



ILO EVALUATION

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INDEPENDENT FINAL EVALUATION

Project Title:

Skills Development and Employment Services for the Construction Sector in the Gaza Strip
PAL/10/01/SDC

Funded by:

Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)

Implemented by:

International Labour Organisation (ILO)
United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – p.3

II. BODY OF THE REPORT

- 2.0 Problem Context and Intervention Logic – p.7
- 2.1 Validity of the Design – p.8
- 2.2. Validation of Program Theory of Change – p.10
- 2.3. Program assessment against OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria – p.11
 - 2.3.1. Relevance – p.11
 - 2.3.2. Effectiveness – p.12
 - 2.3.3. Efficiency – p.19
 - 2.3.4. Sustainability and Impact – p.19
- 2.4. Analysis of Program Target Group – p.20
- 2.5. Management Arrangements – p. 21
 - 2.5.1. Project Advisory Committee (PAC)
 - 2.5.2. Project Management Unit (PMU)
 - 2.5.3. Monitoring and Evaluation – p.21
- 2.6. Added Value of the ILO-UNRWA Partnership – p.22
- 2.7. Coordination and Networking with the Palestinian Authority and Donor Agencies – p.24
- 2.8. Lessons Learned – p.25

III. RECOMMENDATIONS – p.26

Appendices

- (i) Terms of Reference
- (ii) In-country mission schedule / inclusive of persons interviewed
- (iii) End of mission Debriefing Meeting

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Context

The identified problem of a number of students not progressing through the school system and the existing over-crowding in schools encouraged UNRWA's educators to develop a strategy and opportunities to assist these students in finding other opportunities in vocational training and skills development programs.

With unemployment levels in Gaza at unprecedented levels and among the highest in the world, together, ILO and UNRWA see education and skills-development of the young population as the key priority of their work in ensuring better lives for Palestinians, and improved economic circumstances and recovery for Gaza, to lay the road toward statehood building. The project, through the provision of skills training, using modern training curricula and applying on-the-job training, is increasing the employability of workers and responding to the immediate needs of the labour market. In the longer term the project is contributing to the development of modernised and labour market based vocational education and training curricula, and supporting its integration into a system which is relevant, flexible, effective and efficient. The short term vocational training courses introduced at UNRWA TVET centres – GTC and KYTC for over-aged school students in partnership with ILO are built on the competency based training approach as envisaged by the TVET strategy. The resulting curricula were shared with the Palestinian Authority to ensure alignment.

Within this context, the project 'Skills Development and Employment Services for the Construction Sector in the Gaza Strip', was developed and implemented by ILO and UNRWA, funded by the Swiss Government with a total budget of USD 1,850,090 (USD 493.087 for the ILO and US\$1.357.003 for UNRWA) over a period of 18 months. The project duration based on the original contract was from the 1st of December 2010 until 31st of May 2012. There were two no-cost extensions approved, bringing the final completion date of the project to 28th of February 2013.

- Purpose of the evaluation

As outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) the purpose of the evaluation is: 1) to review the achievements of the project by assessing to what extent the stated objectives and major outputs have been achieved. Review the efficiency and effectiveness of the project implementation framework; 2) Review the collaboration that has been established with representatives of employers, with employers themselves, and with trade unions, in order to facilitate apprenticeship and transition to work. Identify the bottlenecks that may have constrained this collaboration and how it can be systematised; 3) Analyse and make recommendations regarding the sustainability of the project, provide recommendations on how to build on the achievements of the project, and identify more specifically the support needed for the furthering and up-scaling of the CBT approach to other training undertaken by UNRAW; 4) Examine the joint programming model, in particular the coordination between ILO and UNRWA to achieve the common pre-set objectives of the project; 5) Document lessons learned and good practices for replication.

The end-of-program evaluation of the program took place as per good development practice, to allow stakeholders to assess results, to learn from experiences and to inform future practice of similar project interventions. The consultant was contracted by ILO, with the Terms of Reference for the evaluation developed jointly by both ILO and UNRWA and reviewed by SDC.

The main clients for this evaluation include the management of ILO and UNRWA, both agencies' staff involved in the implementation of the project, and the Swiss Development Cooperation as the donor providing support to the project.

- Methodology of the evaluation

The evaluation had two main components: a) the desk review of the project documentation; and b) in-Gaza field mission to conduct interviews, meetings and focus group discussions with stakeholders. The field mission to Gaza took place between Monday the 25th of February and Tuesday 5th of March (inclusive). The program for the field mission was jointly organised by the former ILO project manager and UNRWA's Assistant Operations Support Officer. The complete in-country mission schedule is attached as Annex ii.

During the field visit semi-structured interviews took place with UNRWA and ILO staff including: **ILO**: Former ILO project manager, ILO Senior Skills Expert, TVET International Expert seconded to UNRWA Education Department, ILO Technical Monitors; **UNRWA**: Deputy Field Office Director, Staff of the Operations Support Office, Staff of the Projects Office, UNRWA management staff of both Gaza and Khan Younis Training Centres, CBT master trainers and trainers involved in the project. **SDC**: SDC Director of Cooperation, and National Program Officer and the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.

Two Focus Group Discussions took place with students who had formerly participated in the training program. The Focus Group Discussions were attended by approximately 32 students. Selection of students was made against pre-defined criteria: students from different training batches; students who had found employment after apprenticeship; students who had not found employment; and students who had received training only and not the apprenticeship (batch 4). One-to-one interviews took place with two students to allow for more in-depth discussion of their experiences with the project. A meeting also took place with a number of private sector companies who provided apprenticeship places under the project.

The meetings with UNRWA staff, employers and students were complemented by visits to the UNRWA training centres and four visits to construction sites.

Meetings with the direct project stakeholders were complemented with various meetings including, but not limited to, the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, Trade Union representatives, Contractors' Union, other donor countries representatives supporting vocational training programs in Gaza and the West Bank.

The in-country evaluation mission was concluded with a debriefing meeting for UNRWA and ILO in Gaza and for SDC in Jerusalem.

- Main findings and conclusions

There are a number of strong evidence based results achieved against the project's objectives and outputs as outlined in the project document. The project has brought substantive changes to the lives of young people struggling in the standard educational system. The project has the potential to be even more successful if a number of principal recommendations are implemented in the future.

Relevance: The project has been very relevant in responding to an identified skill gap in the labour market. The project has been able to offer 655 students, who were not progressing in the education system, an opportunity to take on a tailored type of skills training program. Central to the relevance argument are the life changes this project has brought for a large number of students.

The project allowed both UNRWA and ILO to gain experience in and learn from the Competency Based Training Approach in the specific context of Gaza. UNRWA is currently revising its TVET strategy for its five areas of operations, with the aim of incorporating CBT across all its vocational training programs. From this experience (and others in the region), ILO is finalizing a handbook on CBT.

Effectiveness: 713 students participated in the program spread over 4 training batches. Of these, 655 students (92%) passed the Competency Training Program and 58 failed. All students who passed the CBT participated in the 6 month on-the-job training program. Out of a sample of 100 students: 22 % of the students were unemployed, 16 % of the students were working in non-related areas, and 62% were working in jobs related to their training. The results in finding employment are encouraging but can be further strengthened through providing better support to students during and after the apprenticeship, and through better identifying areas in which employment can be found more easily.

The application of the CBT training approach has been effective in supporting students in acquiring a skill that they can apply in the workplace. Students felt comfortable with the approach, because of the key characteristics of CBT: Very hands-on and practical training approach, task focused; Learners are not expected to perform tasks better than others or in competition with others; Emphasis on the workplace application of knowledge and skills. Training participants rated the CBT training program very highly and gave an average rating of 8 out of 10 to their experience.

Nine Master Trainers have been trained under the program and are now equipped to train other trainers in the CBT approach: these trainers will require further regular support and follow up while working on the training program. The Master Trainers have developed draft curricula and instructor manuals. These are now of an adequate standard but the UNRWA trainers request that the curricula, instructor manuals and assessment guides go through a final review and validation by a CBT expert to ensure the manuals are incorporating the CBT approach to a high standard. The validation of the curricula, manuals and resources should be done through UNRWA TVET and ILO on technical grounds (checking with international companies) and methodological grounds (CBT). ILO has taken steps to obtain approval and certification of the training curricula with the Palestinian Authority (PA). This validation and follow up with the Palestinian Authority (PA) should take place in any case and should not be linked to whether a follow up program will be in place.

The students valued the apprenticeship highly but made a number of recommendations to strengthen the apprenticeship, with a focus on learning on the job. Students found that their technical and professional knowledge did not improve sufficiently during the apprenticeship. Students would like to receive regular visits from trainers who provide them with input and advice on improving their skill level. Both UNRWA and the employers view the apprenticeship program 'from differing perspectives'. UNRWA considers it as part of the Job Creation Program and many employers consider it as humanitarian support (doing a duty for the community by employing students who failed in the school system). Both UNRWA and employers do not have the right understanding of what an apprenticeship entails, namely skill development and on-the-job training.

Efficiency: Performance of the program against efficiency criteria is mixed. When reviewing the amount of the investment in relation to the results achieved, the project is representing good value for money. Results achieved are sustainable and will have an effect beyond the duration of the project such as: the chance for 655 students to take on a productive role in society; UNRWA's capacity strengthened in delivering short-term CBT courses (resources and ToT); and ILO's strengthened experience in supporting CBT training in the region.

Sustainability: The program will have lasting effects beyond the duration of the program. The training of the students will allow them to have a productive role in society; it changed the self-esteem

of the students and the way the community and their families view them. The capacity of UNRWA has been strengthened in delivering short-term tailored training courses, allowing UNRWA to be more market focused in the delivery of their vocational training programs. The program has provided learning to both UNRWA and ILO to replicate this approach in other areas and to integrate lessons in the review of the TVET strategy for UNRWA. Sustainability and impact of results can be strengthened further if recommendations made during this evaluation will be incorporated into future designs.

The main achievement of the project lays in the changes the project has achieved with the over-aged students taking up the training program. The project intervention resulted in a greater self-esteem for the students, with their position in the family and the community changed.

The strength of the CBT is its linkage with the market; it identifies and responds to a gap for certain skills in the labour market. The training method suits the learning of the students; the training is practical, on-the-job, with one-to-one attention between the trainer and the student.

Sustainability of results can be strengthened through greater attention being given to the selection of contractors and sub-contractors for the apprenticeships.

