responsive characteristics. It effectively includes activities that highlight women's roles, skills, and participation, addressing some of their specific needs and showcasing their contributions. However, to be considered Gender Transformative, the plan would need to go further in challenging and changing gender norms and power structures, addressing the root causes of inequalities.
8	Budget	Gender Blind	The project's budget shows minimal integration of gender considerations. While there is an explicit intention to enhance the capacity of the planning unit at the Prime Minister's Office to collect and disaggregate data by gender, this is the only clear instance where gender is addressed in the budget. Beyond this, gender is not effectively incorporated into the budget allocations, which indicates a limited commitment to ensuring gender-responsive planning and implementation. The lack of comprehensive gender-specific budgeting across activities suggests missed opportunities to mainstream gender throughout the project and allocate sufficient resources to achieve gender-related objectives. Based on the GRES scale, this reflects a low level of gender responsiveness in the financial planning aspect of the project.
9	Annual Work Plans	Gender Targeted +	The TARABOT Annual Workplans (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024) exhibits Gender Targeted and Gender Responsive characteristics, with some elements approaching Gender Transformative. The inclusion of gender analysis, training, and efforts to enhance partner capacities in gender mainstreaming are positive steps toward addressing gender disparities. To reach a truly Gender Transformative stage, the plan would need to explicitly aim at challenging and altering gender norms, power structures, and addressing the root causes of gender inequalities across its initiatives

10	Technical Committee Meetings and Governance	Gender Blind	A review of the minutes from the Technical Committee meetings reveals that gender considerations were rarely discussed or mentioned. This lack of focus on gender in strategic decision-making forums highlights a gap in the integration of gender-sensitive approaches within the project's governance structure. The minimal attention to gender in these discussions suggests that gender was not prioritized or systematically addressed, potentially undermining efforts to ensure gender-responsive outcomes. This points to a need for more consistent incorporation of gender considerations in future discussions to align with the project's stated gender objectives and commitments.
11	Progress reporting and Monitoring	Gender Responsive	The TARABOT program's Annual Progress Reports (2021,2022,2023) demonstrates a blend of Gender Targeted and Gender Responsive practices, with some aspects approaching Gender Transformative. The deliberate inclusion of gender analysis, capacity-building, and the development of gender-specific strategies reflect a strong commitment to gender responsiveness. However, to fully attain a Gender Transformative status, the program would need to engage more actively in altering gender norms, addressing power imbalances, and challenging the root causes of gender inequality in all aspects of its interventions.
12	Baseline	Gender Targeted +	The TARABOT Baseline Report (2023) primarily exhibits Gender Targeted and Gender Responsive characteristics, particularly in its emphasis on gender-disaggregated data and the recommendation for gender-sensitive evaluations. However, for it to be considered Gender Transformative, it would need to incorporate strategies explicitly designed to address and alter gender norms, power dynamics, and structural barriers to gender equality.
13	Theory of change	Gender Blind	Both documents are Gender Blind as they do not explicitly integrate gender perspectives, indicators, or outcomes. However, with targeted adjustments—such as adding gender-specific goals, indicators, and strategies—they have the potential to be upgraded to Gender Targeted or even Gender Responsive frameworks, ensuring that TARABOT's interventions are inclusive and equitable for all genders.
14	MEAL Framework	Gender Blind	The MEAL Plan was found to be Gender blind as it lacks explicit gender-responsive monitoring indicators. For instance, there is no clear evidence that the plan will collect gender-disaggregated data, nor does it mention assessing the differential impact of the project on men, women, or other gender groups.
15	Policy Level	Gender Blind	At the policy level, the project aimed to improve disaggregated data collection, analysis, and monitoring frameworks for resilience in collaboration with relevant national and international stakeholders. However, the project's capacity to fully mainstream gender at this level remained a challenge throughout its implementation.
16	IPs East Jerusalem	Gender Targeted	The Palestinian National Theatre (PNT), the Arab Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Jerusalem (JACCI), and the Jerusalemite Youth Cultural Forum (JYCF) all demonstrate a Gender Responsive approach by promoting the participation of women and youth in cultural and business activities. PNT successfully included women in theatrical productions and workshops, but it did not challenge deeper societal norms or power dynamics. Similarly, JACCI supported female merchants in a traditionally male-dominated business environment through legal aid and capacity building yet fell short of addressing systemic barriers to women's

