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## Cooperative Support Programme for Palestine (CSP-OPT)

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Name of Evaluation Manager: Mr. Younis Sbeih

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This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

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## Acronyms

AC	Advisory Committee
AICS	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
CDF	Cooperative Development Fund
CDI	Cooperative Development Institute
CSP	Cooperative Support Programme
CWA	Cooperative Work Agency
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCU	General Cooperative Union
IDI	In-Depth Interviews
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
KII	Key informant interview
MOFP	Ministry of Finance and Planning
MOL	Ministry of Labor
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NPA	National Policy Agenda
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-Operation Development
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territories
PGFTU	Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
WB	West Bank
FPCCIA	Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture

## Tables

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## Executive Summary

Table 1. Executive Summary

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT	
<b>Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure</b>	<p>The project aims to foster sustainable development in the OPT by addressing challenges faced by cooperatives. It focuses on regulatory reforms, purpose alignment, and performance enhancement. The CSP employs a holistic approach, encompassing regulatory reforms, purpose alignment, and performance enhancement to strengthen the cooperative sector. It balances regulatory support with autonomy to create a conducive environment. The means of action include; streamlining procedures and removing barriers, clarifying cooperative purposes and promoting active member involvement, &amp; offering capacity building, training, and technical support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementing Agency: International Labour Organization (ILO)</li> <li>- Local Funds Management: Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)</li> <li>- Palestinian Counterparts: Cooperative Work Agency (CWA) and Ministry of Finance and Planning (MOFP)</li> </ul>
<b>Present situation of the project</b>	60–80% of milestones met during the reporting period.
<b>Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation</b>	<p>The evaluation, spanning a 22-month period from June 2021 to March 2023, aims to guide the second phase of the CSP, providing insights into lessons learned, challenges, and successful practices. The primary beneficiaries include internal ILO teams, external agencies, local and international implementing partners, government bodies, and civil society institutions.</p>
<b>Methodology of evaluation</b>	<p>The evaluation employs a comprehensive methodology, including KIIs and FGDs with diverse stakeholders. It adheres to OECD/DAC criteria, ensuring a standardized approach to assessing relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. A desk review of relevant documents precedes the qualitative analysis, emphasizing adaptability, responsiveness, inclusivity, and ethical considerations.</p>
<b>MAIN FINDINGS &amp; CONCLUSIONS</b>	<p><b>Relevance:</b> The CSP's commitment to relevance is evident in its alignment with multi-level strategies and agendas, ensuring a nuanced response to the cooperative sector's challenges. The project's direct correlation with the CWA's strategy, National Policy Agenda, and Italy's priorities reflects a comprehensive understanding of sectoral needs. However, to maintain enduring relevance, sustained commitment to current national priorities and unwavering adherence to international standards is deemed crucial</p>

**Validity of Design:** The CSP's robust design, grounded in comprehensive research and needs analysis, positions it as a vital intervention tailored to the specific challenges of the Palestinian cooperative sector. As the project progresses, maintaining this alignment and adaptability to evolving needs will be essential for its continued effectiveness.

**Efficiency:** project's adept financial management, strategic use of material resources, and effective human resource development have driven enhanced productivity in the sector. The CSP-OPT's agility in redirecting resources in response to the COVID-19 pandemic showcases its resilience and commitment to mitigating challenges. However, recommendations for periodic reassessment of budget allocations and continuous review of resource utilization suggest a proactive stance toward potential challenges and emerging opportunities. Additionally, periodic evaluations of personnel costs are recommended to maintain the project's efficient utilization of human resources.

**Effectiveness:** The effectiveness of the project is evident in its tangible contributions to cooperative capacity-building, institutional development, and awareness-raising. Noteworthy progress in strategic planning, capacity building, and support for CWA, CDI and CDF reflects the project's commitment to fostering a robust cooperative ecosystem. Challenges, particularly those related to financial constraints and the unique circumstances in Gaza, have been acknowledged and addressed with a proactive approach. The potential gap in design lies in the absence of systematic post-training follow-up, emphasizing the need for a sustained approach for enduring impacts. Challenges within sectoral unions, notably the lack of incentives, compromise their effectiveness and necessitate strategic measures for revitalization. Efforts to change perceptions and raise awareness have been noteworthy, reflected in the communication plan, capacity-building initiatives, and partnerships. However, delays in activities such as the study tour to Italy pose challenges. The emphasis on strategic planning, statistical analysis, and cooperative principles contributes to awareness but reveals a persistent lack of a cooperative culture.

**Impact:** there are significant contributions to aligning with national strategies and fostering awareness within the Palestinian cooperative sector. The emphasis on capacity-building has positively influenced the skills of key stakeholders, emphasizing the project's efficacy in enhancing the overall functionality of cooperatives. However, negative effects manifest in an economic empowerment gap and limited impact on some unions. The overall impact is positive, contributing to the reform and development of the cooperative sector in alignment with governmental efforts. Additionally, the lack of a cooperative culture persists, with few recorded new cooperatives and entrepreneurial initiatives by the youth, indicating room for improvement in attracting and encouraging youth participation.

**Sustainability:** commendable efforts in promoting sustainability across its focus areas. The establishment of the CWA and strategic focus on Cooperative Unions demonstrate a commitment to capacity building, with adaptability identified as key to addressing evolving challenges. Operation and Maintenance Agreements are recognized as essential for sustaining the CDI and CDF, with a need for continuous capacity building and market access. Knowledge sustainability, facilitated through initiatives like national conferences, holds promise for informing policies and guiding practitioners. However, the challenge lies in ensuring the recurrence and active contribution of these platforms to the cooperative sector's long-term growth.

## RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

### Main findings & Conclusions

#### 1. Bottom-up Approach:

Recognizing the pivotal role of cooperatives in the project's success and the overall strength of unions, a strategic shift towards a bottom-up approach is recommended. Rather than solely targeting the General Cooperative Union (GCU) and sectoral unions, the focus should be redirected to empower primary cooperatives and their members directly. Key strategies involve cooperative-centric capacity building, educating members about union functions, practical knowledge transfer, networking opportunities, and establishing feedback mechanisms. By empowering individual cooperative members, the project ensures grassroots-level understanding, active participation, collaborative culture, adaptability, responsiveness, and long-term sustainability.

#### 2. Collaborations

The second recommendation underscores the importance of collaborative initiatives to reinforce the interconnectedness of the cooperative sector, contributing to its resilience and sustainability. Key strategies involve aligning with the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA) enhancement, developing complementary training modules, enhancing regional collaborations, expanding partnerships with organizations like the World Food Programme (WFP), and linking with existing initiatives. The collaborative approach seeks to address challenges faced by various cooperative entities and create a synergistic impact through shared learning.

#### 3. Promotion of Cooperative Culture & Entrepreneurship

The third recommendation targets the fostering of a vibrant cooperative culture and entrepreneurship. The project proposes dual-focused initiatives for engaging the general public, particularly the youth, and empowering women in leadership roles within the cooperative sector. Key strategies involve digitalization of learning materials for youth, youth-focused pilot programs, promotion of women's leadership, encouraging women's participation in unions, and utilizing CDI and CDF resources. Leveraging digital tools aligns with youth preferences, making cooperative concepts more



	accessible, while emphasizing women's leadership promotes gender equity and enhances diversity within the sector. Implementation steps include collaborating with youth platforms, establishing women's leadership workshops, and integrating CDI/CDF resources.
<b>Main lessons learned and good practices</b>	The emerging good practice of ensuring inclusive participation by engaging all relevant stakeholders, encompassing cooperative members, unions, government bodies, and civil society organizations in the West Bank and Gaza, proved instrumental in shaping the success of the Cooperative Support Programme in Palestine. This strategic approach not only facilitated the unification of the cooperative sector's vision but also led to the formulation of a robust Cooperative Sector Strategy. The engagement of diverse stakeholders enhanced the quality of the strategy, fostering a profound sense of ownership among participants. This inclusivity translated into heightened commitment, particularly from cooperative members and unions, amplifying the effectiveness and impact of the program. The success of this practice underscores its potential for replication in similar initiatives, emphasizing the significance of collaborative engagement for the sustainable development of cooperative sectors, especially in complex socio-political contexts.

## Body of the Report

### Project Background

#### **Purpose, Structure & Logic**

Cooperatives have a rich history in Palestine, extending back to the early twentieth century, and have played a pivotal role in fostering cooperative development within the Arab States. These cooperatives span various sectors of the Palestinian economy, including producers, workers, enterprises, savings and credit, social services, housing, and consumer cooperatives. They have historically emerged to address unmet needs, providing essential services, improving livelihoods, and creating employment opportunities. While primarily prominent in rural areas, cooperatives also serve as an organizational model for informal economy workers and enterprises, offering economies of scale in accessing resources and markets. At an organizational level, cooperatives empower members, workers, users, and communities to self-organize and negotiate with public and private sector entities.

Despite their potential, Palestinian cooperatives face several structural challenges, including an unsupportive institutional and legal environment, unclear purposes due to donor-funded external promotion, and suboptimal performance influenced by both internal and external factors. The CSP initiated by The ILO aims to address these challenges, fostering a more conducive environment for cooperatives.

The CSP, an integral part of the larger "Be the Impact" initiative, funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, is a transformative program led by the ILO. The primary goal of the CSP is to

promote sustainable development in the OPT through the advancement of Palestinian cooperatives and the promotion of social entrepreneurship.