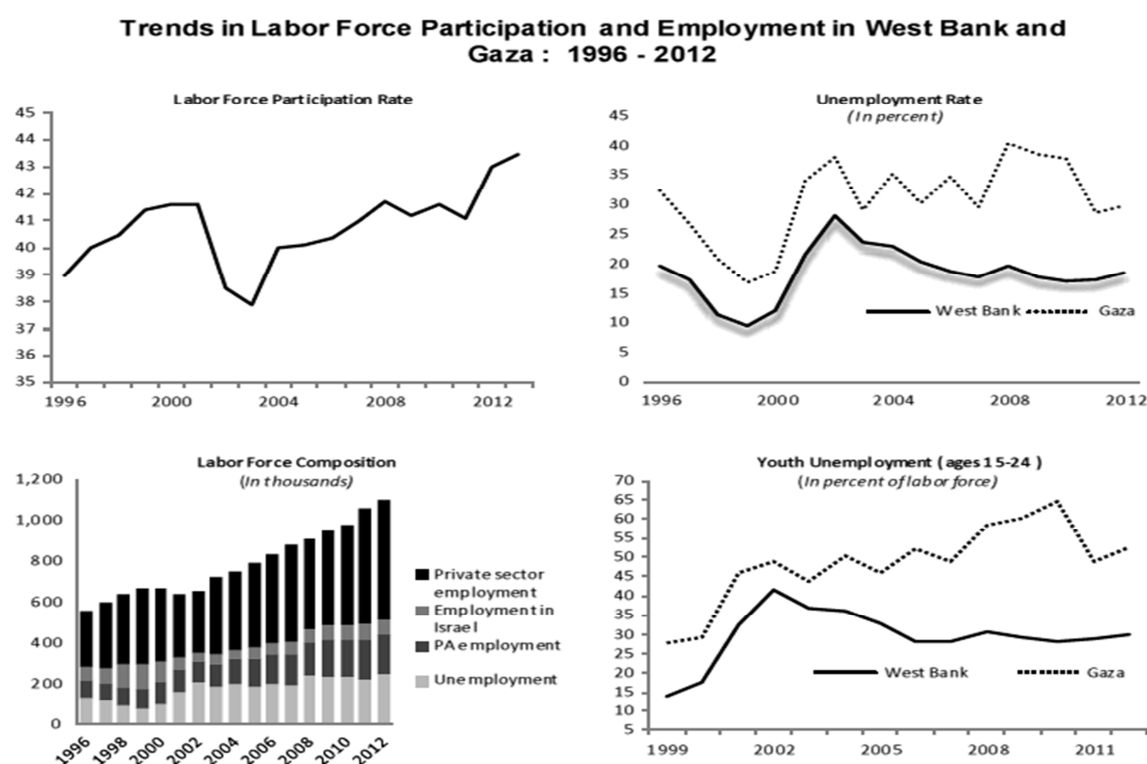
The project was able to draw on the strengths of both ILO and UNRWA agencies to a certain extent. However, it was found that the strengths of both agencies could have been better utilised if communication challenges had been addressed. ILO has the ability to provide capacity building and quality assurance but was confronted with a number of challenges in recruiting the appropriate skills level of staff on a long term basis. This contributed to challenges in communications and impacted on regular advice and input to the staff implementing the program. However, it is the evaluator's opinion that the joint implementation model between two UN sister agencies has its value and is worth developing further. When concerns around management and communication are addressed the complementary roles and expertise can be further exploited and put toward achieving stronger results for the program.

II. BODY OF THE REPORT

2.0. Problem Context and Intervention Logic

Based on estimates prepared by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) in 2012, the total population of the Palestinian Territory at mid-2012 was about 4.29 million. The estimated population of West Bank was 2.65 and the Gaza Strip totalled 1.64 million. The percentage of individuals aged (0-14) was about 43.7% in the Gaza Strip.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip have a very young population with low labour force participation. While the population of working age has been growing at 4% on average since 1995, labour force participation increased only marginally from 39% in 1995 to 44% in mid-2012. The relatively high proportion of students in the working-age population keeps labour participation low.



Source: Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics and IMF staff calculations.

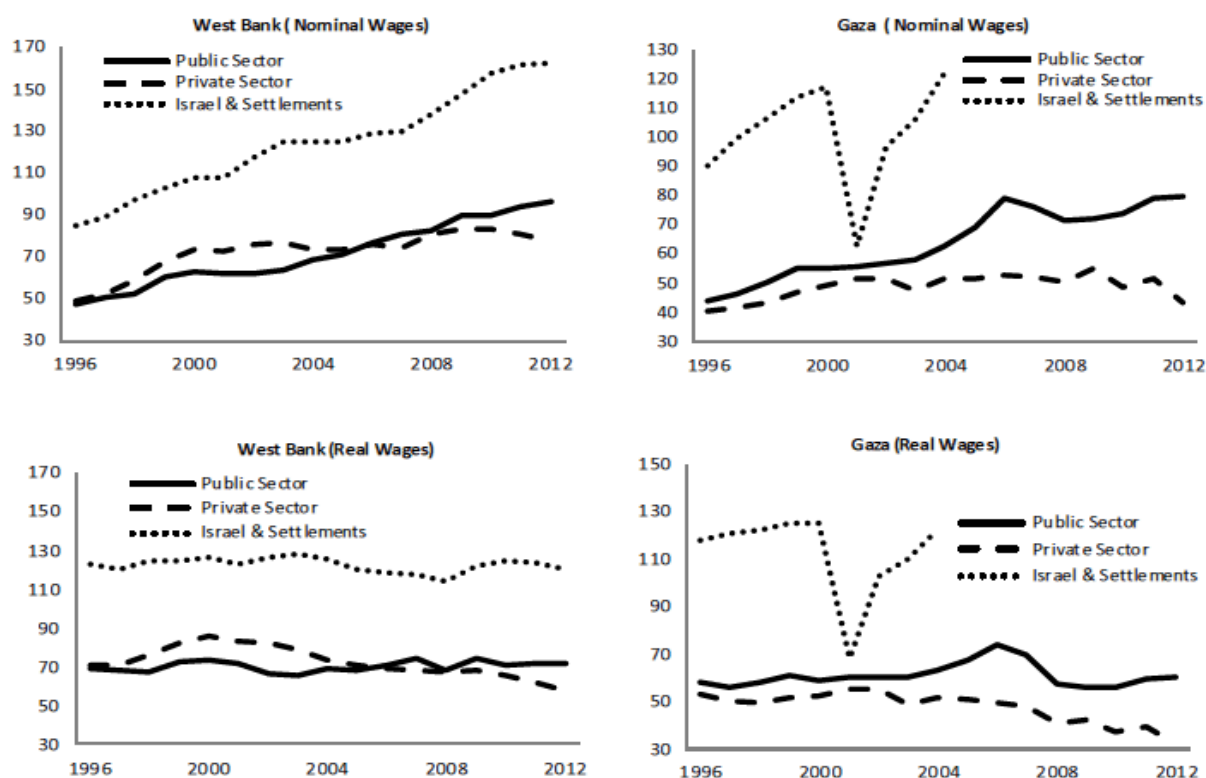
Participation in the labour force is a key indicator of the extent of labour market activity and effectiveness in providing job opportunities. The results of the labour force survey¹ revealed that the labour force participation rate in the 1st quarter of 2012 was 43.4% of the total labour force (persons aged 15 years and above), with 45.5 % in the West Bank and 39.9% in the Gaza Strip. The results also showed that 31.5% of the labour force was unemployed in the Gaza Strip.

Unemployment is especially high among youth, particularly in Gaza. Youth unemployment in Gaza (aged 15-24) is 52%; this is higher than before the 2008 war in Gaza, when it averaged 49%.²

¹ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), Labor Market Survey, Period January-June 2012.

² Data in this section from 'West Bank and Gaza: Labor Market Trends, Growth and Unemployment', Udo Kock, Mariusz Suminski, Hania Qassis, December 2012, IMF.

Average Daily Wages (In NIS)



Source: Palestine Central Bureau of Statistics and IMF Staff calculations.

These tables clearly show the high unemployment among youth, especially in Gaza, and the ongoing decline in wages in the private sector, both in Gaza and the West Bank.

The high youth unemployment should be seen in combination with an increased percentage of youth not completing education. In 2011 the percentage of individuals (15 years and over) who completed university education was 11.3% while the percentage of individuals who did not complete any stage of education reached 10.8% (8.3% for males and 13.4% for females). There is a danger in Gaza of an increased number of young people not finishing formal education. The challenge is that insufficient formal education venues are available in Gaza for those students who have difficulties in the mainstream education system. This program is excellent in providing those students with alternative options. However, agencies implementing these programs should ensure there are pathways available for these students to return to mainstream education if they wish to do so. Future programs as the UNRWA – ILO skills project should also ensure that the students attain a sufficient level of literacy and numeracy and that there are opportunities for students to improve their skills and general knowledge.

2.1. Validity of the Design

Within this context, the project ‘Skills Development and Employment Services for the Construction Sector in the Gaza Strip’, was developed and implemented by ILO and UNRWA, funded by the Swiss Government with a total budget of USD 1,850,090 over a period of 18 months. The project duration based on the original contract was from the 1st of December 2010 until 31st of May 2012. There were

three no-cost extensions approved, bringing the final completion date of the project to 28th of February 2013.

This project was innovative because of the strategic partnership between two UN agencies jointly taking on the implementation. The aim of the project was to build on the comparative advantages of both ILO and UNRWA in the field of vocational training and expertise on labour conditions.

For UNRWA the project served a dual purpose, strengthening its training institutions while at the same time reaching some of the most vulnerable people in Gaza; in this case the over-aged students. The participants in the project are students who have been repeating grades, resulting in them being two or more years older than their peers in school. These students are at risk of dropping out of the educational establishment and the vocational training courses were expected to provide an alternative through which they can flourish, secure a recognised skills-set and potentially lead to employment.

For ILO, the project was a way to implement a similar project that it had implemented successfully in South Lebanon and Iraq. The ILO had a similar success when developing a competency based curricula in Iraq. The project in Gaza would contribute to the provision of further support to sister UN agencies in designing market relevant competency training profiles, and in harmonising employers' needs with the real competencies of students.

The joint ILO-UNRWA 'Skills Project' for over-aged students was developed with the aim of contributing to skill development, employment generation and social and economic recovery of Gaza.

The project document was supported by one central development objective and 3 outcome statements. The outcome statements support UNRWA over-aged students gaining labour market skills, strengthen local SMEs of the construction sector, and assist in developing an employment strategy.

Training took place within existing UNRWA's TVET institutes (GTC/KYTC) who have a strong reputation in providing trade and technical courses. The project has therefore also contributed to strengthening the capacity of these institutes in providing short-term modular courses for 'Over-Aged Students'.

Development Objective: Contribute to Skills Development, Employment Generation and to the social and economic recovery of the Gaza Strip
Outcome 1: UNRWA over-aged students gained labour market relevant skills and/or employment through the provision of competency based skills training (CBT) including on-the-job training at UNRWA Gaza Vocational Training institutions (namely GTC and KYTC).
Outputs: Capacity of UNRWA TVET institution is strengthened (equipment and best practices manuals) Capacity of UNRWA's trainers is enhanced through the set-up of a core trainer team 5 curriculum of training programs reviewed, 5 evaluation guides and 5 instructor guides developed 5 short-term CBT training programs delivered
Outcome 2: Local SMEs of the construction sector will have been empowered through provision of well-trained staff (construction workers).
Outputs: Capacity of construction SMEs is enhanced On-job training is delivered
Outcome 3: A strategy to maximize employment within UNRWA Gaza Programme will be formulated.
Outputs: Skills development and employment creation strategy formulated

When reviewing the program design and the results achieved, it was found that the logic of the program design should be strengthened and be more focused on the project target group. Outcomes and outputs listed circle around the target group. The project's Theory of Change and underlying

assumptions ‘why certain strategies or activities are taking place to achieve what’ are not clear in the design. The design is trying to achieve too much within a short period of time, and with limited sources of funding.

Example: Outcome 1 refers to the UNRWA over-aged students gaining labour market access. However, when reviewing the outputs listed under Outcome 1 there is no output listed that refers directly to the students. The outputs are focused on the TVET institutions, trainers and delivery of training programs. Similarly, when reviewing Outcome 3 and the output listed, the focus is on developing an employment creation strategy; there is no output listed that refers to the students gaining employment as a result to aim for after their apprenticeship.

2.2. Validation of the Program Theory of Change

It was important for the purpose of the evaluation to understand what the Theory of Change for the program was and what the underlying assumptions were when determining the project strategy and implementation of selected activities. Based on interviews with staff involved in the program, the following Theory of Change was developed.

Definition of Theory of Change

The theory of change can be stated quite simply:

IF

we achieve progress towards OBJECTIVE 1; AND

we achieve progress towards OBJECTIVE 2; AND

we achieve progress towards OBJECTIVE 3;

THEN

We will achieve progress towards THE DESIRED GOAL

From the focus group discussions and meetings during the evaluation mission the following Theory of Change for the program can be formulated. The feedback received and the results achieved under the project clearly demonstrate that in reality the central focus of this project was, and should be, the students. A strategy with the students at the centre of the implementation should be developed for any future design.