			leadership. JYCF ensured gender equity in its outreach but did not significantly shift existing gender roles. To achieve Gender Transformative outcomes, all three projects need to address structural inequalities and promote women’s leadership and participation in non-traditional roles.
17	IPs Area C	Gender Blind	The project fails to adequately account for the differing needs and challenges faced by men and women, particularly in rural and agricultural settings of Qalqiliya, where gender roles significantly influence access to resources and decision-making platforms. There is no gender-specific targets or measures to ensure women's equal participation in committees or leadership, which represents a missed opportunity for gender inclusivity. While some resources are distributed equitably, underlying gender inequalities remain unaddressed. A related project, the BWB "Palestinian National Centre for Desert Tourism," takes positive steps toward gender integration by empowering Bedouin women but remains limited in challenging existing gender norms and promoting broader leadership opportunities for women. To achieve a Gender Transformative impact, the project would need to expand women's roles and address cultural barriers to their participation in non-traditional sectors.
18	IPs Gaza	Gender Targeted	The Palestinian Food and Agricultural Industries Union (PFAIU), Gaza Culture and Development Group (GCDG), Fares Al Arab for Development (FAFD), and Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children (ASDC) all exhibit a Gender Responsive approach but fall short of reaching Gender Transformative outcomes. PFAIU empowered women farmers in dairy production but did not challenge gender power dynamics or promote leadership roles for women. GCDG acknowledged gender equality in its vocational training academy but faced cultural barriers that limited women's involvement in technical courses. FAFD supported marginalized groups, including female-headed households, through sustainable agricultural practices but did not address gender norms or promote leadership changes for women. Lastly, ASDC created inclusive opportunities for women with disabilities but did not fully empower them in leadership or decision-making roles. For these projects to achieve a Gender Transformative impact, they need to emphasize women’s leadership, challenge traditional gender norms, and address deeper societal inequalities.

Conclusions

The TARABOT programme represents a significant and commendable achievement by all stakeholders, providing a solid foundation for continuous and sustainable efforts to enhance resilience in Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza. The evaluation has been carried out under the challenging circumstances of ongoing armed conflict. Despite these difficulties, the evaluation team has drawn upon the experiences and models developed and implemented across the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip up to October 2023. These insights form a critical part of the analysis, offering valuable lessons for assessing the overall performance of the TARABOT programme. The Evaluation has identified four major strengths in the Programme⁷⁹:

The programme piloted a resilience strategy for Area C and EJ and Gaza, which:

⁷⁹ All findings are elaborated in the relevant text.

- Further legitimized the need and urgency of investing in the sustainable development of Area C, EJ, and rather than providing only short-term, humanitarian assistance.
- Demonstrated that, with a focused mix of interventions, it is possible to support a transition from adaptive to transformative resilience⁸⁰
- Demonstrated that flexibility of approach is key to achieving transformative resilience in three quite unique and challenging operational contexts (Area C, Gaza, EJ) and across a variety of sectors while maintaining alignment with overall project goals.

The programme prioritised Capacity Building at the national level and the level of beneficiaries, which:

- Contributed to expanding planning and policy capacities within the PA, building capacities within line ministries (MoA, MoTA, MoJA) for cluster planning, the participation of MoA, MoTA and MoJA at the governorate level in project design and implementation.
- Increased local and national ownership of the development of Area C, the protection of EJ and the national narrative, (culture, housing and business revitalisation),
- Built skills and knowledge building of farmers, youth, women and entrepreneurs to expand their economic opportunities, earning potential and increase self-reliance
- Developed some gender and social inclusion sensitivity across a wide range of activities and contexts (e.g., development of business skills of female entrepreneurs and youth, increasing access of visually and hearing impaired to social and economic opportunities).

The programme encouraged Innovation in Development Interventions, which:

- Tested new approaches for stakeholder engagement in the project design and implementation process.
- Tested new models for collaborative business enabling environment in Gaza (Food and agriculture sectors) and service provision models (housing) East Jerusalem, multi-partner consortiums in agriculture (Area C), renewable energy solutions to support fishing and agriculture production (Gaza, Area C).
- Demonstrated that some risk-taking projects are possible and worth doing, even in the face of the Israeli government's restrictions and practices and settlers' harassment of the Palestinian population (East Jerusalem, Area C).
- Demonstrated the value of a multi-sector and multi-partner approach to resilience, to achieve more significant results and impact.