The CSP adopts a holistic approach, addressing the challenges facing cooperatives by:<sup>1</sup>

1. **Regulatory Reforms:** Creating a regulatory environment that supports cooperative growth while ensuring the autonomy and self-sufficiency of cooperatives. This balance between regulation and freedom is crucial for cooperative development.
2. **Purpose Alignment:** Clarifying the purpose of many cooperatives, moving from externally promoted models to those with active member involvement. This realignment helps ensure that cooperatives effectively meet their intended goals.
3. **Performance Enhancement:** Improving the performance of cooperatives by addressing internal factors such as management capacity and external factors impacting the broader Palestinian economy.

**Table 2. Key Outcomes & Outputs of CSP-OPT**

Development Objectives and Outcomes	Key Outputs
<b>Enhanced Institutional Environment:</b> The CSP endeavors to create a conducive institutional framework for cooperatives' thriving. This includes streamlining regulations, improving coordination among entities, and enhancing the capacities of cooperative unions.	<b>Improved Regulatory Environment:</b> Streamlined procedures and the removal of barriers will foster cooperative growth.
<b>Operational Effectiveness:</b> By offering capacity building, training, and technical support, the CSP aims to equip cooperatives for optimal performance, enhancing operational efficiency, managerial capacities, and production capabilities.	<b>Enhanced Capacity Building:</b> Training and workshops will enhance managerial and technical capacities.
<b>Innovation and Resilience:</b> The CSP promotes innovative cooperatives by integrating technology, modern business practices, and market-oriented approaches. This strengthens resilience and adaptability.	<b>Innovative Cooperative Models:</b> Emerging cooperative models aligned with modern trends will drive job creation and economic diversification.

The CSP is a key driving force behind reshaping the trajectory of the cooperative sector in Palestine. It provides support to the CWA and provides support to the establishment of the subsidiary bodies, the CDI and the CDF, with the dual purpose of fulfilling regulatory obligations and promoting cooperative activities.

Furthermore, the CSP extends its assistance to the newly established GCU and its five sectorial cooperative unions, focusing on enhancing their strategic planning, training, governance, and leadership. The program also fosters international collaboration by facilitating knowledge and expertise exchange with global partners, contributing to sustainable development efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> Project Document

In summary, the CSP's purpose, logic, and structure are centered on creating an enabling environment for cooperatives to thrive, aligning their purposes with the needs of members, and enhancing their performance. This comprehensive approach seeks to strengthen the cooperative sector and promote sustainable development in Palestine.

### Intervention Levels, Specific Outcomes & Outputs

This project involves a multi-level approach targeting different aspects of the Palestinian cooperative system, aiming for inclusivity and sustainability. The collaborative efforts with various stakeholders and international organizations contribute to the overall success of the CSP.

The project's intervention levels align with the following:

- **Meta Level:** focuses on changing perceptions about cooperatives and their contribution to social and economic development. This level involves influencing cooperative members, leaders, government officials, and institutions through research, advocacy, and evidence-based activities. Key outcomes include changing perceptions about cooperatives, recognizing the role of women and gender equality, and influencing development frameworks.
- **Macro Level:** aims to create an enabling environment for Palestinian cooperative development through policies and regulations. The focus is on providing technical assistance to shape the regulatory framework, such as the development and finalization of the Cooperative Sector Strategy (2024-2029) and the creation of a Cooperatives Audit Manual. The outcomes include the establishment of a supportive policy environment and the strengthening of regulatory frameworks.
- **Meso Level:** the project provides technical assistance to key institutions governing the cooperatives sector, including the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA), the General Cooperative Union (GCU), and sectoral unions. Capacity development initiatives are implemented, such as training on auditing and ILO tools, to enhance their ability to lead cooperative development. The outcomes involve improved capacities of these institutions and enhanced services to cooperative members.
- **Micro Level:** is dedicated to supporting individual cooperatives. The focus is on strengthening their management, productivity, and participation in the cooperative movement. Training on ILO modules for feasibility studies and business plans is provided to groups of cooperatives. Specific outcomes include the establishment of new cooperatives, increased membership, higher production levels, and expanded market presence.

**Table 3. Specific Outcomes & Outputs**

Outcome	Output	Activity
Conducive eco-system	Output 1.1 CWA fully operational	1.1.1. Technical Support for the reform of the CWA legal framework and governance structure

		1.1.2. Develop the core functions of CWA, and operational plan
		1.1.3 Train CWA personnel on core functions and develop detailed job descriptions
	Output 1.2 Cooperative unions reviewed and strengthened	1.2.1. Assess the performance, activities and financial viability of the sectoral unions and the GCU
		1.2.2 Assess the needs expressed by primary cooperatives with regard to the general and the sectoral unions
		1.2.3 Organize the strategic planning workshops for each union, to define its mission, purpose, modus operandi, results-framework plan and budget
Output 1.3 A national cooperative conference convenes in Palestine	1.3.1 Draft background notes, evaluation papers, information material, etc.	
<b>Efficient Support Infrastructure</b>	Output 2.1 CDI and CDF legal and institutional frameworks established	2.1.1 Develop a fully-fledged operational plan, including bylaws, staffing, competencies, reporting lines, required equipment, and budget.
		2.1.2 prepare management systems and training material for the main types of cooperatives in Palestine, including specific material on women-only cooperatives
		2.1.3 Train CDI and CDF personnel in the use of such systems and material
		2.1.4. Design and implement a detailed work plan for the first year of the CDI and CDF's

		operations (training of cooperative leaders, staff and members, and support personnel)
<b>Cooperative Innovations</b>	Output 3.1 Knowledge and experience sharing with third countries organized	3.1.1. Organize study tours for CWA staff and cooperative leaders to countries where these cooperatives are successful
	Output 3.2 South-South cooperation in the area of cooperative development mobilized	3.2.1. prepare a list of around 20 developing countries having the most successful and efficient cooperative movements.
		3.2.2. conclude longer-term agreements with those movements for the provision of technical support to the CWA and the movements.
	Output. 3.3 new forms and types of cooperatives introduced in Palestine	3.3.1. Develop and implement an operational plan for the successive introduction of at least three new types of cooperatives in OPT, putting particular emphasis on those types of cooperatives that are most relevant to women in OPT
3.3.2. Provide specialized technical support of those cooperative ventures (CWA and CDI)		

**Description of Project's Implementation, Major Events, and Milestones**

The CSP has been instrumental in fostering the growth and development of the cooperative sector within the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In its pursuit of empowering cooperatives and strengthening their capacities, the CSP has facilitated several critical interventions that have contributed to the enhancement of the CWA and the GCU and its sectorial union. These interventions have been pivotal in aligning the project with its strategic objectives, creating significant milestones throughout its implementation.

*Strategic Planning Training and Coaching Sessions*

The CSP strategically targeted the capacity development of cooperative members and stakeholders, conducting training and coaching sessions that focused on strategic planning. These sessions proved instrumental in helping 17 participants, including 7 women, from the CWA and sectorial cooperative unions to better articulate their missions, refine their objectives, and facilitate the development of union work plans. Such endeavors have fostered a robust foundation for more efficient and goal-oriented cooperative work within the region.

*Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Training Course*

Recognizing the importance of information technology within the CWA, the CSP introduced a practical training course on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This training equipped 8 participants, including 5 women, from the CWA staff with the skills required for basic statistical analysis. It enhances their proficiency in managing data and reinforces the IT administration within the CWA, ultimately contributing to more informed decision-making processes.

#### *Training of Trainers Workshop on ILO's Think. Coop and Start. Coop Tools*

The ILO organized a one-week Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop on ILO's "Think Coop and Start Coop" tools, held in the Gaza Strip. A total of 32 participants, consisting of 21 men and 11 women, attended this comprehensive training. It was designed to build the knowledge and skills of participants from various national institutions, including the CWA, GCU, sectorial cooperative unions, primary cooperatives, and selected NGOs. This initiative has effectively disseminated vital cooperative principles and practices, further reinforcing the cooperative movement in the region.

#### *Coaching Programme on Think. Coop and Start. Coop in Gaza*

Building upon the success of the TOT workshop, the CSP initiated a follow-up coaching programme in Gaza, targeting 120 participants, comprising 75 men and 45 women. This program, following the TOT, extended the training and coaching to a wider audience interested in either initiating new cooperatives or joining existing ones. It has nurtured a new generation of cooperative members and leaders, supporting cooperative expansion and sustainability.

#### *My.Coop Training of Trainer's Programme on Managing Palestinian Agricultural Cooperatives*

The ILO organized a Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop focused on My.Coop, designed to enhance the management of agricultural cooperatives. The workshop, attended by 21 women and men, included two members from the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA) and 17 participants from 15 distinct agricultural cooperatives in the West Bank. These initiatives aimed to bolster agricultural cooperative management, fostering agricultural sustainability and food security in the region.

#### *Cooperative Management and Cooperative Audit Training*

A vital aspect of the CSP's interventions involved conducting a training program targeting CWA cooperative auditors, both internal and external, and inspectors. This training, held from 17th to 19th January 2023, involved 24 participants, of which 16 were men and 8 were women. It aimed to enhance the skills and knowledge of CWA staff in conducting cooperative audits, ensuring compliance with international cooperative auditing standards, and maintaining a high level of audit quality.

### **Description of Project's Funding Arrangements**

The CSP benefits from a comprehensive and well-structured funding arrangement. These arrangements are designed to facilitate the efficient allocation and management of financial resources across different components of the project. Key elements of the funding arrangements include:

- AICS (Italian Agency for Development Cooperation): AICS plays a pivotal role in managing the local funds allocated to the project. This includes funds for the "affidato component" of the project, which AICS directly manages. This funding arrangement ensures that the local funds are utilized effectively and in alignment with the project's objectives.
- Palestinian Counterpart (CWA and MOFP): The budget support component is primarily overseen by the Palestinian counterparts, namely the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA) and the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MOFP). The implementation of this component is guided by the Implementing Agreement, and the CWA and MOFP coordinate closely with AICS personnel from the Jerusalem office to ensure the effective utilization of budget support funds.
- ILO (International Labour Organization): ILO is entrusted with the management and execution of the multilateral component of the project. This includes funding allocated according to the Cost Sharing Agreement. The coordination between ILO and AICS personnel from the Jerusalem office is instrumental in ensuring the successful implementation of multilateral activities.