The underlying Theory of Change for the Skills Development project can be described as follows:

If we identify the gaps in the labour market for semi-skilled and skilled labourers;

If we develop a training program that provides quality training in semi-skilled³ professions needed in the private sector to fill the gaps;

THEN

If we develop a comprehensive training program (inclusive of training, apprenticeship, certification and employment services) that incorporates an approach and methodology that responds to the learning styles and needs of students;

We will be able to support students in finding a productive role in the family and community, allowing them to value their knowledge and skills and raise their self-esteem.

The logical framework included in the project design has guided the project implementation. The quality of the logframe is of an acceptable standard with Objectives/Outcomes supported by outputs and activities. However, for the any similar projects in the future the logframe should be reviewed and strengthened, and base itself on a well discussed Theory of Change and identification of underlying assumptions. This project should be considered as a pilot phase showing significant results which can be strengthened in the future.

³ Grading of skills can be done against a national qualification framework that has been not been finalized for the OPT; however based on training contents the program provides training in semi-skilled levels.

More detailed comments on the logframe include the need to review the performance indicators against outcomes and outputs. The indicators included in the logframe are more suited to collecting evidence and data at the output level. The way the indicators are included in the logframe does not make clear whether the indicators respond to the outcomes or the outputs. At the outcome level indicators should be both qualitative and quantitative, aiming to show higher level change. In addition, when reviewing the outputs there is no output directly naming or targeting the students themselves. Objective1/Outcome 1 is also too cumbersome and attempts to include too many changes it wants to achieve. Outcome statements and outputs need to be kept simple, direct, measurable and hierarchical.

Finding: When reviewing the current design in comparison with the Theory of Change identified during the in-Gaza mission with stakeholders, it is clear that the project design and consequently the reporting have been unable to capture the major changes and successes of the project.

2.3. Program Assessment against OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria

2.3.1. Relevance

The construction sector in the Gaza Strip has been hit hard following the Israeli closure imposed on Gaza in 2000 with the start of the second intifada. The wars on Gaza in 2008 and 2012 have led to destruction of buildings and infrastructure. The closure on Gaza imposes a blockade or restrictions on imports and exports, including severe restrictions on imports of building materials. However, despite these constraints, the construction sector is one of the productive sectors in Gaza that has better levels of private sector investment in comparison with other sectors. This was confirmed in the ILO skills survey conducted in November 2009. This sector represented 21% of the local GDP and involved 30% of the private sector workers before the 2008 war. The construction sector was also the main engine of growth in Gaza in 2011, as mentioned in the ILO Director General report on occupied Arab territories of 2011 and 2012.

The construction sector faces a number of challenges because of the closure regime imposed on Gaza, but also because of the lack of skilled construction workers. Additional challenges are around the quality of materials and the reliance on the tunnel economy that foster parallel power structures.

In response to this identified gap in the labour market and the potential of construction in Gaza, the project aimed to address the skills deficit in the top 6 priority areas through providing training programs.

Due to the economic situation (with 20% of the Gaza population living in deep poverty) there is increased pressure on young people to leave school early to support their families. This has resulted in many young people taking up unskilled jobs, earning very low wages and enduring unsafe working conditions.

In addition to this the education system in Gaza is under real pressure, with double shift school days and overcrowded classrooms. There are no resources available to support students with learning difficulties or students who have behavioural problems because of the stress prevalent in Gaza (caused by the conflict, and daily stressors such as unemployment and poverty in families). There is no solid evidence that target students were under-performing in class because of conflict-induced stress, but conflict and daily stressors caused by the living conditions in Gaza cannot be excluded as having an impact on learning and social behaviour among young people in Gaza. UNRWA may want to consider using psycho-social assessment tools to determine whether under-performance in class is due to academic ability or is also exacerbated by the living conditions of families.

In Gaza, until the end of Grade 9, there are no other educational options available to young people than the regular education system, which is standard for everyone. Many of these students (with learning difficulties, who learn differently, or have to deal with psycho-social and economic pressures) keep repeating year after year or will drop out of school early. In 2010 there were an estimated 11,481 students that have repeated a number of their school years. These students are called 'over-aged students' within the UNRWA schooling system.

This project targets the group of young students who face difficulties in reaching and completing Grade 9. The project has provided an estimated 655 students a tailored skills training program which includes vocational training at one of UNRWA's vocational training centres in Khan Younis (KYTC) and Gaza (GTC), a 6-month paid apprenticeship within a private sector construction company and a toolkit at the end of the training to support their employment. If time and resources permit, it would be beneficial if UNRWA as the main implementer of the program assessed what were the main determining factors for students deciding to join the training program (financial incentives of the paid apprenticeship may be the determining factor for poor families).

These students are unable to access the standard vocational training programs at the KYTC or GTC because a minimum entrance standard required for these programs is completion of Year 9. The over-aged students have only completed Grade 6. Government run vocational training centres are not well resourced and would be unable to train 655 students within the timeframe of a year. Entry to most vocational training programs requires completion of Grade 9.

The project has been very relevant in responding to an identified skill gap in the labour market. The project has been able to offer students, who were not progressing in the education system, an opportunity to take on a tailored type of skills training program. Central to the relevance argument are the life changes this project has brought for a large number of students.

The project allowed both UNRWA and ILO to gain experience in and learn from the Competency Based Training Approach. UNRWA is currently revising its TVET strategy for its five areas of operations, with the aim of incorporating CBT across all its vocational training programs. UNRWA Gaza and UNRWA's Youth and TVET unit provide a strong contribution to this endeavour.

There is increased interest and support from donor countries in providing support to vocational training programs in the oPT. Both ILO and UNRWA have extensive experience with the provision of vocational training and utilising different approaches to vocational training, and should be well positioned to share experiences and lessons with other stakeholders, government agencies and donor agencies alike. Vocational training interventions in oPt are currently scattered and not well coordinated. The Palestinian National Authority is aiming to provide more clarity and support through developing the National Qualification Framework, which will help in establishing the levels of skills, an exercise for which UNRWA's and ILO's experiences will be relevant and valuable.

Finding: It is important when assessing relevance to assess whether the three outcomes included in the project design are equally relevant. It is the evaluator's opinion that all listed outcomes are relevant but that the project has achieved more results against Outcome 1. It should be noted that Outcome 1 does include various aspects from upgrading training facilities, introducing CBT, on-the-job training and access to the labour market for students. This is explained further under the section of Effectiveness.

2.3.2. Effectiveness

a. Results of the program against each Outcome Statement

Outcome 1: UNRWA over-aged students gained labour market relevant skills and/or employment through the provision of competency based skills training including on-the-job training at UNRWA's Gaza Vocational Training Institutions (namely GTC and KYTC).

The outputs listed against Outcome 1 are not the most relevant outputs if you consider the changes that the project is aiming to achieve under Outcome 1. There is not a strong causal link between the outputs and the outcome. The outputs listed are contributing to a stronger UNRWA capacity to deliver short term training programs. This capacity would not automatically contribute to UNRWA over-aged students gaining labour market relevant skills and/or employment.

The program consists of around 475 hours of training, varying according to the type of course, in one of the 6 selected skills. Following the training program the students have a 6 month training apprenticeship within one of the private sector companies. During the training program the students are supervised and trained by the UNRWA CBT trainers. During their apprenticeship program the students are supervised by the employer and the UNRWA monitors of the Job Creation Program. The first two batches of students received a training certificate at the end of the training program, before taking up the apprenticeship. This was changed after the second batch and now students receive a certificate upon completion of both the training program in the training centres and the apprenticeship. The latter was to demonstrate more clearly that the program consisted of two components, both a centre-based training program and an apprenticeship.

713 students participated in the program spread over 4 training batches. Of these, 655 students (92%) passed the Competency Training Program and 58 failed. All students who passed the CBT participated in the 6 month on-the-job training program.

Four batches of training took place: Batch 1 (not funded under SDC) had 193 students enrolled and 187 students passed; Batch 2 had 263 students enrolled and 246 passed; Batch 3 had 143 students enrolled and 126 passed; Batch 4 had 106 students enrolled and 96 passed. All students who passed the training program moved into the apprenticeship or to the On-the-Job training program.

The Placement and Career Guidance Office of UNRWA took a sample of 100 students who had finished the apprenticeship to assess who had found work (Date of sampling February 2013). This was done in preparation of the evaluation mission. The results were as follows:

Out of a sample of 100 students: 22 % of the students were unemployed, 16 % of the students were working in non-related areas, and 62% were working in jobs related to their training.

The results of the survey show a significant improvement since the findings of the internal evaluation carried out in December 2011. The higher employment rate after the apprenticeship program was mainly because the students are now better trained because of the longer training hours they receive before the commencement of the apprenticeship. The training hours were extended following feedback from employers. This is one example illustrating the fact that the project was able to be flexible and address concerns throughout the project. The adjustment of the training hours allowed the program to strengthen its results, potential impact and sustainability.

The survey provides a good snapshot of the sample of 100 students. It would be beneficial if UNRWA could do an analysis of all the students who participated in the program and undertake some more qualitative analysis. It is not clear how long the students were unemployed, or what kind of jobs they took up after the apprenticeship (if not related to the training), or how long they had been in employment and how long their contracts were expected to last, or the salary level the students were receiving after their apprenticeship.

In two Focus Group Discussions attended by 32 students (*see page 3 for method of sampling*) the rating of close to 9 out of 10 was provided for their experience under the project. Most of the students felt they were stuck in the educational system and did not make any progress. Their experience in the schools was not very positive and they felt like failures or a burden to society. All students, without exception, mentioned that the training program had given them an opportunity to take on a productive role in society. The program impacted on how the community and their family perceived them and they no longer felt like a burden to others.

A small number of students mentioned that they regretted not having completed Grade 9 and would like to return to school to complete Grade 9. UNRWA and the education sector in general in Gaza is challenged by under-resourced and crowded schools with staggered teaching times. Maybe it could be investigated or a suggestion made that schools/education authorities develop a program for these students that could run in conjunction with the industry training at the training facility? Perhaps literacy and numeracy components related to their training could be integrated into the students' learning materials or some time allocated regularly (each day/week at the beginning of the day) to support further numeracy and literacy development?

All students were extremely positive about their relationship with the UNRWA trainers and the quality of the training provided. Students found the training sufficient, but felt that sometimes they were still missing certain skills when starting the apprenticeship. This again, in the view of the evaluator, is to do with the wrong perception of the purpose of an apprenticeship.

The duration of the training program is acceptable. Extending the duration of the apprenticeship should be considered; however, extending the apprenticeship with its current approach is not recommended. The apprenticeship requires a complete overhaul to ensure it becomes part of the skills training program.

The students provided a number of suggestions on how to strengthen the training program for the future:

- Students were not involved in the **selection of the workplace** or had any discussion with UNRWA before starting the workplace. Students felt they could have benefitted from a better introduction to the company and the place of work. UNRWA's Career guidance unit should be more involved in supporting the students before taking on the apprenticeship and after completion of the apprenticeship in seeking employment opportunities.
- **Duration of the apprenticeship** – overall the students recommended that the apprenticeship be extended from 6 to 12 months.
- **Concerns around salary** – UNRWA pays the students' salary during the apprenticeship. In a number of cases it was mentioned that the salary amount was unstable, and the salary paid was often different from the agreement. Because the program is considered as part of the Job Creation Program students are paid only for the days they work. It is recommended that the agreement is checked to ensure this is clearly stipulated in the agreement and understood by all students. It should be understood that apprentices are not able to get a full wage similar to those who are skilled or semi-skilled workers, and are part of the job-creation program. However, the concern raised here is linked to ensuring the agreement is clear on the issue of remuneration and well understood by the students.
- **Payment of transportation costs** – Employers are expected to pay for the transportation costs. These costs can be high if the workplace is a long way from where the student lives. Students mentioned that they were paid transportation costs (an improvement since the start of the program) but that they often had to ask several times for the payment. Students should not be put in a position of having to ask continuously for payment of their

transportation costs. Mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that the employer pays the transportation costs to the trainee weekly when a UNRWA trainer or other staff member visits the trainees on-site.