The programme employed efficient and effective implementation arrangements, which:

- Promotes a transparent allocation of Programme resources, following rigorous, well documented, and consistent procedures for selecting all projects taking account of the contextual difference in each area
- Fosters strong stakeholder collaboration and beneficiary consultation process to ensure alignment with national planning priorities and beneficiary needs.

⁸⁰ Adaptive resilience is defined as systematic adaption to shock by adjusting to the new reality e.g. by diversifying livelihoods, adopting floor-resistant framing methods, engaging in conflict resolution training; Transformative resilience is a systematic transformational move away from shock by, for example, changing laws (quotas for women participation on decision-making bodies, switching to the use of clean energy to protect the environment).

4 Recommendations

Recommendations

The recommendations are based on the premise that there is a need to continue to support the achievement and efforts of TARABOT. The PA is very invested in TARABOT as a mechanism for moving their work forward on resilience, despite the recent reconfigurations of PMO staffing. The mechanism is seen as flexible and relatively rapid and the Evaluation Team believes that, if the report's recommendations are properly implemented, TARABOT-UNDP would be the appropriate mechanism for continuity. On the one hand, UNDP has the historical experience and institutional comparative advantage of working in Palestine and in development internationally. On the other hand, UNDP had accumulated rich experience during the past years, through managing the CRDP, and it would be more cost-effective to develop TARABOT based on the recommendations of this report, as opposed to venturing into other options.

The following recommendations are presented in four categories: recommendations for all stakeholders, followed by those for the PA, UNDP/PAPP, PMU and donors – and are prioritized in order of importance and time – 1 being most important for immediate action; 2 being important for implementation as part of the project implementation process; 3 being important for actioning at the appropriate time in the project cycle.

For all stakeholders

- ✓ Recognize TARABOT as a true partnership between the PA, donors, UNDP and other international and local stakeholders, including beneficiaries. On that basis, the Evaluation team believes that it is important to recognize both the accomplishments and the weaknesses of the Programme so far and take equal responsibility for what has worked well and produced good results and what has not worked well. The stakes are extremely high for Area C, EJ, Gaza and for Palestine. It is worth striving to consolidate what has been achieved in the first phase of TARABOT. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Ensure that the PA's strategic directions, as stipulated in national strategies, be the main point of reference for decision-making on Area C, EJ and the recovery and reconstruction of Gaza. **Priority 3**
- ✓ Design a new project strategy (TOC) that fully embraces a gender transformative approach by undertaking a gender analysis of the operating context and an ex-ante analysis of the level of gender integration into the completed interventions to understand and critically assess the gender impact of past methodologies. **Priority 1**
- ✓ The new project strategy should fully embrace the transformative resilience approach elaborated in the Sumud Background paper of 2022 i.e. that has as its goals (1) fostering national unity and cohesion (2) providing vulnerable communities with services and investment (3) Increasing access to needed socio-economic resources and (4) Improving the capacity of Palestinians to use resources.⁸¹ Develop outcomes and outputs sequentially from an understanding of what results are necessary to support the goals and outcomes and develop indicators which can provide evidence of the extent to which the results are being achieved. **Priority 1**
- ✓ If significant additional funds become available, give consideration to expanding the scope of Tarabot with the revisions provided for in the Sumud Background Paper page 3 which would include interventions additional to those already implemented which would invest in economic resilience, expand financial inclusion particularly for women, safeguard and promote mental and psychological

⁸¹ Resilience document

health, and interventions which would prepare and support a shock responsive social protection system. **Priority 3**