The funding arrangements are complemented by the establishment of an Advisory Committee (AC), consisting of representatives from various project stakeholders. This committee convenes at least twice a year to monitor the project's activities and results. Additionally, a technical working group ensures coordination and communication among all relevant stakeholders, further enhancing the efficiency of the funding arrangements.

#### **Description of Organizational Arrangements for the Implementation of Be the Impact**

The implementation of the CSP relies on a well-structured organizational framework. This framework is designed to ensure effective coordination and collaboration among different project partners. The organizational arrangements encompass the following components:

- Budget Support Component: The budget support component is primarily overseen by the Palestinian counterparts, including the CWA and the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MOFP). The Implementing Agreement regulates the implementation of activities under this component. CWA and MOFP collaborate with AICS personnel from the Jerusalem office to facilitate the successful execution of budget support activities.
- Multilateral Component: The multilateral component is managed by the International Labour Organization (ILO). The activities under this component are governed by the Cost Sharing Agreement. ILO collaborates closely with AICS personnel from the Jerusalem office and other members of the Advisory Committee (AC) to ensure that the multilateral component aligns with the project's objectives.
- Local Funds and "Affidato" Component: The project also benefits from local funds, including the "affidato" component, which involves the selection of Italian Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) through a competitive process. The involvement of CSOs adds value to the initiative by leveraging their expertise and knowledge in the areas of cooperatives and social entrepreneurship, particularly in the Palestinian context.

The organizational arrangements are underpinned by effective coordination mechanisms, including the AC and technical working groups, which ensure smooth project implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

## Contributions and Role of ILO, Project Partners, and Other Stakeholders

The CSP is a collaborative effort involving multiple stakeholders, each contributing distinct expertise and responsibilities:

**Table 4. Roles & Responsibilities of Stakeholders**

International Labour Organization	
Project Oversight	The ILO plays a key role in overseeing the entire project, ensuring that it aligns with the intended objectives and outcomes.
Capacity Building	The ILO provides capacity-building and training services aimed at enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of cooperatives
Technical Expertise	The ILO offers technical expertise, conducting assessments and providing tailored support to the CWA and the GCU and its sectorial unions.
Legal Framework	Collaborates with the CWA on the revision of Cooperative Law and secondary legislation, including bylaws for the CDF and CDI
Project Management	Manages and coordinates the day-to-day execution of project activities.
Cooperative Work Agency	
Operational Support	The CWA is responsible for implementing the project's activities and initiatives in line with the project's objectives
Cooperative Development	Works towards fostering a conducive ecosystem, efficiency in support infrastructure, and cooperative innovations, as outlined in the project's immediate outcomes.
Collaboration	Collaborates closely with the ILO to align project activities with the Cooperative Law and secondary legislation and receive necessary capacity-building.
GCU and Sectorial Unions	
Support to Unions	The GCU and its sectorial unions provide support and guidance to primary cooperatives, helping them thrive and contribute to the project's objectives.
Coordination	Ensure that the cooperative unions reviewed and strengthened in Outcome 1 are functioning efficiently.
Partnership	Collaborate with the ILO and CWA to identify capacity gaps and deliver training and technical support to sectorial unions.
Legal Framework	Work with the ILO on legal and institutional frameworks for the CDF and CDI to enable efficient cooperative development.

## Evaluation Background

### Purpose

The mid-term evaluation of the Cooperative Support Programme (CSP) is undertaken with a multi-faceted purpose, encompassing an in-depth scrutiny of its design, scope, implementation status, and capacity to achieve anticipated outcomes. This comprehensive assessment extends to collecting and analyzing valuable insights from the program's implementation phase, including lessons learned, challenges faced, and successful practices. The primary motivation is to inform the forthcoming second phase of program implementation, spanning April 2023 to December 2024, and to serve as a guide for adaptation. The evaluation delves into various dimensions, assessing the program's performance concerning its planned



objectives and its preliminary indications of intended and unintended impact and sustainability. Furthermore, it contributes to the broader objectives of capacity development and the achievement of sustainable development goals.<sup>2</sup>

### Scope

The evaluation spans 22 months, from June 2021 to March 2023, capturing valuable insights into the program's nature, extent, impact, and sustainability. It takes into account the political, security, and environmental constraints as well as the alignment of the project objectives with key frameworks, such as the ILO's Programme and Budget (P&B) strategy, the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) in Palestine, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDG) in Palestine.

The evaluation aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the CSP, assess its alignment with national and international priorities, explore its impact on the cooperative sector, identify implementation challenges, and offer recommendations to enhance its impact and effectiveness. The ultimate goal is to provide valuable insights that inform the CSP's future strategies and interventions, ensuring its continued relevance and impact within the cooperative sector in Palestine.<sup>3</sup>

### Clients

The primary beneficiaries of this evaluation encompass a diverse spectrum of stakeholders, including internal ILO teams, external agencies like AICS, CWA, and GCU, local organizations such as the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU) and the Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture (FPCCIA). Government bodies, including various ministries directly involved in the cooperative sector, and international organizations like We Effect, Oxfam, FAO, and CARE International, are also key beneficiaries. Additionally, various national civil society institutions that actively support the cooperative sector are integral stakeholders in this evaluation. The findings and recommendations generated from this evaluation have a significant impact on several key stakeholders. The insights garnered are instrumental in enhancing the program's relevance, performance, and sustainability. Given the dynamic nature of Palestine's national priorities, the project document, activities, and strategies may require alignment and adjustments to adapt to these evolving needs. This process aligns with the ILO Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193).<sup>4</sup>

**Table 5. Sequence of Evaluation**

Phases	Deliverables	Timeline
Inception Phase	Inception Report	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug 2023
Verification & translation of tools	Tools in Arabic	9th Sep – 13th Sep 2023
Initial contact & recruitment of participants	List of participants	9th Sep – 13th Sep 2023
Fieldwork	Data Collection	13 <sup>th</sup> Sep – 4 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2023
Report Writing	Final Report	15 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2023

<sup>2</sup> ToR

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## Criteria & Questions

### **Relevance and Strategic Fit**

Relevance and strategic fit are central to the assessment, aligning with the standards set by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC). In this dimension, the evaluation explores the extent to which the Cooperative Support Programme (CSP) aligns with sub-regional, national, and local priorities and needs. It further delves into whether the project's objectives harmonize with the specific requirements of the Palestinian cooperative sector and address the challenges and opportunities it encounters. This evaluation criterion also examines the CSP's consistency with national development strategies and its adherence to international best practices for cooperative sector development. Additionally, the assessment evaluates the incorporation of gender perspectives and inclusivity in project interventions, in line with OECD/DAC criteria.

### **Validity of Design**

Validity of design assesses the project's logic, strategy, and elements in relation to the identified needs within the cooperative sector. It considers whether the project's design is both coherent and realistic in addressing these needs.

### **Efficiency**

Efficiency encompasses a comprehensive evaluation of the CSP's resource utilization. It scrutinizes the effectiveness of financial and human resource allocation, considering the extent to which these resources are efficiently used. The evaluation also examines administrative and management processes to determine their level of streamlining and cost-effectiveness. Furthermore, the criterion assesses the repurposing of resources, particularly in light of the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Effectiveness**

Effectiveness centers on the project's capability to achieve its short-term objectives, particularly in terms of cooperative capacity-building and institutional development. The evaluation aims to gauge the project's success in promoting collaboration and networking among cooperative entities. It also assesses the degree to which the project interventions raise awareness of and encourage the adoption of cooperative principles among the target beneficiaries.

### **Impact**

Impact criteria revolve around identifying the tangible and observable changes brought about by the CSP. It seeks to understand the influence of project interventions on the functioning and performance of Palestinian cooperatives. The assessment extends to the project's contributions toward enhancing the livelihoods, income generation, and socio-economic empowerment of cooperative members, with a particular focus on marginalized individuals. Additionally, the evaluation aims to uncover any unintended positive or negative effects on the cooperative sector and its stakeholders.

### **Sustainability**

Sustainability extends the evaluation to examine the level of capacity building within social partners and its impact on the long-term sustainability of project activities and maintenance of results beyond project completion. A specific focus within this criterion is the sustainability of infrastructure projects and the utilization of knowledge generated throughout the project.

This comprehensive evaluation framework, grounded in OECD/DAC criteria, draws from the standards set by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and its integration of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue. It aims to provide a detailed assessment of the CSP's performance, alignment, and effectiveness while contributing to its continued impact and relevance within the cooperative sector in Palestine. The findings and recommendations generated from this evaluation have a significant impact on several key stakeholders, helping to inform strategies and adaptations to meet evolving needs, aligning with ILO's Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193).

## Methodology

### Approach

The evaluation of CSP-OPT employs a comprehensive methodological framework, utilizing qualitative research methods. This approach ensures a robust and multi-dimensional assessment of the project's implementation, impact, and areas for improvement. The methodology is designed to offer a nuanced and evidence-based assessment.

### Methods & Data Collection Instruments

#### *Desk Review*

The evaluation commences with an extensive desk review of all relevant project documents, including logic frameworks, baseline reports, monitoring reports, progress and status reports, previous evaluation reports, beneficiary documentation, and strategic documents. This review facilitates a thorough understanding of the project's context, objectives, and achievements, while identifying any gaps or weaknesses in the project design and implementation. The desk review is conducted collaboratively with the CSP-OPT team to ensure an ethical and transparent document collection and review process.