- **Payment of overtime** – This is for hours worked by trainees in excess of the hours agreed under the apprenticeship and is expected to be paid by the employers. Students received payment for overtime, paid by employers. It is recommended however, that ILO and UNRWA ensure payment of overtime during the apprenticeship respects minimum salary scales.
- **Labelling of students** - During the training and apprenticeship students were still being referred to as the ‘over-aged students’, which meant they were regarded and treated differently. They felt they needed to work harder to prove themselves as not being failures.
- **Job tasks during apprenticeship** - Most students indicated that often they were asked to do jobs not related to the job for which they had been trained. Often this was because their specific skill was only required at a certain time during building at a construction site. For instance, tiling will take place when the building has been fully constructed, whereas shuttering is only needed at the start of construction. UNRWA has been trying to address this by connecting the students with sub-contractors who are called in by construction companies. The process of developing a database of sub-contractors was started by ILO in Gaza but was not completed. Working with sub-contractors will provide trainees with more training directly linked to their skill; however, the drawback with sub-contractors may be that full time employment cannot be guaranteed. This was not a concern raised during the mission but still something for UNRWA and ILO to consider. UNRWA as an agency often engages contractors and sub-contractors for construction related activities. UNRWA and other UN agencies may want to consider providing extra points during the tender process to those contractors and sub-contractors who have apprentices placed in their companies.
- **On-the-job monitoring visits** - The regularity of the visits by UNRWA job-creation monitors was infrequent, with some students mentioning weekly visits while other students mentioned visits of 2 or 3 times per week to check on problems and attendance. The UNRWA monitors are employed under the Job Creation Program and visit different sites to check on workers employed under the JCP. The monitors have no previous relationship with the trainees and their role is purely administrative. For a limited time the ILO employed two technical monitors for a certain period who would follow up on the technical quality of the training provided in the training centres. It is the evaluator’s opinion that the technical monitors are not regularly required for this purpose. The UNRWA training centres have sufficient in-house expertise to ensure the training provided is of the required level and quality. More follow up and supervision is required during the apprenticeship.
- **Training Certificates** – A significant number of students pointed out that they had not received their training certificates. This should be checked urgently and rectified by UNRWA. Training certificates should be handed to the students the day they finish their training in the training centres and a second certificate upon completion of their apprenticeship. In addition, certification procedures should be designed and implemented in a systematic way in order to be fair, to increase the employers’ trust in the ‘value’ of the certificates, and design/negotiate further education pathways.

Finding: The project has exceeded the target of 500 students to be trained. It also has achieved set targets for students succeeding in the training program (85%) and for those finding employment after

the apprenticeship (75%). The project has achieved significant results in bringing positive and lasting changes to the lives of 655 students.

b. Effectiveness of the Competency Based Training Approach

The Competency Based Approach to vocational training was used for the Skills Development Program. CBT capacity development for UNRWA vocational training centres (Gaza Training Centre and Khan Younis Vocational Training Centre), as outlined in the project document, was achieved under the program.

Both the Gaza Training Centre and the Khan Younis Training Centre were equipped with materials to deliver the training (GTC was equipped with materials to deliver the training program for the 5 skills while KYTC was equipped with materials to deliver 3 skills training programs).

In July 2011 a meeting took place in Amman between the ILO and UNRWA senior trainers followed by a trainer of trainers (ToT) program in Beirut in September 2011 for nine Master Trainers. Trainers were trained in the CBT approach during an ILO facilitated training program. The objective of training Master Trainers was that these people would be a resource within UNRWA to train other trainers in the CBT approach and to support the integration of the CBT approach across other training programs in UNRWA. Six draft competency based training curricula were developed by the Master Trainers and discussed during the September 2009 training program. The meeting in Amman and the ToT in Beirut supported the Master Trainers in developing appropriate CBT curricula.

It is important to provide ongoing training to those UNRWA trainers who were selected for the Master Trainers program. It is understood that the duration of the Master Trainers training program was limited to 1 week and did not include a practical skills demonstration. The UNRWA Master Trainers have requested further ILO support in developing their skills and certification of resources and manuals they have developed. This should be further followed up in future training programs. It should also be noted that regular access to Gaza and the ability to speak Arabic are crucially important.

The application of the CBT training approach has been effective in supporting students in acquiring a skill that they can apply in the workplace.

Students felt comfortable with the approach, because of the key characteristics of CBT:

- Very hands-on and practical training approach; task focused
- Learners are not expected to perform tasks better than others, or in competition with others, but rather they are supposed to perform according to pre-defined standards.
- Emphasis on the workplace application of knowledge and skills.

The implementation of the CBT Approach has been very relevant for the trainees who participated in the training program. Training participants rated the CBT training program very highly and gave an average rating of 8 out of 10 to their experience.

Outcome 1 – Output 1: Capacity of UNRWA TVET institution is strengthened (equipment and best practices manuals)

This output has been achieved but it was not possible to review the funding allocation between both training centres. However, based on visits to the training centres and meetings with the trainers, it appears that the training centres received sufficient resources and equipment to conduct the training. The Khan Younis Training Centre was equipped to provide 3 courses and the Gaza Training Centre was equipped to provide the full 6 training courses. The logic behind this allocation is not clear. It should be mentioned that CBT is a more costly, but more effective, way of providing vocational training courses because the aim is to provide the students with a real-working-place environment

where they can utilise tools and resources equal to the work place. Even if CBT is considered more costly in comparison with the other more traditional approaches to vocational training, it is considered cost-effective when taking into consideration the potential impact and the changes the program is achieving for the target group. However, the program should ensure that its effectiveness is strengthened through implementing the recommendations made in the evaluation report.

The curricula and training manuals are addressed under Output 3.

Outcome 1 – Output 2: Capacity of UNRWA’s trainers is enhanced through the set up of a core CBT trainer team

Nine Master Trainers have been trained under the program. In interviews conducted the Master Trainers felt sufficiently equipped to train other trainers in the CBT approach. Further validation of this should be considered as this could not be validated in the evaluation. Under future programs the Master Trainers should receive ongoing refresher training to ensure their knowledge and practical implementation is further enhanced. The Master Trainers have developed draft curricula and instructor manuals. These are now of an adequate standard but the UNRWA trainers request that the curricula, instructor manuals and assessment guides go through a final review and technical and methodological validation by a CBT expert to ensure the manuals are incorporating the CBT approach to a high standard.

Outcome 1 – Output 3: Curriculum of training programs is reviewed, 5 evaluation guides and 5 instructor guides developed.

- a. **Curriculum of training programs:** Curricula were developed and used in the delivery of the 5 training programs (shuttering, tiling, masonry, plumbing, steel reinforcement). The draft form of the curricula was developed by the UNRWA Gaza trainers. The curricula were then modified in ILO facilitated training in Beirut (September 2011) during which the Competency Based Approach was strengthened. After the CBT training in Beirut the Gaza UNRWA trainers further modified the curricula.
- b. **Instructor guides / or training manuals:** The 6 instructor manuals were developed by the trainers of GTC and KYTC. The instructor guides assist the trainers in delivering the curricula through providing training techniques, approaches in delivering the training, etc.
- c. **Evaluation guides / or Assessment guides:** these guides provide a methodology for the trainers to be used when assessing the trainees’ progress from one competency to the next.

During the evaluation it was not possible to assess the contents of the manuals because of the language. UNRWA trainers are satisfied with the quality of the work delivered but recommend that the 3 manuals developed under the program be validated by a CBT expert to ensure the CBT approach is properly integrated across all manuals used for the program. No validation of the contents of the manuals took place after the training in Beirut.

Outcome 1 – Output 4: 5 Short term CBT Training programs delivered

Over the duration of the project there were 4 CBT Training Programs delivered; this was one less than initially planned for in the project document. The main reason for this was that the training hours were extended for each training group. It was found that the number of training hours was not sufficient to allow students to be trained at an adequate skilled level, based on the feedback received from the employers and students. The fact that only 4 instead of 5 training cycles took place is acceptable because the program still achieved its target number of trainees, while the extended training hours also allowed the students to attain a better quality skilled level. Feedback received during the

evaluation indicated that the students are now trained at the level of skilled labourer rather than semi-skilled. However, it is not clear on which Qualification Framework this assessment was based.

Outcome 2: Local SMEs of the Construction Sector will have been empowered through provision of well-trained staff (construction workers)

A meeting took place attended by 5 private sector companies who placed students within their companies under the apprenticeship scheme. Additional information was obtained from the employers when visiting a number of construction sites where apprentices were working.

On the question to the employers of how well the trainees were sufficiently skilled to take up their work in the workplace, the employers gave the program an average rating of 7 out of 10. In the meeting employers expressed that they found the students in general not ready to take up work, and often lacked the necessary skills to work on their own. The evaluator finds a score of 7 out of 10 acceptable considering the role of the apprenticeship in complementing the centre-based training received. Employers should not expect students to have acquired all the required skills before commencing work. Students are expected to continue their skills development during the apprenticeship and this should be clearly communicated to the employers as part of the agreement in placing students. Arrangements should be made that other workers or on-site engineers provide further on-site training to the students during the apprenticeship.

Employers' suggestions on how to strengthen the apprenticeship:

- Part of the training to be done on site. A group of trainees and a trainer, supported by the company site engineer, should practice and train on site. This would allow the trainee to experience 'real working situations – practice – materials'.
- UNRWA trainers should have previous work experience and be able to convey to the students 'real life working practices'. The trainers should also follow up on the students during their work placements. There was also the recommendation that when UNRWA site engineers are present (construction of UNRWA buildings) the engineers should acknowledge and support the students.
- The training program should include other specialities such as painting and plastering. Some of the skills taught at the moment, such as shuttering, require greater cognitive and mathematical skills.
- An incentive approach should be developed to strengthen students' attitude and commitment to the work. Employers' feedback was that on average 50% of the students had a good attitude to the work, with 25% showing a strong commitment.

Finding: Both UNRWA and the employers view the apprenticeship program 'from differing perspectives'. UNRWA considers it as part of the Job Creation Program and many employers consider it as humanitarian support (doing a duty for the community by employing students who failed in the school system). Both UNRWA and employers do not have the right understanding of what an apprenticeship entails, namely skill development and on-the-job training.

In the project design document a technical monitoring aspect was included. The technical monitoring would be strengthened with the inclusion of 4 technical monitoring positions. The aim was that the monitors would be trained by an ILO CBT expert in 2012; however, this was not fully achieved. Only two monitors were recruited under the program, one for the duration of 6 months, the second monitor for the duration of 4 months. The outputs achieved through the monitors were considered insufficient to justify the cost. There was also no clarity on whether the monitors should be on-site during the apprenticeship, or following the work in the centre-based training component. The evaluator was

informed during the mission that the monitors supported the centre-based training and did not visit the students during the apprenticeship component.

The aim of the ILO technical monitors was to provide support to the UNRWA trainers in ensuring the training was of good standard, provide oversight to the assessment of the students and provide support to the apprenticeship program. The reason why the recruitment did not occur is not clear. One of the reasons provided was the lack of sufficient funding to hire the technical monitors over a long period of time.