- ✓ Complete a conflict sensitivity and full gender analysis of the operating context for TARABOT so that areas of potential conflict in the environment and opportunities for gender transformative activities can be proactively identified and mitigated for in intervention design so that the Do No Harm principle can be effectively operationalized. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Design a new performance measurement system process (RFF and MEAL plan) that is simple but rigorous, with measurable results (outputs and outcome), and sufficient indicators that can provide evidence of the changes the programme plans to achieve. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Analyse thoroughly the lessons from TARABOT Phase 1 and hold groups discussions with key stakeholders to try an answer the following questions. Answering the below questions can act as a roadmap for re formulating the theory of change, RFF, MEAL plan and determine how the next phase will look like: **Priority 1**
 - **Pre-conditions:** Is it realistic to envisage sustainable development activities, so long as any peace process is stalled and progress towards the two-state solution is stalled? In the context of building resilience in the Palestinian context, does this matter?
 - **Size:** TARABOT received about USD 7.5 million but the original budget was set at USD 40 million. What should the size be for another three-year implementation period? USD 40 million? If funding continues to be limited, should TARABOT focus all the funds in one intervention package targeting one geographical area?
 - **Content:** Should the Programme continue to be an activity-based, flexible, responsive, small-grants programme, or should it aim at larger multi-year development projects? What should be TARABOT's comparative advantage, as compared to other donor-supported programmes?
 - **Scope:** How should Tarabot deal with the problem of unequal distribution of resources within interventions? Should it reduce the number of issues it deals with? Narrow its geographic focus? Reduce the number of interventions?
 - **Cross cutting issues:** Are gender and inclusion essential components of a resilient approach? If so, how to better integrate them into interventions?
 - **Operating modalities:** Can the RBM's capacity be expanded? Or should UNDP add an additional staff specialized in M&E? What kind of implementing partners (IPs), should be used? Should the partnership scope be expanded to include local government entities and an increased number of private sector entities? What is the best organisational arrangement to implement the Programme? Should consortia arrangements be mandated in the EOI?

For the PA

- ✓ In the next national planning round, ensure that resilience and gender are integrated into strategies and that planning documents continue to support institutional and other development interventions, necessary not only for 'resilience' building, but also for the sustainable development of Area C, and Consider expanding the adoption of projects and models that promote direct joint planning between sectoral actors across the CSO/NGO landscape and government entities. This approach not only enhances relevance, effectiveness, coherence, and sustainability but also fosters positive perceptions of institutional actors. **Priority 3**
- ✓ Provide strategic guidance on national needs while providing technical support and oversight at the operational level, strengthen synergies and avoid duplication of support. **Priority 3**
- ✓ Formalize the role of the newly revived Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) as the true, leading entity for planning for Area C, EJ, and Gaza in partnership with other line ministries, to ensure that all work -- including donor-funded work -- in Area C, EJ and Gaza is coherent with the National Policy Agenda and the sector strategies. **Priority 2**

- ✓ As a co-chair, MoPIC must convey national priorities during the steering committee meetings and ensure that there is no duplication of projects. **Priority 3**

For UNDP/PAPP

Measures to improve TARABOT performance towards objectives include the following:

- ✓ As TARABOT is considered an experimental project in many respects, for the next round of interventions, the question of sustainability should be a key part of the design and addressed activity by activity. An ex-ante analysis of each intervention should be carried out to assess what would be the components of sustainability. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Further clarify the division of roles between RBM and the PMU around M&E, so that the PMU is empowered to be accountable for its efforts to deliver a quality programme in full compliance with UNDP quality standards. **Priority 2**
- ✓ Facilitate adequate staffing, top quality gender and resilience mentoring of PMU staff currently in place. Either recruit a dedicated M&E staff person for the PMU - or expand the current capacities of the RMB, so that the Results and Resources Framework (RRF) can be revised with an effective hierarchy of results, outcomes, and impact indicators, and the methodology, which informs these indicators, can be designed and adopted (Systematic before-and-after interviews with beneficiaries, or After Action Reviews would be a significant improvement and is an example of a better methodology that employs well-tested M&E tools). A re-designed MEAL will be integral to informing PMU management and enabling the adjustment of implementation based on real-time feedback and performance data. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Bring a gender expert on board who can undertake a gender audit of the interventions already underway or completed to assess the level of gender integration and how to improve it. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Engage proactively in knowledge dissemination with all stakeholders in Palestine to improve project/activity design and provide documentation that donors and other stakeholders can use to mobilize their electorates to advocate for their governments to continue or start engaging in TARABOT and to advocate. A robust and systematic approach to resource mobilization should be continued with the support of the recent Communications plan. **Priority 2**
- ✓ Prepare, in partnership with the PMU and the PA, a Proposal Document for the continuation of TARABOT, based on the critical lessons learned from TARABOT phase 1. This Proposal Document should include a review and documentation of lessons learned to inform the next phase of TARABOT. It should also include an implementation structure and implementation modalities with clear objective criteria against which oversight can be performed and evaluated, including transparency and accountability measures in the selection of project/activities and implementation partners. Capacity building of MoPIC and relevant PA line ministries should remain a core objective for the long-term sustainability of the Programme outcomes and impacts. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Further utilize the technical experience and lessons learned accumulated from other existing programmes implementing similar interventions, including those that have successfully used gender transformative and inclusive approaches in their design (e.g., cluster-based agricultural development, skills training, enabling the business environment, in addition to the experience of previous programmes (e.g., World Bank implemented area development programmes, NDC resilience programmes). **Priority 2**
- ✓ Engage in advocacy in support of the UN's and ICJ's attempts to increase international awareness on the illegality of the occupation and its impacts on resilience and other development and humanitarian planning, the obligation of member states to act in accordance with international law, and the urgent need for a ceasefire, and free passage of aid into Gaza. **Priority 2**