#### *Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)*

Semi-structured In-depth Interviews (IDIs) with diverse constituents and stakeholders involved in the CSP-OPT are conducted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the project's implementation, challenges, and achievements. The key informant interviews encompass various groups, including ILO staff/consultants, AICS representatives, constituents and stakeholders from cooperative organizations, international and national civil society organizations, government counterparts, and more. These IDIs are conducted in a participatory and consultative manner to gather insights on the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the project. The results are triangulated with other data sources, such as field visits, to ensure representative and valid findings.

#### *Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)*

In addition to IDIs, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) are conducted with different stakeholder groups. These FGDs provide participants with the opportunity to share their perspectives and experiences in a group setting, facilitating the identification of common themes and perspectives. FGDs are conducted with CSP-

OPT implementing partners, direct beneficiaries, and local stakeholders. This includes members of cooperatives, government officials, civil society members and more. These discussions are held in a gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate manner, and the results are recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns in the data.

### Analysis Method

Qualitative data analysis is employed to extract meaning and insights from the collected data. Thematic analysis will be used to categorize data into themes and sub-themes, providing a nuanced understanding of the CSP-OPT project's implementation and impact. Qualitative data analysis focuses on recurring themes, patterns, and overarching insights to draw evidence-based conclusions.

### Stakeholder Participation

The methodology emphasizes an inclusive and participatory approach that engages a wide range of stakeholders. This approach aligns with OECD standards and emphasizes gender inclusivity. The rationale for stakeholder participation is to ensure diverse perspectives, foster candid dialogue, and capture a comprehensive understanding of the project's dynamics and impacts.

**Table 6. Target Respondents**

Target group	Tool\ Unit	Location	Quantity
Stakeholders	FGD	West Bank	2
	KII	West Bank	1
Beneficiaries	FGD	West Bank	2
	FGD	Gaza	1
	KII	West Bank	1
	KII	Gaza	2
Implementing Partners	FGD	West Bank	1
	KII	West Bank	3
	KII	Gaza	1
	KII	Online	3

**Table 7. In-Depth Interview Participants**

No.	Organization
1	Cooperative Work Agency
2	General Cooperative Union West Bank
3	Ministry of Labor
4	General Cooperative Union Gaza
5	Cooperative Work Agency Gaza
6	Sectoral Housing Union Gaza
7	ILO – Geneva
8	ILO – Jerusalem
9	AICS

10	Sector Expert
11	CARE International

### **Norms, Standards & Ethical Safeguards**

The evaluation adheres to established norms, standards, and ethical safeguards. Data collection follows ethical guidelines, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and gender sensitivity. The process prioritizes the protection of data and the safeguarding of participant rights. All evaluation activities are conducted with utmost respect for ethical standards.

### **Limitations & Potential Bias**

The evaluation has encountered several limitations that may affect the depth and breadth of data collection and, subsequently, the comprehensiveness of the findings. These limitations include limited participation in FGDs, communication delays, scheduling challenges, non-attendance of confirmed participants, and reduced organizational representation. These limitations must be considered when interpreting the findings.

## **Main Findings**

### **Relevance**

The Cooperative Support Project (CSP) in Palestine represents a commendable initiative that endeavors to address the prevalent challenges within the Palestinian cooperative sector. Its unquestionable relevance to the sector is founded on its strong alignment with national objectives and international best practices. Nevertheless, it is essential to underscore that sustained commitment to current national priorities and needs, and unwavering adherence to international standards are indispensable in ensuring the CSP's enduring relevance and efficacy.

### ***To what extent are the objectives aligned with sub-regional, national, and local priorities and needs?***

The CSP in Palestine demonstrates a high degree of alignment with sub-regional, national, and local priorities and needs. Specifically, the project is intricately linked to the CWA "Reform and Development" strategy for the cooperative sector (2018-2022). The CWA strategy, rooted in the Decree Law n. 20 of November 2017, articulates key priorities including strengthening the institutional framework, enhancing managerial and financial skills, and fostering a cooperative culture. This synchronization reflects an understanding of sub-regional and national needs, ensuring that the CSP is positioned as a strategic response to the identified challenges within the cooperative sector.

Moreover, the CSP is in harmonious alignment with the broader National Policy Agenda 2017-2022, specifically Pillar 3, which emphasizes Economic Independence. The project aligns with priorities 11 (Building Palestine's Future Economy) and 12 (Creating Job Opportunities), showcasing its commitment to contributing to the economic development goals of the nation. Furthermore, the project adheres to the principles and actions of the European Joint Strategy in Support of Palestine 2017-2020, positioning itself as an integral part of the international cooperative development landscape.

In summary, the CSP's alignment with sub-regional, national, and local priorities and needs is robust, as evidenced by its integration with key strategies and agendas at multiple levels. The CSP's alignment with the CWA's strategy is explicitly detailed, referencing legislative contexts and priorities. Concrete references to the CWA's strategy, coupled with legislative contexts such as Decree Law n. 20 of November 2017, substantiate the project's commitment to reinforcing the institutional framework and fostering a cooperative culture. The project's explicit alignment with Pillar 3 of the National Policy Agenda and the European Joint Strategy, with references to economic independence and job creation, further underscores its relevance.

***To what extent are the objectives aligned with the constituents' priorities and needs, and the donor's priorities for the country?***

The CSP in Palestine is closely attuned to the priorities and needs of its constituents, as well as the donor's priorities for the country. The project derives its relevance from a nuanced understanding of the cooperative sector's challenges and the imperative to address the pressing needs of various stakeholders.

The CSP is not only compliant with national and sub-regional strategies but also reflects Italy's strategic priorities. As an active EU donor in the economic development sector, Italy, through the CSP, engages in cooperative development aligned with Pillar 5 of the EU Joint Strategy. The project's inclusion in the LACS Labour Sector Working Group and the reference to the Italian Cooperation's 2016-2018 Programming Strategy further underline its synchronization with Italy's overarching development objectives. Italy recognizes the cooperative sector as a crucial asset for international cooperation and development, reflecting a strategic alignment with the CSP's objectives.

The project aligns with the constituents' priorities by emphasizing the creation of a conducive environment for cooperative development. The establishment of the legal and institutional framework for the CDI and CDF caters to the identified needs of cooperatives for support structures and regulatory clarity.

The CSP's adherence to international standards, particularly those advocated by the ILO, is indeed noteworthy. However, it is imperative that this adherence transcends the realm of mere principle and is visibly reflected in practical implementations that align with global best practices in cooperative development.

CSP places significant emphasis on inclusivity and sustainable development, particularly through its efforts to advance gender equality. These endeavors are essential in fostering a more inclusive and equitable economic environment in Palestine. The CSP's alignment with these broader socio-economic developmental objectives further underscores its significance on both the domestic and global stages.

In essence, the CSP's alignment with constituents' priorities and needs, coupled with its synchronization with the donor's priorities for the country, solidifies its position as a tailored and relevant intervention that comprehensively addresses the cooperative sector's multifaceted requirements.

### Validity of Design

In this section, we will delve into the evaluation of the CSP's objectives, results, and outputs within the context of the identified needs. We will also examine the coherence and realism of the project's logic model to ensure it remains aligned with the evolving challenges and needs of the cooperative sector in Palestine.

***To what extent are the project design, logic, strategy, and elements valid vis-à-vis problems and needs?***

The CSP's strategic relevance is deeply rooted in its response to the identified structural challenges faced by Palestinian cooperatives—unsupportive institutional and legal environments, unclear purposes, and suboptimal performance. It is purposefully designed to create an enabling environment for cooperatives by undertaking regulatory reforms, aligning purposes with active member involvement, and enhancing performance.

In its overarching purpose, the CSP contributes to the larger "Be the Impact" initiative, funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation. Its comprehensive approach aligns with national objectives illustrated in the CWA Strategy, the 2017-2022 National Policy Agenda, and international principles outlined in the European Joint Strategy.

***Addressing Identified Needs:***

**Enhanced Institutional Environment:** The CSP strategically addresses the identified need for an enhanced institutional environment within the Palestinian cooperative sector.

The project identifies and seeks to address the need for enhanced capacities in administration and finance within the cooperative sector. Recognizing the importance of these competencies in decision-making and accountability adds depth to the project's logic model.

***Operational Effectiveness:***

The CSP's focus on improving managerial skills and financial performance resonates with the challenges faced by cooperatives in Palestine.

***Awareness & Entrepreneurship:***

The project's mission to increase awareness of cooperative principles and social entrepreneurship aligns with an insightful analysis of the existing cultural vacuum in these domains. The introduction of innovative cooperative models and the preparations for the CDI are strategically aligned with identified needs. Recognizing the CDI's potential as a catalytic force for cooperative culture reflects a keen understanding of the dynamic landscape of economic dynamism and uncertainty.

In conclusion, the CSP, deeply embedded in comprehensive research and needs analysis, emerges as highly relevant to the identified challenges within the Palestinian cooperative sector. Its alignment with national priorities and international best practices is not merely asserted but substantiated with concrete references and contextual understanding. The project's strategic interventions, supported by evidence from participant feedback and desk analyses, position it as a formidable force for fostering sustainable development through cooperative empowerment in Palestine.