Finding: The technical oversight of the apprenticeship program was not strong. The program could have benefitted from a closer technical supervision, ensuring a close link between the training program and the private sector, and providing an external view on the students' assessment and capacity, and support to students during the apprenticeship.

Outcome 3 – A strategy to maximize employment within UNRWA Gaza Programme will be formulated

The UNRWA Placement and Career Guidance Office assisted the project in finding apprenticeship places after the training was completed at the UNRWA training centres. All students who wanted to enter the apprenticeship program were provided with a place of work and a high percentage of the students also found employment after their apprenticeship was completed. The latter happened, however, without the involvement of the UNRWA Placement and Career Guidance Office. It is the evaluator's opinion that, if the apprenticeship is an integral part of the training program, the trainee should receive guidance: in choosing the appropriate type of skill prior to taking up the program; in apprenticeship contracts; and in finding employment after the apprenticeship is completed.

Finding: All students were able to find placement with a private sector company to undertake their apprenticeship; however, this should not be considered as 'employment' but as part of the training program.

2.3.3. Efficiency

Performance of the program against efficiency criteria is mixed. When reviewing the amount of the investment in relation to the results achieved, the project is representing good value for money. Results achieved are sustainable and will have an effect beyond the duration of the project such as: the chance for 650 students to take on a productive role in society; UNRWA's capacity strengthened in delivering short-term CBT courses (resources and ToT); and ILO's strengthened experience in supporting CBT training in the region.

Finding: It was found, however, that efficiency could have been better if the management of the program had been leaner and stronger, with more clear communication channels between ILO and UNRWA. Time and resources were not always used efficiently in the recruitment of technical support. Example: Technical monitors were recruited only for 6 and 4 months respectively. This was insufficient to allow the Technical Monitors to undertake the work effectively and to determine whether their role was effective or not.

2.3.4. Sustainability and Impact

The program will have lasting effects beyond the duration of the program. The training of the students will allow them to have a productive role in society; it changed the self-esteem of the students and the way the community and their families view them. The capacity of UNRWA has been strengthened in delivering short-term tailored training courses, allowing UNRWA to be more market focused in the delivery of their vocational training programs. The program has provided learning to both UNRWA and ILO to replicate this approach in other areas and to integrate lessons in the review of the TVET strategy for UNRWA. Sustainability and impact of results can be strengthened further if recommendations made during this evaluation will be incorporated into future designs.

2.4. Analysis of Program Target Group ‘Over-aged students’

UNRWA has approximately 11,500 over-aged students in its schools in the region at the moment. These students are at a minimum 2 years behind their peers in their current classrooms. The school system they are currently in poses challenges for these students for different reasons: classrooms are overcrowded and double shifts in schools put constraints on teachers to provide the required support to these students; some of the students are facing learning difficulties and the education system is unable to provide that additional support required; students are mostly coming from families who are facing severe socio-economic and financial conditions, often with pressure on youngsters to contribute to the family income.

There is clearly a need to work with these students to assist them in finding other opportunities that will allow them to develop themselves and find a role in their communities. These students often suffer from psycho-social problems that manifest themselves in the way they deal with the teachers, their colleagues or others. Reference was made to these behavioural challenges during the Focus Group Discussions with employers and UNRWA staff.

The special circumstances of these students added an extra layer of responsibility to the project. These special circumstances were recognised in the beginning, but were not taken into consideration or sufficiently addressed when the project was designed.

This meant that the CBT trainers were not just skills trainers in this project but, to a certain extent, also counsellors to the students to address some of the behavioural issues.

In the Focus Group Discussions all students were very positive about their experiences with the trainers. They often referred to their trainers as their ‘friends’ and were very spontaneous in making the comparison with their teachers who would, in certain cases, humiliate or hit them. This evaluation does not intend to assess or provide an opinion about the relationship between the students and their teachers. However, it is clear that these over-aged students required another way of dealing with or another kind of relationship between themselves and their instructors, trainers or teachers.

The employers also referred to the sometimes challenging relationship with the students placed in the apprenticeship. Based on the results of ongoing employment with the employers it seems this is not the overwhelming reality, and that in most cases students were committed to their apprenticeship and left a good opinion with the employer, which is reflected by the large number of students finding employment after the apprenticeship.

The main achievement of the project lays in the changes the project has achieved with the over-aged students taking up the training program. The project intervention resulted in a greater self-esteem for the students, with their position in the family and the community changed.

The strength of the CBT is its linkage with the market; it identified and responds to a gap for certain skills in the labour market. The training method suits the learning of the students; the training is practical, on-the-job, with one to one attention between the trainer and the student.

How to strengthen the program in the future:

1. The program is currently seen as part of the Job Creation Program. The workplacement or apprenticeship is seen as Job Creation or Cash for Work; it is not seen as part of the training itself. The training program should include both the training program and the workplacement as two halves of one whole program.
2. At the end of the apprenticeship the students should have a graduation ceremony and be awarded a certificate after a proper assessment process. (The latter is very important and during the evaluation mission it was found that many students had not yet received their certificate. This should be corrected as soon as possible, if not already addressed).

3. The OECD-DAC definition of impact is: 'The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended'. When evaluating the impact of a program or a project, it is useful to consider the following questions: What has happened as a result of the program or project? What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?

2.5. Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

2.5.1. Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

The role of the PAC is to provide strategic direction on key issues. As explained in the objectives in the project document, the PAC was to be a small group of senior officials representing ILO, UNRWA and other main partners, whose purpose was to ensure effective cooperation between key stakeholders.

Finding: It was found that the PAC did not function as well as intended at the beginning of the project. For instance, the PAC was not able to involve other stakeholders, such as the donor SDC, in PAC meetings. It is the evaluator's opinion that this was mainly caused by the way the project was managed. Each partner, UNRWA and ILO, had their own implementation schedule and their own budget. This is not a weakness per se, but can make the program less effective if there is no strong leadership in program management. One of the main impediments to the successful project implementation was the fact that ILO was not in a position to keep on-site staff with the appropriate level of expertise and had to rely on consultants on an ad hoc basis.

2.5.2. Project Management Unit (PMU)

The PMU was set up with responsibility for the day-to-day implementation and coordination of activities. It was staffed with an ILO project manager (two project managers for the duration of the project) and support staff, under the supervision of the ILO Jerusalem office and the technical guidance of the ILO-Regional Office in Beirut. The PMU was expected to assume responsibility for the provision of technical inputs, sub-contracting, day-to-day monitoring and backstopping, and to recruit local and international consultants on an ad hoc basis to undertake specific assignments.

The PMU had regular meetings to provide support to the project implementation. Minutes of meetings were reviewed. However, it seems that the functioning of the PMU could have been more effective if there had been greater clarity around the roles of everyone involved and a clear management structure.

The involvement of ILO Regional Office in Beirut in decisions related to the day-to-day management does not provide the most effective management of the project. It seems this adds an extra layer to the management of the project. Based on feedback received there was a lack of clarity on the role of the ILO Regional Office and the ILO office in Jerusalem. It would be more effective if ILO Jerusalem were involved with the day-to-day management of the project and ILO Beirut focuses on the provision of technical expertise, strategic direction and financial management of the program.

2.5.3. Monitoring and Evaluation

Project performance assessment through systematic gathering of data at the output level was sufficient and allowed the project management team to identify challenges and weaknesses to the program. A monitoring system was developed that includes a set of specific output indicators for trainees' achievements, apprenticeship performance, relation between trainees and employers, etc.

It is clear that when challenges were identified the project management intervened and developed strategies to address the concerns (e.g. number of training hours, need for technical monitors, etc.). From the project documentation and interviews it was evident that the project management team tried

to deal with the issues. A solution was not always found, especially in cases where the solution required additional resources.

The performance indicators are all quantitative and do not allow assessment of the qualitative changes the program is achieving.

2.6. Added Value of the ILO-UNRWA Partnership

The project was able to draw on the strengths of both ILO and UNRWA agencies to a certain extent. However, it was found that the strengths of both agencies could have been better utilised if communication challenges had been addressed.

From the conversations, it is clear that both agencies had views and expectations of what the role of the other agency should be. Example: UNRWA trainers expected more technical input, review and validation from ILO in assessing resources developed under the project, while ILO staff may have shied away from being too closely involved to avoid being accused of micro-management of the project.

At the moment, an International Expert is seconded from ILO to UNRWA HQ Amman to assist UNRWA in finalizing its TVET strategy. This position is funded by the Swiss Cooperation office-Amman Through two missions to Gaza, the ILO Adviser who is now the UNRWA/ILO TVET Adviser has provided assistance to the UNRWA trainers in Gaza.

It is the evaluator's view that the project could have been more effective in achieving its results if:

- A clear communication strategy had been implemented. Roles, responsibilities and expectations should have been more clearly spelled out at the beginning of the project. Clear lines of communication should have been in place between the two agencies to review and strengthen the communication strategy more regularly.
- One project manager should be appointed and embedded within UNRWA Gaza, with clear roles and responsibilities, and with the required level of technical skills and ability to speak Arabic. Bringing expertise closer to the field, without having to rely on engaging consultants on an ad hoc basis, will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the program.
- Despite inherent difficulties to commute in and out of Gaza, ILO Jerusalem should strengthen its role in the daily oversight of the project, with ILO Beirut providing technical inputs on all documents. ILO Jerusalem should also take on a more pro-active role in engaging with SDC as the donor and keeping the donor well informed about project progress.
- At the moment there are too many layers of management involved in the project. The size and the scope of the project ask for a lean management structure.

ILO's role under the project

Since December 2012 ILO's involvement has been more at the UNRWA departmental level, with an ILO International Technical Adviser now on loan to UNRWA and placed within UNRWA's Education Department in Amman. Prior to December 2012 ILO's involvement was directly focused on the project implementation in Gaza.

ILO's direct role under the project was impacted by challenges around the recruitment of international technical experts in the field of CBT to be based in Gaza. It is the evaluator's opinion that there is no need for a full-time CBT international expert to be present in Gaza to support the UNRWA Gaza trainers. It is more important that the UNRWA trainers are supported through ad hoc missions by a CBT technical expert in Gaza. In cases when access to Gaza is an issue, a training meeting should take place outside of Gaza in the region. Issue of access for experts should be addressed and it is recommended that discussions take place with the donor to explore whether SDC can provide support in obtaining the necessary permits. The evaluator believes that Arabic language skills are essential at

this stage of the program. The support needed now is different from the inception phase of the program. The emphasis should now be on reviewing and validating the curricula and training manuals developed in Arabic by the trainers in Gaza, continued training of master trainers, testing and certification.

During the start-up phase of the program the involvement of ILO was very effective in providing training to the UNRWA trainers and supporting UNRWA in introducing CBT across the vocational training program. ILO contributed greatly to the set-up of the foundations of the program.

When the program was evolving towards full implementation the role and presence of ILO was less clear. In strict evaluation terms ILO's involvement was directly related to achieving the expected outcomes of the program as described in the Project Design Document. However, as indicated in the mid-term internal review and as observed during this external evaluation, ILO could have taken on a more prominent, leading role throughout the implementation. This should be an area for discussion for any future programming.

Some suggested areas:

In specific areas of the program

- Review and validate curriculum and training materials to ensure the CBT approach is fully applied. Provide advice on where it can be strengthened.
- Work with the Private Sector companies who take part in the apprenticeship program on improving labour standards and health and safety conditions.
- Work with the Trade Unions in Gaza is challenging at the moment. In the future, areas in which cooperation is possible should be better assessed.
- Follow up closely with the Palestinian Authority and Ministry of Labour in certifying the curriculum under the National Qualification Framework.