- ✓ Complete a staffing proposal for M&E person. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Network with other specialized UN agencies and other development actors through the UN cluster system [LACs?] to identify potential cooperation and complementarity. **Priority 2**

For Donors

- ✓ Agree as a unified group on implementation modalities and arrangements and how they want to exercise their oversight responsibility over TARABOT within the parameters of their contracts signed with the PA and UNDP. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Clearly establish any changes in reporting needs and agree on unified reporting requirements. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Commit to funding the next phase of TARABOT. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Assist UNDP mobilise resources for the next phase of the programme from additional donors. **Priority 1**
- ✓ Increase engagement in advocacy for Area C, EJ and Gaza at the international level and with the Israeli government. **Priority 1**

Improvement Suggestions for the ToC

Reformulated theory of change would need to be realigned with the actual activities on the ground, validate key assumptions, and ensure that the RFF and MEAL plans are fully aligned with the ToC. Such an approach would be invaluable in capturing activities related to capacity development, measuring outputs at various levels, including capacity, policy, planning, and service provision. It would also provide clear monitoring and documentation of changes in trust levels, as well as insights into the consortium partnership models. Furthermore, it would incorporate measures of socio-economic resilience at the beneficiary level.

In the future, UNDP must take the time to engage in a reformulation of the Theory of Change (ToC). If the project context or activities deviate from the original plan, it is crucial to trigger a reformulation and validation process to maintain alignment between learning, accountability tools, and project implementation. Additionally, this opportunity must ensure vertical alignment, creating clear logical linkages from activities to outputs, and from outputs to outcomes. This process should address the following points and involve participatory activities to help formulate and later validate them:

- ✓ Clearly define the goals and objectives of the TARABOT program.
- ✓ Identify the necessary outcomes to achieve these goals and objectives.
- ✓ Restate the outcomes as measurable results.
- ✓ Determine the outputs needed to achieve the outcomes.
- ✓ Restate the outputs as measurable results.
- ✓ Develop indicators that provide strong and reasonable evidence that your results are being achieved.
- ✓ Create clear and precise measures for your indicators that anyone can implement.
- ✓ Reconsider the context through a gender lens, identifying the gaps between men and women related to the development challenge (e.g., legal context and institutional practices influencing men's and women's actions and decisions; cultural norms and beliefs; gender roles, responsibilities, and time use; access to and control over resources; patterns of power and decision-making).

Annexes (Attached Separately)

Annex 1: ToR for the Mid-term Evaluation

Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

Annex 3: List of Documents Reviewed

Annex 4: Data Collection Tools

Annex 5: List of KIIs

Annex 6: List of FGDs

Annex 7: List of Most Significant Change Cases

Annex 8: Sample Distribution

Annex 9: Most Significant Change Cases

Annex 10: Programme Portfolio

Annex 11: Contribution of TARABOT to the SDGs – Detailed Analysis

Annex 12: Alignment between UNDP/PAPP RRF and TARABOT RRF

Annex 13: Alignment of TARABOT to UNSDCF, UNDP Strategic Plan, NDP Priorities

Annex 14: A summary of output achievements under output one

Annex 15: Ethical Considerations

Annex 16: Signed Pledge of Ethical Conduct