**Efficiency**

***How does the efficiency of resource utilization, encompassing financial, material, and human resources, during the project implementation process impact the overall productivity?***

The efficiency of resource utilization in a project, encompassing financial, material, and human resources, significantly impacts the overall productivity of that project. This concept is well exemplified in the CSP-OPT, as detailed in the progress report from September 2022 to October 2023. While the progress reports highlight commendable financial management, the recommendations for budgetary adjustments provide an opportunity to refine resource utilization further and ensure sustained impact.<sup>56</sup>

#### *Financial Resource Utilization*

The CSP-OPT, with a budget of \$1,774,371, has demonstrated careful financial management. Efficient allocation and utilization of financial resources have been vital in achieving various milestones despite challenges like political instability and the need for revising implementation schedules. Effective financial management has facilitated the achievement of numerous outputs and outcomes, like the establishment of new cooperatives, capacity building, and the development of strategies and frameworks for cooperative development. However, periodic reassessment of budget allocations for each outcome can address potential challenges and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

#### *Material Resources Utilization*

The project leveraged material resources effectively, such as developing training materials, audit manuals, and establishing physical entities like the CDI and CDF. These resources play a crucial role in enhancing the capabilities of the cooperative sector in Palestine, thereby contributing to the project's productivity. Nonetheless, instituting a mechanism for regular review of material resource utilization to seek cost-effective strategies would further ensure that it dynamically aligns with the evolving needs of the sector, and goals of the project

#### *Human Resource Utilization*

The project's success can be significantly attributed to the effective utilization of human resources. It involved extensive training and capacity-building initiatives for the CWA and GCU, and sectoral unions. Training on cooperative audit, management, and governance has empowered these entities to lead cooperative development, directly impacting the productivity of the cooperative sector in Palestine. However, to maintain efficient utilization of human resources, the project needs to implement periodic evaluations of personnel costs to ensure a direct correlation with enhanced project outcomes.

*The efficiency in utilizing these resources has led to several key achievements:*

- Development of cooperative frameworks and strategies, enhancing the sector's regulatory environment.
- Strengthened capabilities of CWA for better governance and management of cooperatives.
- Establishment of new cooperatives and support to existing ones, boosting their management, productivity, and market presence.

***To what extent does the repurposing of resources contribute to mitigating the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on project outcomes?***

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<sup>5</sup> First Progress Report, 2022

<sup>6</sup> Second Progress Report, 2023



The impact of COVID-19 on the CSP-OPT and the extent to which repurposing of resources has helped mitigate this impact is a multifaceted issue. The CSP-OPT faced initial delays due to the pandemic, pushing the official project start to June 2021. The following are the key areas where resource repurposing may have played a role in addressing the challenges posed by the pandemic:

#### *Adapting Training and Capacity Building*

The pandemic likely necessitated shifts in training methods, perhaps moving from in-person to digital platforms. particularly for the Strategic Planning Training and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) course. This would involve reallocating resources to develop online training modules and materials, and possibly training staff to deliver these sessions effectively. The progress reports mention various training programs conducted during the pandemic, indicating an adaptation to the constraints imposed by COVID-19.

#### *Regulatory Framework and Strategic Planning*

The development of the Cooperative Sector Strategy for 2024-2029 and the Cooperative Audit Manual indicates strategic redirection of efforts to strengthen the policy and regulatory framework. This focus could be partly in response to the pandemic, emphasizing more resilient and adaptable cooperative structures.

#### *Establishment of the CDI and CDF*

Resources might have been redirected to expedite the establishment of the CDI and CDF. These entities could play a crucial role in post-pandemic recovery by providing training, capacity building, and financial support to cooperatives.

#### *Promotion of New Forms of Cooperatives*

The establishment of new cooperatives in sectors like waste management and the marketing of products through collaborations with the World Food Programme (WFP) suggest an innovative approach to addressing pandemic-induced economic challenges. Redirecting resources to support these initiatives could be seen as a response to the changing economic landscape due to COVID-19.

#### *Enhanced Communication and Visibility*

The pandemic has underscored the importance of effective communication strategies. The project's collaboration with a communication firm to develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy could be part of a reoriented approach to ensure stakeholder engagement and public awareness in the challenging context of COVID-19.

#### *Risk Management and Corrective Action*

The project's risk register and the measures in place to address potential risks, including those exacerbated by the pandemic, are crucial. The repurposing of resources towards risk mitigation strategies, especially in the volatile context of the COVID-19 pandemic, would be a critical aspect of project management.

While the CSP-OPT progress report does not explicitly detail how resources were specifically repurposed in response to COVID-19, it is evident from the various initiatives and adaptations mentioned that there was a significant effort to mitigate the pandemic's impact on project outcomes. This includes adapting training methodologies, focusing on regulatory frameworks, supporting new cooperative forms, enhancing communication strategies, and emphasizing risk management and evaluation processes.

## Effectiveness

In assessing the effectiveness of the Cooperative Support Programme for Palestine (CSP-OPT), it is essential to consider its achievement of short-term objectives related to cooperative capacity-building and institutional development, its role in promoting collaboration and networking among cooperative entities, and its impact on increasing awareness and adoption of cooperative principles among the target beneficiaries.

***To what extent has the project effectively contributed to its stated objectives, particularly in producing the specified outputs, while ensuring gender equality, especially within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic?***

### *Outcome 1: Strengthening Cooperative Ecosystem*

The project has made significant progress in achieving Outcome 1, with 60–80% of milestones met during the reporting period. The Cooperative Sector Strategy for 2024-2029, led by the project, demonstrates a commitment to fostering an effective ecosystem. The strategy, although undergoing revisions, reflects a consultative approach, involving stakeholders from Gaza to assess sector challenges and prioritize actions for positive change.

The project's commitment to capacity-building is evident in strategic planning training and coaching sessions. Seventeen participants, including 7 women, from the CWA and sectorial cooperative unions underwent these sessions, fostering a robust foundation for more efficient and goal-oriented cooperative work within the region. Capacity development extends to IT proficiency with the introduction of a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) training course. Eight participants, including 5 women, from the CWA staff gained skills for basic statistical analysis, contributing to more informed decision-making processes and reinforcing IT administration within the CWA. Qualitative feedback from participants supports this alignment, praising the richness and relevance of training materials. However, the analysis highlights a potential gap in the project's design—the absence of systematic follow-up in the post-training phase. This underscores the need for a more comprehensive and sustained approach, encompassing enduring results and outputs for the sustainability of positive impacts.

*“We, a group of colleagues, took a course in SPSS, and it helped our work, and facilitated the strategic planning issue. In one way or another, it changed how we work”<sup>7</sup>*

Training programs for CWA staff and programs targeting 71 members, covering various aspects of cooperative management, highlight a commitment to continuous improvement and skill enhancement. The recorded increase in CWA services, including advisory visits, legal consultations, and grant approvals, indicates a positive trajectory. CWA staff conducted more than 450 advisory visits to cooperative

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<sup>7</sup> Focus Group Discussion, CWA, 2023.

associations and provided legal consultations to cooperatives, totaling approximately 160 cases. They approved obtaining 34 grants for funded projects benefiting cooperatives. 16 new cooperatives have been registered, and 22 inactive cooperatives have been dissolved. Regarding the analysis of financial data for the cooperatives, 320 budgets of active cooperatives were analyzed. The CWA has signed eight memorandums of understanding with partners aimed at coordinating efforts in organizing and developing the cooperative sector.<sup>8</sup>

In relation to the GCU and the sectoral unions, a key milestone within this framework was the Start.COOP training conducted in July 2023, involving 28 participants from six cooperative unions, including representatives from the GCU and diverse sectoral unions. This training initiative was not only comprehensive but also inclusive, encompassing both male and female participants. The subsequent hands-on training and coaching, guided by a seasoned cooperative expert, further enriched the learning experience.<sup>9</sup> A core feature of this module was the incorporation of a Feasibility Study and Business Planning Workshop, ensuring that participants developed a nuanced understanding of economic feasibility aligned with legal frameworks and cooperative principles.

Furthermore, the CSP project has strategically leveraged the ILO's My.COOP module, emphasizing the development of skills in feasibility studies, business planning, and resource mobilization. Recognizing the importance of sustaining cooperative development expertise beyond the project's lifespan, the CSP has implemented a targeted strategy. This strategy involves the establishment of a cohort of master trainers on the My.COOP module, with a specific focus on enhancing the management of agricultural cooperatives.

However, the planned national cooperative conference, aimed at raising awareness of challenges faced by Palestinian agricultural workers, has been temporarily suspended due to current political conditions and increased movement restrictions. The project acknowledges the delay and expresses an intention to revisit the event when conditions are safer.

Despite the aforementioned efforts, qualitative feedback from primary cooperative members and key informants has revealed nuanced challenges within the GCU and sectoral unions. While certain unions, notably in agriculture and credits and savings, exhibit commendable functionality and active engagement, others falter in delivering services to their members, lacking incentives for cooperative participation. The deficiency in union membership, attributed to the absence of enticing incentives, compromises the fundamental purpose of unions—namely, influencing policymakers. This viewpoint is echoed by local NGOs, primary cooperative members, and union affiliates. Addressing this issue is paramount to reinvigorate sectoral unions, as their effectiveness is contingent on proactive and engaged membership. Strategic measures to introduce incentives can not only attract more cooperatives but also enhance the unions' influence on policy matters, responding to the shared concern voiced by diverse stakeholders about the need to fortify sectoral unions and reinforce their role as influential advocates in shaping cooperative policies.

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<sup>8</sup> Second Annual Progress Report

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

*“The role of the unions is supposed to be organized to work on marketing, packaging, and packaging for cooperative associations. This critical aspect is entirely missing, whether it's the sectoral unions or the general union; none of them are focused on this”<sup>10</sup>*

### *Outcome 2: Establishing Support Infrastructure*

Outcome 2 emphasizes structural support for the CDI and CDF, aiming to empower the Palestinian cooperative sector. While progress on bylaws submission awaits decisions from the CWA Board of Trustees, the project has undertaken a comprehensive preparatory assessment in collaboration with Legacoop. By introducing a follow-up coaching program in Gaza, targeting a broader audience of 120 participants, the project demonstrates scalability and sustainability in disseminating knowledge and nurturing a new generation of cooperative members and leaders.