In areas of awareness raising around Labour Standards:

- Raising awareness among the employers around Health and Safety conditions
- Raising awareness around the minimum wage
- Raising awareness around the Juvenile Labour Law

(These issues should be placed within the constraints that the context of Gaza calls for, but nevertheless should not prevent ILO from playing its role around its core mandate, which is linked to labour standards, employment, social protection and social dialogue.)

UNRWA's role under the project

UNRWA has a well-recognised reputation and long term experience in providing vocational training in the oPt. Under the project UNRWA had the opportunity to develop short term training courses using CBT, aimed at a target group that UNRWA vocational training centres had not worked with previously.

The quality of the training provided under the project was received positively and was of a high standard. It could not be verified to what extent the trainers and the manuals are incorporating the CBT approach. However, based on the interviews with the trainers, they appear to have a good grasp of the CBT approach.

The way the program was set up, incorporating the apprenticeship under the Job Creation Program for monitoring purposes may have been correct from an efficiency perspective. It was also a reflection of how the apprenticeship was perceived at the beginning of the program. However, without the continued presence of Technical Monitors on the program, the apprenticeship did not give the expected learning results.

From the interviews and meetings with UNRWA staff and trainers it was clear that a change took place among most of the trainers in relation to the CBT approach, as well as in trainers' attitude toward the students. Organisational change is always slow, especially when it involves changing of attitudes or incorporating different training approaches.

UNRWA should ensure that both training centres, based in Gaza and Khan Younes, work cooperatively and share resources and knowledge. This will make the CBT training delivery more effective and promote a more efficient use of resources. The evaluator was unable to assess the financial resources made available to both training centres. Increased transparency between both centres on available resources is recommended to avoid communication challenges.

The main recommendation to UNRWA is to ensure that there is a common understanding of the contents and strategy of the training program across the different departments involved. This will make the program more effective and results stronger. UNRWA should ensure the management of a program like this is lean and efficient, ensuring results oriented approaches in implementation, monitoring and reporting.

2.7. Coordination and Networking with Palestinian Authority and Donor Agencies

2.7.1. Validation by the Palestinian Authority

The CBT curriculum was submitted by ILO to the Palestinian National Authority in September 2012. It is important that the training programs are validated by the PNA. It is important for the students who went through the training program that it is recognised by the government.

Based on meetings with donor agencies and PNA ministries it is the evaluator's opinion that validation and recognition of the training curriculum by the PNA will not take place soon. The reason for this is that the PNA is working on further unification of the TVET system; at the moment TVET sits under the responsibility of various ministries such as Ministry of Education (MoED), Ministry of Higher Education (MoHED), Ministry of Labour (MoL) and Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA).

Currently various actors are involved in providing vocational training; NGOs, Charitable Organisations, Government, UN, etc. All agencies are licensed by the MoL to provide vocational training; however, the curriculum needs to be standardised. The Palestinian Authority Ministry of Labour is working toward a National Qualification Framework.

2.7.2. Networking with other donors

There is increased interest among donor agencies in supporting the TVET sector in the oPt, which will require strengthening of coordination to ensure effective use of resources allocated.

In general, vocational training offered in the oPt requires students to have completed Grade 9. The UNRWA-ILO project remains an exception by targeting students who are struggling within the current education system and are unable to finish Grade 9.

GIZ – German Government – Key intervention is supporting the PNA to develop Palestinian occupational standards, including standards for curriculum development, to be applied by all who are involved in the provision of TVET.

In addition to making the provision of Vocational Training in the oPt more standardised and validated by the Ministry of Labour, there is another area in which donors and PA could work together; that is on the existing perception around Vocational Training.

Vocational training in the oPt remains considered as 'education for failures' and less than 5% of students enrol in vocational training programs. The Palestinian Authority needs to market TVET as a viable sector among Palestinian families and, at the same time work with the private sector to provide decent job opportunities (quality of work, decent work and decent pay). Traditionally, among Palestinian families the emphasis is on obtaining a university degree. However, there are insufficient

places available to employ all university graduates in the labour market conditions in the oPt, while at the same time the market requires certain skills for which no qualified people are available. The message needs to be disseminated that a diversity of skills is required in a society and that vocational training is valuable and should not be seen as second-class education.

Changing perceptions among the private sector is important as well. Many private sector companies believe TVET institutions are not important to them because of the gap between the private sector and the training provided at the TVET institutions. Reducing the gap between the private sector and the TVET will require ensuring that TVET institutions remain relevant by being more market focused, responding to skills shortages, through improved equipment and instructors with upgraded skills at TVET institutions. In the oPt the TVET sector needs to be more pro-active to the changing needs in the labour market.

Lessons Learned

Recommendations made in the report are evidence based and therefore give a good indication of what the lessons are under this project. The main lessons of the project are centred on the following two main questions (derived from ILO's Guidance Note 3 – Evaluating Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices): 'Are we doing the right thing?' and 'Are we doing things right'?

Are we doing the right thing?

It is the evaluator's opinion that the project is doing the 'right' thing. The project is targeting a group of students who face challenges in the traditional education system and are lagging behind. This has an immense impact on the morale and self-esteem of these young students. The presence of these students in the regular UNRWA education system also puts a strain on limited human and financial resources.

The results are demonstrating that the project is an effective way of addressing a development need. 713 students participated in the program and around 80% of the trainees found employment after the completion of the apprenticeship. The project intervention resulted in greater self-esteem for the students, with their position in the family and the community changed. The project was also an innovative way of bringing vocational training and the private sector together. Too often vocational training programs are 'standard' programs without any regular assessment of private sector needs.

The project is an example of where a small intervention can make a big difference. The project can however be further strengthened to ensure: a) students have the opportunity to return to the regular school system if they wish; b) the program should include continued literacy and numeracy activities to support life-long learning; c) the stigma of 'over-aged students' should be eliminated and students should be given the opportunity for a fresh start.

Are we doing things right?

When it comes to implementing the project, both agencies (UNRWA and ILO) can strengthen the process. The strength of the implementation is closely linked with the operational nature of UNRWA and its long experience in providing vocational training in Gaza. The strength of the project is also in the relationship developed between the trainers and the students.

- The model developed, a combination of centre based training and apprenticeship, is good but the model needs to be further strengthened. The main lesson here is that the apprenticeship should be considered as an integral part of the training and not considered as 'something that happens after the training'. A number of recommendations have been made in the report on

how the apprenticeship can be strengthened. Both agencies are in a position, based on the experience in Gaza, to develop a model and operational guidelines that can be used for further project development. This model can and should be shared by other governmental and non-governmental agencies that are involved in similar activities.

- The second important lesson of the project is that the operational and managerial relationship between UNRWA and ILO needs to be strengthened. The joint implementation supports the move of the UN toward implementing as One UN. This project provides a number of lessons on how such a joint implementation can be strengthened. A clear division of tasks should be developed between ILO and UNRWA and the inputs of both agencies should be coordinated by one project manager who has an overall coordination role. The division of tasks should be based on the expertise and experience of each agency. Both agencies should be accountable for the support that they agree upon to be provided under the project. A regular 6 monthly review should take place of the input of both agencies and they should action any concerns or contextual constraints immediately. Transparency and communication are the main factors in ensuring that organisations work well together as equal partners in a joint venture.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Develop a clear Theory of Change and identify underlying assumptions that place the students at the core of the program as a basis for future project designs.

Recommendation 2: The name ‘Over-Aged Students’ should be dropped from the moment the students start the training program. Students should be able to see the vocational training program as a new start.

Recommendation 3: In future designs ensure the program outcome statements are equally relevant and more closely reflect the program Theory of Change, the higher level changes the program aims to achieve.

Recommendation 4: In future programs ensure that students have the opportunity to return to follow regular school curricula if desired. Or at a minimum, future programming should ensure learning opportunities for students to ensure further development of literacy and numeracy skills. This could perhaps be done through a continued school based learning program that complements the vocational training program.

Recommendation 5: The training program should be strengthened qualitatively by placing the students more central to the project intervention. A number of small adjustments will have a significant impact on the results including, but not limited to: 1) UNRWA trainers follow students during apprenticeship; 2) ILO engages pro-actively with employers and Trade Unions on working conditions; 3) students will be better informed about the purpose of the apprenticeship when deciding to take on the skills training program and before starting the apprenticeship itself.

Recommendation 6: The apprenticeship component of the program is to be strengthened through ensuring a correct common understanding of the purpose of an apprenticeship.

Recommendation 7: The apprenticeship component of the program should be considered as an integral part of the training program; it should not be considered as something that follows the training program. The training program for the students should be a 12 month program that includes one package composed of training centre based skills development and the apprenticeship to further

strengthen and apply acquired skills. GTC/KYTC based training and the apprenticeship should both be treated as an integral part of the training program.

Recommendation 8: Apprentices should be supervised by the trainers of the GTC or the KYTC during the apprenticeship to follow up on learning and skills development. The apprenticeship program should not be considered as part of UNRWA's Job Creation Program. The purpose of the apprenticeship is not job creation or cash for work; it is about skills development.

Recommendation 9: ILO staff needs to work with the employers on ensuring correct understanding and application of the apprenticeship.⁴

Recommendation 10: Strengthen the technical oversight of the program through ILO recruited and trained technical monitors over the duration of the project, with a focus on bridging the gap between the training program and the needs of the private sector, and follow up on the apprenticeship program with the employers.

Recommendation 11: An individual employment strategy for each student is developed to support the students in finding employment after completion of the apprenticeship.

Recommendation 12: A results framework and workplan should be developed by the program with realistic resources allocated against each outcome and output. This should be closely managed by the program manager and updated quarterly for the PMU and the PAC.

Recommendation 13: In future similar projects, implementation should be strengthened through the employment of a psycho-social support person to assist trainers to train and support students more effectively. It is not recommended that a psycho-social support person be solely dedicated to work directly with students, as this could emphasize to the students that they are regarded as different or problematic.

Recommendation 14: CBT trainers should continue to maintain the relationship with the students during their apprenticeship. The transition from training centre based training to the apprenticeship with an employer would be strengthened if the students could keep the relationship that they developed over the period of months with their training instructors.

Recommendation 15: To strengthen and formalise the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to allow it to provide strategic direction to the program, with the relevant input from different stakeholders.

Recommendation 16: Bring clarity to the lines of responsibility of those involved in the management of the project. The project management should be leaner, with one project manager responsible for overseeing full project implementation, without micro-managing or taking over the role of other stakeholders involved.

Recommendation 17: For the next design the program should be supported by a strong Results Framework, allowing the program to assess both quantitative and qualitative results.

Recommendation 18: ILO and UNRWA should utilise their comparative advantages more strongly, with **UNRWA** focusing on the training delivery in their training centres; providing psycho-social support to the students; trainers following students during the apprenticeship; employment strategy after the apprenticeship; and **ILO** focusing on providing CBT technical support to UNRWA (training methodologies, curricula, building capacity and providing quality assurance for a sustainable testing and certification system); liaison with potential employers (focus on CBT, health and safety conditions).

⁴To build capacity and ensure quality assurance based on characteristics of successful apprenticeships. See ILO G20 - http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/genericdocument/wcms_190188.pdf

Recommendation 19: The program should ensure strong linkages with the Palestinian Authority and other stakeholders to ensure the CBT curricula are shared and assessed within the National Qualification Framework.

ANNEX 1

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR IN THE GAZA STRIP

PAL/10/01M/SDC

Independent final evaluation

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction and Rationale for the Evaluation

Since January 2011, ILO and UNRWA have implemented '*Skills Development and Employment Services for the Construction Sector in the Gaza Strip*', a Project funded by the Swiss Government with a total budget of CHF 1'200'660 over a period of 18 months.

The project builds on the strong knowledge and comparative advantages of both ILO and UNRWA in the field of vocational education and training. UNRWA and ILO work jointly with relevant technical institutions and engage with the private SMEs in the construction business to achieve the three project outcomes. Emphasis is placed on the strategic partnership and effective collaboration between ILO and UNRWA in the area of skills development and employability.