By involving Italian expertise, the project is aligning with global standards, and the anticipation of a concrete relationship between CDI and CDF reflects a well-thought-out approach. Despite delays, the project's commitment to adherence to international standards and alignment with global best practices is evident.

The commitment to aligning with global standards is reinforced by the project's efforts in Training of Trainers (TOT) workshops. A one-week TOT workshop on ILO's "Think Coop and Start Coop" tools, held in Gaza, engaged 32 participants from various national institutions. This initiative has effectively disseminated vital cooperative principles and practices, further reinforcing the cooperative movement in the region.

All in all, the project's collaboration with Legacoop has resulted in a comprehensive roadmap for the establishment of the Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) and Cooperative Development Fund (CDF). The draft report, developed through extensive consultations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, is currently being finalized based on stakeholder feedback.

### *Outcome 3: Changing Perceptions and Raising Awareness*

The project's efforts under Outcome 3 to change perceptions about cooperatives and raise awareness have been noteworthy. The communication plan and strategy formulated by the CWA, with the project's support, reflect a strategic approach. The emphasis on sharing success stories and mapping cooperative movements globally demonstrates a commitment to innovation and learning from international experiences.

Capacity-building initiatives by the CWA and GCU have empowered members, enhancing their understanding of cooperative management, governance, and service delivery. The Cooperative Audit Manual, a joint effort with the Jordanian Cooperative Corporation, even in its pre-endorsement phase, is actively being used, showcasing a proactive approach to implementation. However, the study tour to Italy has been delayed, which is one of the core activities for this objective.

The project's partnerships, such as supporting women's cooperatives and initiatives for waste management, showcase a broad and inclusive approach. While some activities, especially in Gaza, have been impacted by the outbreak of war, the adaptability and formulation of new ideas underscore

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<sup>10</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Local NGOs, 2023.

resilience. The initiative has facilitated the creation of a novel women's cooperative in Souq Al-Manshiyeh, Nablus, aimed at overcoming the impediments faced by women in marketing their products. Additionally, a collaborative effort with the Palestinian Employment Fund (PEF) is in progress to establish a Waste Collectors' Cooperative in Gaza. These cooperative endeavors to enhance recycling practices, foster responsible waste management, ensure dignified working conditions, provide social protection, and contribute to the eradication of child labor. Unfortunately, due to the eruption of conflict in Gaza, this undertaking has been temporarily halted.

The project's emphasis on strategic planning, statistical analysis, and cooperative principles through TOT workshops and coaching programs contributes not only to capacity building but also to changing perceptions about cooperatives. These initiatives align with the project's goal of raising awareness about the significant role of cooperatives in the growth of the Palestinian economy. However, the lack of cooperative culture remains an issue, with only few recorded new cooperatives, as well as entrepreneurial initiatives by the youth. This calls for a new approach to attract the youth and encourage them to start their own cooperatives.

*“The project falls short of the necessary intervention required for establishing cooperative societies among youth. This is primarily due to the circumstances they face and the economic conditions. If you don't provide financial support, they won't have the ability to establish a cooperative society that has a real economic project. The economic project for graduates or unemployed individuals, for instance, has limited possibilities in the first place. Therefore, a specific intervention should be made more explicit”<sup>11</sup>*

### *Challenges to effectiveness*

The effectiveness of the project encounters multifaceted challenges, particularly in relation to the GCU and sectorial cooperative unions. One fundamental obstacle arises from their formation, primarily driven by regulatory requirements rather than genuine needs. While the unions legally exist for each of the sectors, their functionality is incompetent, whereby they are unable to provide services to their members, and unable to persuade members to join. This creates a pressing need to redefine their roles, mandates, objectives, and added value.

Financial constraints pose a significant hurdle, with an overall lack of funding for cooperative associations and specialized financial services tailored to their needs. Moreover, challenges in the cooperative registration process highlight the CWA's limited human and financial capabilities. The deficiencies in specialized human cadres, logistical support, and vehicles impede the effective enforcement of laws and tasks related to registration processes.

The persistent lack of awareness among cooperative members regarding key cooperative principles and registration requirements emerges as a recurring challenge. Additionally, the lack of coordination between some international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and the CWA negatively impacts the cooperative movement, reflecting a need for improved collaboration and communication.

The complex political and economic realities facing Gazan cooperatives present unique challenges, stemming from the blockade, restricted movement of people and goods, and limitations on imports and

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<sup>11</sup> Key Informant Interview, 2023.

exports critical for economic growth. These challenges are expected to worsen labor market and economic conditions, emphasizing the necessity to focus on recovery and reconstruction efforts.

***How has the project fostered synergies with national initiatives, and what impact has it had on building collaborations with other donor-supported projects?***

The project has actively fostered synergies with national initiatives, demonstrating a commitment to collaborative efforts and coordination with various stakeholders. The Steering Committee (SC), composed of representatives from the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), Cooperative Work Agency (CWA), and International Labour Organization (ILO), plays a crucial role in aligning the project with national priorities and ensuring coherence with existing initiatives.

*Strategic Planning and National Priorities*

The project aligns its activities with national priorities, as evidenced by its involvement in the formulation of the Cooperative Sector Strategy for 2024-2029. This participatory consultative process, involving stakeholders from Gaza and the CWA, demonstrates a collaborative approach to address sector challenges within the Palestinian territories.

*Legislative Support and Regulatory Alignment*

Challenges related to the formation of the GCU and sectorial cooperative unions, driven by regulatory requirements, are acknowledged. The project actively addresses these challenges by focusing on capacity-building initiatives and coaching activities to redefine roles, mandates, and objectives. Additionally, the project aims to finalize the legal structure for the establishment of the CDI and CDF providing essential by-laws and regulations.

*Donor-supported projects*

In addition to its achievements and challenges, the CSP-OPT addresses a pervasive issue in the cooperative sector—lack of coordination among various donors. Despite robust partnerships with organizations like AICS and other stakeholders, the prevailing consensus among respondents highlights persistent challenges, including duplicated efforts and uneven support distribution. The CWA plays a pivotal role in overseeing projects and advising donors, aiming to mitigate duplication issues. However, respondents emphasize that challenges persist, calling for a more harmonious and coordinated approach to donor engagement.

The CSP's efforts to forge collaborations and the CWA's advisory role underscore the imperative for enhanced cooperation, collaboration, and communication among all stakeholders. Respondents unanimously advocate for a more coordinated approach to donor engagement within the cooperative sector. Aligning efforts, sharing knowledge, and facilitating open communication channels emerge as crucial elements to address duplication issues, fostering a balanced and effective support system.

***To what extent did the operational arrangements in place contribute to the timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project?***

The CSP-OPT report for September 2022 to October 2023 provides a comprehensive overview of the

project's operational arrangements and their contribution to the timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project. Key aspects of these operational arrangements include:

1. **Strategic Planning and Goal Setting:** The CSP has clearly defined objectives at multiple levels (meta, macro, meso, and micro) and strategies to achieve these, including changing perceptions about cooperatives, providing technical assistance for policy development, and directly supporting cooperatives. This strategic approach has facilitated focused and effective project implementation.
2. **Capacity Building Initiatives:** Significant efforts have been made to strengthen the capabilities of the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA), General Cooperative Union (GCU), and sectoral unions. This includes training on cooperative audit, management, governance, and the implementation of ILO modules like Think.COOP, Start.COOP, and My.COOP. These initiatives have enhanced the operational efficiency of these organizations.
3. **Consultative Processes and Collaboration:** The project has involved extensive consultative processes for policy development and capacity building, ensuring stakeholder engagement and buy-in, which is crucial for the effective implementation of project activities.
4. **Focus on Institutional Development:** The CSP's work in aiding the development of the Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) and the Cooperative Development Fund (CDF) is a major stride in establishing a robust support infrastructure for cooperatives in Palestine.
5. **Innovative Approaches and Partnerships:** The project has fostered innovative cooperative forms and partnerships, such as collaboration with the World Food Programme and the establishment of new cooperatives like Al-Manshiyeh Women's Cooperative. These initiatives reflect an adaptive and responsive operational approach.
6. **Challenges and Risk Management:** The project has faced and addressed several challenges, including political instability and operational restrictions. The project's proactive approach to risk management and corrective actions indicates effective operational arrangements.
7. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regular evaluations, reviews, and monitoring, including a mid-term evaluation, have been integral to the project. These processes have helped in assessing progress, aligning activities with objectives, and making necessary adjustments.
8. **Budget Management:** Detailed budget planning and tracking have been crucial in ensuring that financial resources are utilized effectively and efficiently towards achieving project goals.
9. **Communication and Visibility:** The project has implemented a strategic communication plan to enhance visibility and stakeholder engagement, crucial for the project's success.
10. **Flexibility and Adaptability:** The CSP's ability to adapt to changing circumstances, such as modifying activities in response to political developments, demonstrates a flexible and responsive operational approach.

The CSP-OPT's operational arrangements have significantly contributed to the timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project. The strategic planning, capacity building, collaborative approach, focus on institutional development, innovative strategies, effective risk management, rigorous monitoring and evaluation, careful budget management, strategic communication, and adaptability have all played pivotal roles in achieving the project's objectives.

## Impact

This section seeks to shed light on how the project's interventions have influenced the functioning and performance of Palestinian cooperatives, the extent to which the project has contributed to enhanced livelihoods, income generation, and socio-economic empowerment of cooperative members.