The joint ILO-UNRWA project on '*Skills Development and Employment Services for the Construction Sector in Gaza Strip*' was developed with the aim of contributing to skills development, employment generation and social and economic recovery of Gaza through three main outcomes:

Table 1: Project Objectives

Development Objective: Contribute to skills development, employment generation and to the social and economic recovery of Gaza Strip.	
Outcome 1: UNRWA over aged students gained labour market relevant skills and/or employment through the provision of competency based skills training (CBT) including on-the-job training at UNRWA Gaza Vocational Training Institutions (namely GTC and KYTC)	Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capacity of UNRWA TVET institution is strengthened (equipment & best practices manuals);• Capacity of UNRWA's trainers is enhanced through the set up of a core CBT trainer team• 5 Curriculum of training programs is reviewed, 5 evaluation guide and 5 instructor guides developed• 5 Short-term CBT Training programs delivered
Outcome 2: Local SMEs of the Construction Sector will have been empowered through provision of well-trained staff (construction workers)	Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capacity of construction SMEs is enhanced.• On-job training is delivered
Outcome 3: A strategy to maximize employment within UNRWA Gaza Programme will be formulated	Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills development and employment creation strategy formulated

ILO had a successful experience in South Lebanon in designing and implementing accelerated training courses using a 'Competency Based Approach' for eight technical vocations in the construction sector. The intervention established synergies between the two projects and was a logical strategy to adopt in order to utilize lessons learnt and build a regional network of updated modern curricula to harmonise employers' needs with students' real competences. ILO has had a similar success when developing and introducing competency based curricula in Iraq. By the end of the project, ILO will have established an important level of synergy between the Lebanese, Iraqi and Palestinian curricula.

In December 2011, the ILO and UNRWA conducted an internal interim evaluation whose recommendations and results have been used for the remaining period of the project. The recommendations specifically highlighted the need to support UNRWA trainers in applying the CBT approach and in improving their training methodology, in seeking greater involvement of employers in trainee selection, curricula validation, orientation sessions, and in assessing and certifying skills to be improved.

While the project is coming towards an end and since a new phase is currently in the making, both agencies decided to conduct an internal final evaluation which results would be useful in finalising next phase proposal.

This document describes the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the independent final evaluation to be undertaken during this current phase. It adheres to ILO's policies and procedures on evaluations. It will be managed by the Head of the programming unit, at the ILO Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS) in Beirut.

2. Evaluation Purpose and Scope

PURPOSE

The evaluation will:

Review the achievements of the project by assessing to what extent the stated objectives and major outputs have been achieved. Review the efficiency and effectiveness of the project implementation framework.

Review the collaboration that has been established with representative of employers, with employers themselves, and with trade unions in order to facilitate apprenticeship, and transition to work. Identify the bottlenecks that may have constrained this collaboration and how it can be systematized.

Analyse and make recommendations regarding the sustainability of the project, provide recommendations on how to build on the achievements of the project, and identify more specifically the support needed for the furthering and up-scaling of CBT approach to other training undertaken by UNRWA.

Examine the joint programming management model, in particular the coordination between ILO and UNRWA to achieve the common pre-set objectives of the project.

Document lessons learned and good practices for replication.

SCOPE AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

The scope of the evaluation covers all results achieved from December 2010 to December 2012, with a particular focus on the year 2011 to 2012. In particular, the evaluation examines the quality and impact of project activities on the employability of Palestinian refugees, including:

- Development effectiveness: The extent to which the development intervention's objectives and intended results are being achieved.
- Resource Efficiency: The extent with which resources are economically converted into results, including mention of alternative more cost-effective strategies when applicable.
- Impact: Positive and negative, intended and unintended long-term effects.
- Relevance: The extent to which the development intervention is meeting beneficiary requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.
- Sustainability: The continuation of benefits and probability of continued long-term benefits after the project has been completed.
- Partnerships: The extent to which the project is contributing to the capacity development of UNRWA, the effectiveness of the ILO-UNRWA partnership and implications on potential future national and regional partnerships.
- Lessons learned and good practice: Good practices being identified by the project, key lessons being learned from project implementation, and potential recommendations for similar projects/projects.

SUGGESTED ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

More specifically the evaluation will look at the following evaluation questions:

Relevance

- Did the project address relevant needs and are these still relevant? Given the current situation and based on the latest developments in Gaza have more relevant needs emerged that the project could have addressed?
- What internal and external factors have influenced the targeted groups and implementing partners to meet projected outcomes? Were the project objectives and design relevant given the political, economic and financial context?
- How did the project align with and supported ILO's and UNRWA strategies in Gaza and more generally in the oPt?
- How well did the project complement and link to activities of other donors/development agencies at local level?

Validity of design

- What is the 'theory of change behind the project'? Is the intervention logic coherent and realistic? Do outputs causally link to outcomes, which in turn contribute to the broader development objective of the project?
- Have the various 'change' assumptions been properly identified and addressed in the project design and implementation? (business climate, blockages, bottlenecks to recruitment, etc)
- How appropriate and useful are the indicators described in the project document in assessing the project's achievements? Are the targeted indicators realistic and can they be tracked?

Project effectiveness

- Has the Project achieved its planned objectives in a timely manner?
- Have the quantity and quality of outputs produced been satisfactory? Do the benefits accrue equally to men and women?
- What parts of CBT have been implemented?
 - a. What have been the limitations?
 - b. How can it be up-scaled?
- Which components of the Project had the greatest achievements? What have been the supporting factors? How can the ILO and UNRWA build or expand on these achievements?
- In which areas does the Project have the least achievements? What have been the constraining factors and how have they been addressed?
- What alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project's objectives?
- How did factors outside of the control of the project affect project implementation and objectives and how has the project dealt with these external factors? How realistic were the risks and assumptions that the project built upon?
- Did the program reach the expected number targeted groups? Are the beneficiaries satisfied with the quality and delivery of services? If not, in what way did the services not meet with expectations and why? What concrete improvements and changes have taken place as a direct result of the program?
- What has been the effectiveness of the management arrangements? What has been the added value of the ILO-UNRWA partnership in achieving project goals?
- How effectively did the project management monitor project performance and results? What M&E system has been put in place, and how effective has it been? Is relevant data systematically being collected and analyzed to feed into management decisions? Is data disaggregated by sex? Is information being regularly analyzed to feed into management decisions?

Efficiency of resource use

- Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- Have resources been used efficiently? Has the implementation of activities been cost-effective? Will the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results have been attained with fewer resources?

Impact orientation and sustainability

- How has the project contributed towards project's goal? To what extent has the project contributed the capacity of the ILO and UNRWA constituents? How could the project impact have been improved?
- The examination of the short term training delivery and long term objective (UNRWA reform on skills) must be done around tools and knowledge products.
 - a. What have been the knowledge products so far?
 - b. How were the knowledge products designed?

- c. With what level of participation?
- d. With what quality assurance?
- e. What is the user feedback?
- From the perspective of the targeted youth, what has been the training process from recruitment to gainful employment?
- From the perspective of employers and workers, what are the factors that explain successful apprenticeship and successful long term employment?
- Are national partners willing and committed to continue with the project? How effectively has the project built necessary capacity of people and institutions?
- What are the realistic long term effects of the project on the poverty level and Decent Work condition of the people? Is the project a relevant entry point to support the ILO Decent Work agenda in Gaza?
- To what extent is the project making a significant contribution to broader and longer –term development impact? Is the project strategy and management steering towards impact?
- How could the project be scaled up? Should there be a second phase of the project to consolidate achievements?

3. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted by a Senior Evaluator. The evaluator will be requested to present a more detailed evaluation methodology and an evaluation plan based on the suggested analytical framework and the desk review.

ILO and UNRWA will be responsible for providing all logistical support to facilitate the evaluation process. The evaluation will be carried out using a desk review, alongside field visits to project sites for consultations with project staff, ILO constituents and other primary internal and external stakeholders. Upon completion of the mission, the Evaluator will conduct a stakeholder workshop for the dissemination of initial findings.

The evaluation will be done in two inter-related phases as follows:

Phase 1: A desk review of all relevant project documents. A complete listing of documents to be reviewed can be found in Annex I of the TORs.

Phase 2: On-site interviews, meetings and focus group discussions with project staff, project beneficiaries, social partners and other key stakeholders. A detailed mission schedule will be developed and will be based on the proposed evaluation methodology. There will be a total of 8-days allocated to the on-site portion of the evaluation, including a closing seminar where the tentative findings of the evaluation will be validated.

A list of key stakeholders to be met is provided in annex II of the TORs. Suggested focus groups discussion could be as follow:

Focus Group Discussions

- Worker Representatives
- Employers
- Apprentices who did not continue in their apprenticeship
- Apprentices who are still employed
- People who will not benefit from the apprentice scheme
- Trainers at TVET

4. Clients of the Evaluation

The primary clients of the evaluation are the ILO Regional Office for Arab States (Beirut), the ILO Jerusalem Office and the ILO constituents, the Project Management Team, UNRWA and the donor. Secondary clients include other units within the ILO that may indirectly benefit from the knowledge generated by the evaluation (CRISIS, SEED, COOP, CODEV, EVAL,).

5. Main Outputs

The expected outputs to be delivered by the evaluation consultant are:

- a) An evaluation plan (including instruments and methodology);
- b) Summary of the Stakeholder workshops facilitated by the evaluation team;
- c) Draft evaluation report including stakeholder workshop proceedings;
- d) Final Report :
 - The Final Report should include key project and evaluation data, and follow the ILO evaluation report structure summarized below:
 - Executive Summary
 - Description of the Project
 - Purpose, Scope and the Clients of the Evaluation
 - Methodology
 - Key findings
 - Conclusions
 - Lessons learned
 - Recommendations

The final report will be circulated to key stakeholders (those participants present at stakeholder evaluation workshop will be considered key stakeholders) for their review and comments. Comments from stakeholders will be consolidated by the evaluation manager at the ILO Regional Office for Arab States and provided to the evaluator. In preparing the final report the evaluator should consider these comments, incorporate as appropriate and provide a brief note explaining why any comments might not have been incorporated.

Annex 2 – Schedule Evaluation Mission

Skills Development and Employment Services

For the Construction Sector in the Gaza Strip

25 February - 5 March, 2013

Monday 25th Feb	Gaza
10:00	Arrival to Gaza
10:00 – 11:00	Meeting with previous ILO Project Manager to review mission's schedule
11:00 – 13:00	Kick-off meeting with ILO and UNRWA team Rashid Al ruzzi /ILO Project Manager Philip Brown / Projects officer /UNRWA Seham Abu- Nasr /Programme Support Office/UNRWA Jamil Hamad /Director of GTC/UNRWA Ghassan Abu Orf /Director of KYTC/UNRWA Khairy Shuaib /Placement and Career Guidance Assistant/ UNRWA Nabil Ali /Monitoring and Evaluation assistant /UNRWA
13:00-14:00	Meeting with UNRWA VTC Manager : GTC Principal (Jamil Hamad)
14:00-15:00	Tour of GTC.
15:00- 16:00	Meeting with UNRWA Master trainers (Based in GTC) Khaled El arja, Mussa e-zaaneen, Jawda abu Jazar, nabil salama, Asaad el Jarba & Husni Abu sheira
Tuesday 26th Feb	Gaza
7:30- 9:00	Tour in GTC
9:00- 10:00	Journey to Khan Younis
10:00- 11:00	Meeting with UNRWA VTC Manager: KYTC principal (Ghassan Abu Orf)
11:00- 12:00	Tour in KYTC
12:00-13:00	Meeting with UNRWA VTC trainers (Based in KYTC) ←Sharif abu-ttaya, Sary Abu shaeir and Omar abu Uda+ technical Supervisor hired by ILO Sameh El kahlout→
13:00-15:00	1st Focus Group discussion with (12) training participant
Wed 27th Feb	Gaza
9:00-11:00	2nd Focus Group discussion with (12) training participant
11:00-12:30	Meeting with UNRWA's Area head monitors< Mun abdelsalam- Bilal Jheich – Majed Abu amcha & PCGA (Khairy Shuaib) and ILO technical supervisors/based in KYTC←Sameh →
12:30- 14:30	Focus Group Discussion with Employers <- Mohamed El khatib from Khatib Co. -Abdelsalam awad from Sarhad Co, ENG. Abu E l ameer from Imad & Hassouna CO. and subcontractor plus a site engineer .
14:30 – 15:30	Meeting with Palestinian contractors Union PCU <Usama keheil
15:30-16:30	Meeting with GIZ (Gaza office)<Hazem EL mashharawwi
Thur 28th Feb	Gaza

09:00 – 10:00	Meeting with Government institution(Ministry of Labour) Mohamed El kreiri General manager of Vocational Training> Ahmad aSukar from Planing and Vocational training and Talat Mashharawi from Monitoring Vocatioal training
10:00-11:00	Meeting with trade Union < Abdelraouf Ulayyan from the Palestinian General Federation Of Trade Unions
12:30-15:30	Construction Site Visit in Khan Younis (Al Aqsa university) - Al serhed Company-
Fri 1st March	Gaza
	Write-up for consultant
Sat 2nd March	Gaza
09:00-11:00	Field visit to apprentices in one of construction sites Case study development
11:30 – 15:00	Field visit to apprentices in one of construction sites
Sun 3rd Mar	Gaza
09:00-10:00	Meeting with Islamic relief
10:30 – 15:00	UNRWA and ILO meetings to support information gathering and analysis against evaluation questions included in the TOR.
Mon 4th Mar	Gaza
9.30	Debriefing for stakeholders – key results will be presented and discussed. Participants to be determined during Kick-Off Meeting
14:00	Departure for Ramallah
Tue 5th Mar	Jerusalem - Ramallah
08:00	Meetings in Ramallah with PA Ministries and Donors SDC The head of SDC Mr. Giancarlo De Picciotto; Ms. Sandra Bernasconi Deputy Director of Cooperation; Tanya Abdallah, National Program Officer USAID Ministry of Labour / Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education / Palestinian Authority
Wed 6th Mar	Departure

ANNEX 3

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR IN THE GAZA STRIP

ILO/UNRWA DEBRIEFING

Monday 4th of March 2013 – Martine Van de Velde – Independent Evaluation Consultant

Focus of the evaluation has been on assessing results under the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) funded project and how to strengthen any future programming around Competency Based Training (CBT) and the target group of UNRWA over-aged students.

As with most projects, experiences and changes achieved are a good foundation for learning and strengthening any future similar projects. Success of the program lays in the changes achieved with a large number of the trainees participating in the program (self-esteem, role in the family and community). The project document and the subsequent reporting have not been able to capture these changes and success of the project sufficiently.

1. Relevance

- The identified target group is in need of different educational and vocational support than is currently made available to them in the traditional school system.
- The project is responding to an identified need of a shortage of semi-skilled and skilled workers in the construction sector.
- The objectives identified in the original project document are responding to the identified needs; however, the outcomes and outputs identified in the project should:
 - Put students/trainees more at the centre of the changes the project aims to achieve.
 - Address gap in the labour market.
 - Both (i) and (ii) strengthen one another.
- The Competency Based Training approach is very relevant because it focuses on intensive training on an identified skill. The training methodology suits the target group. And the training responds to an identified need in the labour market.
- The CBT is a tool – an approach that is able to assist both the students and the labour market.

2. Effectiveness

- Results under Effectiveness are closely related to the duration of the project. As the project was of short duration it should be considered more as a **‘pilot’**; experiences should now feed into strengthening further interventions.
- When assessing the results of the project **‘quantitatively’** (based on numbers, trainees enrolled in training program and apprenticeship, number of trainers trained in CBT, manuals produced, etc.) the project has achieved expected results (number of trainees, number of apprenticeships). However, these quantitative results require further analysis to understand the ‘quality’, ‘meaning’ and ‘sustainability’ of the results achieved. Explained:
- **Placing the students/trainees more at the centre of the project**
 - The project needs to ensure that the students fully understand the consequences of their decision to leave school and take up vocational training; need for extra psycho-social support to the students for the duration of the program (students consider themselves as failures and/or are looked upon as being failures, and this has impacted on their behaviour and self-esteem); ensure students are well prepared for taking up the apprenticeship (for example, through some training taking place on a construction site during on-site visits).
- **Training**
 - Curricula, instructor/training manuals and an assessment guide have been developed and are used under the training program. These resources can be strengthened further through review by a CBT specialist.

- There is evidence that the CBT approach is starting to be shared with other parts of the vocational training programs within UNRWA in Gaza.
- Trainers play a larger role than just skills development; they are also counsellors, teachers, etc.
- Functional literacy and numeracy should be part of the training curricula.
- CBT is referred to by all interviewed as a valuable approach to vocational training. However, it is not certain if CBT is well understood / has the same meaning for everyone.
- **Apprenticeship**
 - Should be strengthened. Apprenticeship should be considered as an integral part of the training program.
 - Steps have been taken to address some of the weaknesses of the apprenticeship during project implementation (e.g., involve sub-contractors; discuss the work of the trainees with employers).
 - There is need for a clear common understanding of the apprenticeship; apprenticeship is different from job creation or cash for work.
 - It is a big step for the trainees to take, from training in the VTCs to work placement (could be facilitated by doing some part of the training on worksites, etc.).
 - Supervision of the trainees should be done by trainers of the VTCs, not by technical supervisors (don't know the students) or UNRWA monitors (more administrative focus, present at work or not).
- **Employers/Subcontractors**
 - Employers' feedback on skill level of trainees being ready to start fully functioning in the workplace varied between 50 –70%. Not clear if this is a sufficient level if you take into consideration that the apprenticeship is part of the training program.
 - Challenges remain around trainees doing work outside of their competency. This can be addressed by further developing contacts with sub-contractors (the drawback is that trainees will move workplaces more frequently) and clearer negotiations with the employers/sub-contractors at the beginning of the apprenticeship. Employers need to be followed up during the apprenticeship.
 - More work needs to be done with the employers on understanding the nature of the apprenticeship (new to the Gaza environment).
- **Employment strategy after the apprenticeship**
 - If the apprenticeship is not considered as being part of the Job Creation Program then the employment strategy will need to be looked at differently.

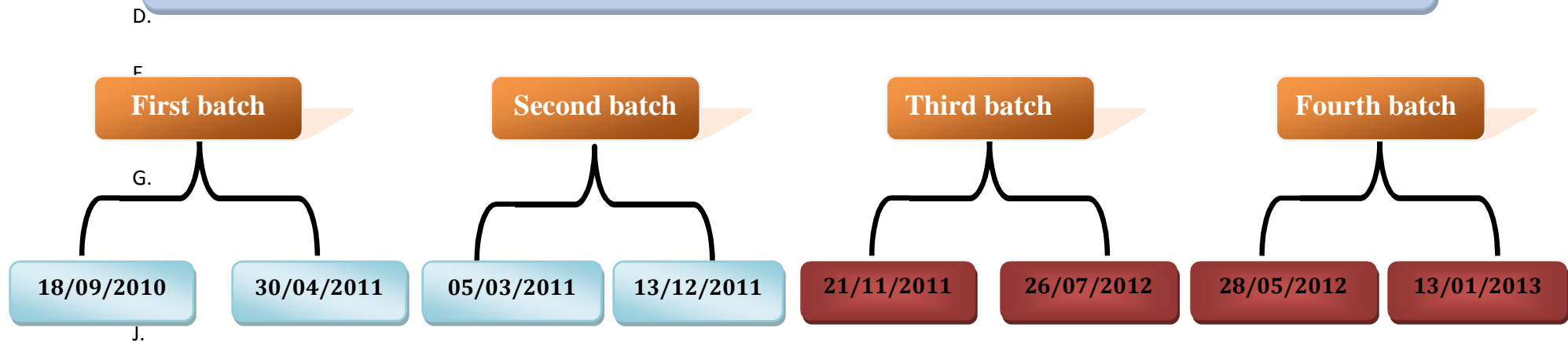
3. Efficiency

- The complementary role of both UNRWA and ILO could be strengthened. ILOs involvement suffered from challenges around human resources (recruitment, change-over in consultants).
- Need for a clearer division of roles between ILO and UNRWA; ensure expectations are clear and what can (or cannot) be provided to meet those expectations. These issues can be resolved through strengthened communication channels.

Recommendations:

- A. Future designs should have the students' experiences at the centre of the project strategy. (Related to this, the description of the target group as 'over-aged students' should be changed). A fresh positive approach to the learning of these students should be the starting point for this project.
- B. Apprenticeships should be viewed and treated differently from the Job Creation Program. The apprenticeship should be viewed as an integral component of the training program. Incentives could be given to very good performing students such as extension of apprenticeship of 6 months.
- C. ILO and UNRWA should utilise their comparative advantages more strongly, with **UNRWA** focusing on the training delivery in their training centres; providing psycho-social support to the students; trainers following students during the apprenticeship; employment strategy after the apprenticeship; and **ILO** focusing on providing CBT technical support to UNRWA (training methodologies, curricula, assessment of students in successfully completing each competency); liaison with potential employers (focus on CBT, health and safety conditions).

Annex 4 - Over-Aged Students - Four Batches in Training Program



Curriculum:



UNRWA draft curricula with an average of 210 training hours and a period of 6 months 'On the Job training' (based on semi-skilled proposal ILO)



ILO/UNRWA modified curricula with an average of 475 training hours average 475 and 6 months 'On the Job training/ apprenticeship scheme'. The increase was done following Employers' feedback and adopting skilled level instead of semi skilled in the training program.

Trainer Manual: CBT curricula and trainers manual are considered draft and will require validating by CBT technical specialist.

Trainers: For the 1st and 2nd batch of training they were contracted trainers from the Job Creation Program, improvements were made by changing the trainers contract to a longer period in Nov 2011, providing more stability to the CBT.

Technical supervisor: March 2012

Two civil engineers were hired to improve the apprenticeship scheme to supervise the trainees across Gaza. One civil engineer was assigned in KYTC as professional in construction similar to the master trainers in GTC.

Course Title	Training Place	Inside Training		On-Job Training
		Admitted	Passed	
First batch				
Masonry	GTC	49	47	47
Building Shuttering	GTC	37	37	37
Steel Reinforcement	GTC	31	31	31
Masonry	KYTC	46	44	44
Building Shuttering	KYTC	30	28	28
TOTAL		193	187	187
Second batch				
Masonry	GTC	21	20	20
Building Shuttering	GTC	17	17	17
Tiling	GTC	88	88	88
Masonry	KYTC	47	42	42
Tiling	KYTC	90	79	79
TOTAL		263	246	246
Third batch				
Masonry	GTC	24	20	20
Building Shuttering	GTC	20	16	16
Tiling	GTC	25	22	22
Plumbing	GTC	24	21	21
Masonry	KYTC	34	31	31
Building Shuttering	KYTC	16	16	16
TOTAL		143	126	126
Fourth batch				
Masonry	GTC	18	15	Not yet applicable
Tiling	GTC	23	20	Not yet applicable
Masonry	KYTC	19	17	Not yet applicable
Tiling	KYTC	26	25	Not yet applicable
Building Shuttering	KYTC	20	19	Not yet applicable
TOTAL		106	96	