***What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended changes and effects induced by the project at the national level, with a focus on their impact on social partners, government entities, beneficiaries, and other relevant stakeholders?***

*Positive Effects*

The project aligns with the governmental efforts to reform and develop the cooperative sector in Palestine, as outlined in the Cooperative Work Agency's (CWA) Strategy "Reform and Development" 2018-2022. The capacity-building focus directly contributes to enhancing the skills and competencies of government entities responsible for overseeing cooperative development.

*“the ILO had interventions in policies and procedures of the law, and this is what benefited us, that their interventions in the law and the law workshops they gave us”<sup>12</sup>*

The project has made significant strides in enhancing awareness among key stakeholders, including the CWA, its employees, and members of cooperative unions. This increased awareness has laid the foundation for a conducive environment for cooperatives in Palestine. Notably, cooperative associations have been established, reflecting progress.

*“All the effort we put into it led to the adoption of the Cooperative Labor Law, which aligns with international standards and recommendation 193 on cooperative labor. It's a significant achievement because it emphasizes the importance of this sector and works on its development through the adoption of modern laws that keep pace with changes”<sup>13</sup>*

However, it's crucial to recognize the diverse developmental stages among cooperatives and cooperative unions, with some achieving operational strength while others remain in early phases, necessitating a transformative journey for individual cooperatives and their members. The bottom-up approach emphasizes the interconnectedness of the cooperative ecosystem. Some unions have achieved operational strength, while others are still in early stages, functioning more symbolically than as impactful cooperative entities.

While the project primarily focuses on intended outcomes, there are potential unintended positive effects. Increased awareness among cooperative members and stakeholders can foster a culture of collaboration and innovation within the sector. Additionally, the project has demonstrated potential unintended positive effects, such as the cultivation of a collaborative and innovative culture within the sector due to increased awareness among cooperative members and stakeholders.

*Negative Effects*

The project's emphasis on capacity building is instrumental in enhancing the knowledge and skills of cooperative members and stakeholders, positively influencing the functionality of the cooperative sector. However, a notable observation from the collected data is the absence of simultaneous economic empowerment initiatives, and concurrent economic empowerment or job opportunities. Additionally, there was no tangible impact on the GCU and some of the sectoral union, whereby some remain a formality rather than a functional body in the cooperative sector. As for unintended negative effects,

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<sup>12</sup> Focus Group Discussion, Sectoral Unions, 2023

<sup>13</sup> Key Informant Interview, 2023



potential concern arises from the focus on capacity building without direct economic empowerment, which may lead to unmet expectations and potential disappointment among cooperative members.

## Sustainability

### ***To what extent has the project facilitated adequate capacity building among social partners to establish sustainable mechanisms, ensuring the continuity of activities beyond project completion?***

The CSP has prioritized capacity building through extensive engagement with social partners, as gleaned from insights gathered through FGDs and KIIs. The CSP's commitment to sustainability is evident in its multifaceted approach to capacity building. The establishment of the fully operational CWA is a landmark achievement, signifying the creation of a regulatory body capable of overseeing cooperative activities. The sustainability of Outcome 1 is intricately tied to the ongoing strength and effectiveness of the CWA, positioning it as a linchpin for enduring success. FGDs indicate that members of the CWA have undergone targeted training sessions, enhancing their skills to effectively carry out regulatory functions. The ongoing strength and effectiveness of the CWA are crucial for the sustainability of Outcome 1.

Furthermore, the project's strategic focus on reviewing and strengthening Cooperative Unions underscores its dedication to enhancing cooperative cohesion and support structures. However, the long-term sustainability of these unions is contingent upon their ability to operate independently and adapt to the evolving needs and challenges of cooperatives. However, FGDs highlight concerns about the varying capacities of Cooperative Unions. While some show notable progress, others appear to struggle, indicating a need for nuanced and strategic capacity-building interventions tailored to the specific challenges faced by different unions. The project's adaptability and responsiveness to these challenges, as indicated in KIIs, are key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of capacity-building efforts.

### ***How effectively are operation and maintenance agreements being implemented to maintain existing results?***

Insights from FGDs and KIIs underscore the importance of Operation and Maintenance Agreements for sustaining existing results, particularly within Outcome 2. Outcome 2's sustainability hinges on the establishment of a robust legal and institutional framework for the Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) and the Cooperative Development Fund (CDF). FGDs reveal that CDI and CDF are seen as essential components in the cooperative ecosystem, providing support, capacity-building, and resource access. KIIs highlight the need for robust operation and maintenance agreements to ensure the autonomous functioning of CDI and CDF beyond the project's duration.

Challenges identified in KIIs, such as the necessity for continuous capacity building and ensuring local and international market access, emphasize the importance of effective agreements in preserving and enhancing existing results. The institutionalization of CDI and CDF within the cooperative ecosystem emerges as a critical factor for sustainability. Continuous effectiveness in providing support and access to resources is imperative for long-term success. Robust operation and maintenance agreements are crucial to preserving and building upon existing results.

***What is the extent to which the knowledge generated during the project can continue to inform policies and guide practitioners after the project's conclusion?***

The CSP's emphasis on knowledge exchange, international collaboration, and the introduction of new cooperative forms positions it as a beacon for knowledge sustainability. FGDs reveal positive perceptions regarding the value of these initiatives in disseminating knowledge and fostering collaboration. The success of knowledge-sharing initiatives, such as the national cooperative conference and South-South cooperation, is contingent upon their recurrence and active contribution to the cooperative sector's long-term growth.

KIIs underscore the significance of integrating new cooperative forms into the Palestinian landscape, with the potential to diversify economic opportunities and enhance income sustainability for members. Furthermore, the tangible impact of project-generated knowledge in informing policies and guiding practitioners beyond the project's conclusion is contingent upon sustained efforts in knowledge-sharing platforms. FGDs and KIIs highlight the need for continuous engagement in these activities to ensure lasting impact on policies and practices within the cooperative sector.

## Conclusion

### **Relevance**

The CSP's commitment to relevance is evident in its alignment with multi-level strategies and agendas, ensuring a nuanced response to the cooperative sector's challenges. The project's direct correlation with the CWA's strategy, National Policy Agenda, and Italy's priorities reflects a comprehensive understanding of sectoral needs. The CSP's emphasis on inclusivity, gender equality, and adherence to international standards underscores its commitment to socio-economic developmental objectives. As the project progresses, sustaining this relevance by remaining attuned to evolving priorities will be vital for its enduring impact on cooperative development in Palestine.

### **Validity of Design**

The CSP's robust design, grounded in comprehensive research and needs analysis, positions it as a vital intervention tailored to the specific challenges of the Palestinian cooperative sector. Its meticulous alignment with national priorities and international best practices is not only asserted but supported by concrete references and contextual understanding. The project's strategic interventions, validated through participant feedback and desk analyses, signify its potential to serve as a catalyst for sustainable development through cooperative empowerment in Palestine. As the project progresses, maintaining this alignment and adaptability to evolving needs will be essential for its continued effectiveness.

### **Efficiency**

Efficient resource utilization has been instrumental in the success of the Cooperative Support Programme for Palestine (CSP-OPT), fostering achievements that contribute to the vitality of the cooperative sector. The project's adept financial management, strategic use of material resources, and effective human resource development have driven enhanced productivity in the sector. The CSP-OPT's agility in redirecting resources in response to the COVID-19 pandemic showcases its resilience and commitment to mitigating challenges. Moving forward, maintaining this efficiency will be crucial to sustaining the positive trajectory of the cooperative sector in Palestine.

## **Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of the Cooperative Support Programme for Palestine (CSP-OPT) is evident in its tangible contributions to cooperative capacity-building, institutional development, and awareness-raising. Noteworthy progress in strategic planning, capacity building, and support for CDI and CDF reflects the project's commitment to fostering a robust cooperative ecosystem. Challenges, particularly those related to financial constraints and the unique circumstances in Gaza, have been acknowledged and addressed with a proactive approach. The CSP-OPT's collaboration with national initiatives and its efforts to navigate challenges within the cooperative sector underscore its strategic significance. Moving forward, sustaining the positive momentum and addressing gender-related gaps will be essential for maximizing the long-term impact of the CSP-OPT in the Palestinian cooperative sector.

## **Impact**

In evaluating the relevance criterion, the CSP's alignment with constituents' needs, donor priorities, and international standards is evident. The project's explicit connections to national strategies, EU Joint Strategy, and ILO principles solidify its tailored and impactful nature. Recognizing potential gaps in practical implementation and the need for sustained post-training support is crucial for maximizing effectiveness in addressing cooperative challenges. The CSP serves as a strategic intervention, addressing multifaceted cooperative requirements, yet its enduring impact relies on proactive adaptation and continuous alignment with evolving needs and international best practices.

In conclusion, the mid-term evaluation of the CSP-OPT project highlights its significant contributions to aligning with national strategies and fostering awareness within the Palestinian cooperative sector. The emphasis on capacity-building has positively influenced the skills of key stakeholders, emphasizing the project's efficacy in enhancing the overall functionality of cooperatives.

However, the absence of concurrent economic empowerment initiatives and limited impact on certain cooperative entities pose challenges to the project's holistic success. The identified unintended positive effects, particularly the cultivation of collaboration and innovation, should be acknowledged and leveraged in future project planning.

Addressing the concerns related to the lack of tangible impact on the GCU and specific sectoral unions is crucial for ensuring the project's sustained relevance and effectiveness. Moving forward, a nuanced approach that integrates economic empowerment measures while maintaining the positive aspects of awareness and collaboration is recommended to maximize the project's impact on livelihoods, income generation, and socio-economic empowerment of cooperative members.

## **Sustainability**

The mid-term evaluation reveals the CSP's commendable efforts in promoting sustainability across its focus areas. The establishment of the CWA and strategic focus on Cooperative Unions demonstrate a commitment to capacity building, with adaptability identified as key to addressing evolving challenges. Operation and Maintenance Agreements are recognized as essential for sustaining the CDI and CDF, with a need for continuous capacity building and market access.

Knowledge sustainability, facilitated through initiatives like national conferences, holds promise for informing policies and guiding practitioners. However, the challenge lies in ensuring the recurrence and

active contribution of these platforms to the cooperative sector's long-term growth. The CSP's success in this endeavor hinges on sustained efforts in knowledge-sharing activities beyond the project's conclusion. Overall, the evaluation underscores the CSP's positive trajectory toward achieving sustainability, while highlighting key areas that require ongoing attention for long-term success.

## Lessons Learned

The Cooperative Support Programme (CSP) in Palestine has been a dynamic initiative, navigating a complex landscape of challenges and opportunities to enhance the cooperative sector within the socio-political context of the region. As the project unfolded, valuable lessons emerged, shedding light on operational, legal, and relational dynamics among cooperative entities and unions.

In terms of historical and socio-political context, Palestine's cooperative sector, deeply rooted in history, has played a crucial role in providing essential services across various sectors despite the challenges of the socio-political environment. Operational and legal challenges were evident, with the sector struggling to effectively apply cooperative laws and manage operational aspects despite having robust legal frameworks. The relational dynamics among cooperative entities, especially between the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA), General Cooperative Union (GCU), and Sectoral Cooperative Unions, showcased a spectrum of cooperation and occasional conflict.

The beneficiaries and targeted users of these lessons include active cooperatives and their members, the CWA, GCU, Sectoral Cooperative Unions, and various stakeholders involved in the cooperative sector, ranging from local entities to international organizations and donors.

Several challenges and negative lessons emerged during the implementation of the project. Misunderstandings and misalignments regarding the nature of cooperatives, ranging from charitable organizations to profit-oriented entities, created challenges in defining their true economic nature. The issue of "fake membership," referring to inactive members not engaging in cooperatives, posed a significant hurdle. Communication and coordination issues, especially between entities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, stagnated relationships. Managing international collaborations and funds presented logistical challenges, and persistent issues with awareness and training within the cooperative sector were evident.

Despite these challenges, positive aspects and successes were noted. The project actively explored solutions, including addressing land allocations and tax issues to overcome challenges. Engagement with international entities, including organizations and donors, provided a valuable platform for collaboration and support.

Reflecting on administrative issues, the CSP navigated ILO administrative considerations, including staff management, resource allocation, and the design and implementation of the project. The lessons learned from these experiences offer valuable insights for future initiatives in the cooperative sector, contributing to the broader understanding of cooperative dynamics in challenging socio-political contexts.

## Emerging Good Practices

In the context of the Cooperative Support Programme (CSP) in Palestine, a notable best practice emerged in the form of "Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement for Cooperative Sector Strategy." Recognizing the complexity of the socio-political environment in the West Bank and Gaza, the project successfully engaged

all relevant stakeholders, including cooperative members, unions, government bodies, and civil society organizations. This comprehensive approach was instrumental in unifying the vision of the cooperative sector, resulting in the formulation of a successful Cooperative Sector Strategy. The success of this practice can be attributed to a commitment to inclusivity, active participation, and collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

The relevant conditions and context of this best practice highlight the importance of overcoming limitations related to socio-political complexities. The engagement strategy proved effective in enhancing the quality of the Cooperative Sector Strategy and fostering a sense of ownership among stakeholders. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the replicability and applicability of this practice may be influenced by specific contextual factors, and careful consideration is advised.

The cause-effect relationship between inclusive stakeholder engagement and the successful formulation of the Cooperative Sector Strategy is evident. The practice directly contributed to the strategy's improvement, emphasizing the positive impact of engaging diverse stakeholders. Measurable impacts include the successful development of the Cooperative Sector Strategy, increased stakeholder commitment, and a heightened sense of ownership. The targeted beneficiaries encompass cooperative members, unions, government bodies, and civil society organizations in the West Bank and Gaza.

This best practice holds substantial potential for replication in projects focusing on cooperative sector development, particularly in complex socio-political environments. Development agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other entities aiming to strengthen cooperative sectors can adopt and replicate this inclusive stakeholder engagement model.

In terms of alignment with higher ILO goals, the practice resonates with the broader objectives of the International Labour Organization. It contributes to promoting inclusive development, participatory governance, and economic empowerment through cooperative initiatives, aligning seamlessly with the ILO's Strategic Programme Framework.

In summary, the best practice of inclusive stakeholder engagement for the Cooperative Sector Strategy in Palestine exemplifies a successful approach to navigating complex socio-political environments. The lessons learned from this practice offer valuable insights for similar initiatives worldwide, emphasizing the transformative power of engaging diverse stakeholders in cooperative sector development.

## Recommendation

### **1. Implementing a Bottom-Up Approach to Strengthen Cooperative Unions**

Recognizing the pivotal role of cooperatives in the overall success of the project and understanding that a robust cooperative sector contributes to the strength of unions, it is recommended to adopt a bottom-up approach. Instead of primarily targeting the General Cooperative Union (GCU) and sectoral unions with capacity-building initiatives, the focus should be redirected to empower primary cooperatives and their members directly.

#### *Key Strategies*

- a. **Cooperative-Centric Capacity Building:** Design and implement capacity-building programs that directly engage cooperative members. Tailor these programs to address the unique needs, challenges, and opportunities faced by cooperatives across different sectors.
- b. **Function of Unions Education:** Integrate sessions within capacity-building programs that educate cooperative members about the functions and benefits of unions. Emphasize how active participation in unions can amplify the impact of individual cooperatives, fostering a sense of collaboration and shared goals.
- c. **Practical Knowledge Transfer:** Facilitate practical knowledge transfer within the context of cooperative operations. Equip cooperative members with the skills needed to understand and engage with union activities effectively. This includes training on governance structures, decision-making processes, and collaborative initiatives.
- d. **Networking Opportunities:** Create platforms for cooperative members to network and share experiences. Foster a sense of community among cooperatives, encouraging the exchange of best practices and lessons learned. This networking can extend to interactions with the GCU and sectoral unions, fostering a more inclusive and cooperative environment.
- e. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish regular feedback mechanisms to gather insights from cooperative members. Use this feedback to adapt capacity-building programs, ensuring they remain relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of individual cooperatives.

#### *Rationale*

- **Empowerment at the Grassroots:** By empowering individual cooperative members, the project ensures a grassroots-level understanding of the cooperative principles and their role in the broader cooperative ecosystem.
- **Active Participation:** Focusing on cooperative members directly encourages their active participation in the strengthening of unions. This approach builds a foundation of support and engagement that emanates from the grassroots level.
- **Building a Collaborative Culture:** A bottom-up approach fosters a collaborative culture within cooperatives. As cooperative members develop a deeper understanding of union functions, they are more likely to actively contribute to the success of the unions.
- **Adaptability and Responsiveness:** Targeting cooperative members directly allows for a more adaptable and responsive strategy. As the needs of individual cooperatives may vary, this approach ensures a customized and nuanced capacity-building process.
- **Long-Term Sustainability:** Strengthening unions through empowered cooperatives establishes a foundation for long-term sustainability. The knowledge and skills acquired by cooperative members contribute to the enduring success of the cooperative sector as a whole.

#### *Implementation Steps*

- I. Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment among cooperative members to identify specific capacity-building requirements.
- II. Develop tailored training modules that cover both cooperative operations and the role of unions in supporting cooperative development.
- III. Facilitate cross-sectoral workshop that bring together cooperative members from different sectors to share insights and best practices, promoting a cross-sectoral cooperative culture.

- IV. Implement a phased approach, starting with pilot programs to test the effectiveness of the bottom-up strategy.
- V. Establish clear communication channels between cooperative members, unions, and project management to ensure seamless collaboration.
- VI. Monitor and evaluate the impact of the capacity-building programs, soliciting feedback from cooperative members for continuous improvement.

By adopting a bottom-up approach and directly empowering cooperative members, the project can foster a more resilient and collaborative cooperative sector, ultimately strengthening the role of unions in driving economic and social development.

Addressed to:	Priority:	Resource:	Timing:
ILO Country Offices	High	Medium	Medium and Long-Term

## 2. Emphasizing Collaborations Among Stakeholders

Collaborative initiatives reinforce the interconnectedness of the cooperative sector, contributing to its resilience and sustainability.

- a. Align with CWA Enhancement: Integrate capacity-building initiatives with the ongoing efforts to enhance the CWA's capabilities in regulatory and promotional functions.
- b. Develop training modules that complement and support the CWA's evolving role in promoting dialogue and coordination within the cooperative sector.
- c. Enhance Regional Collaborations: Capitalize on opportunities arising from partnerships with different organizations to strengthen regional collaborations. Develop joint initiatives with the PGFTU, PEF, and other entities to address challenges faced by women's cooperatives, waste collectors, and others. Promote cross-regional cooperation for shared learning.
- d. Facilitate WFP Partnership Expansion: Collaborate with the WFP to expand the partnership in marketing cooperative products. Explore avenues for replicating the successful model in other regions, ensuring a broader impact on cooperative sustainability.
- e. Link with Existing Initiatives: Establish linkages with existing initiatives supporting cooperatives in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including those by AICS, FAO, WeEffect, Legacoop, ESDC, and others. Collaborate on educational programs, knowledge-sharing, and resource mobilization to create a synergistic impact.

Addressed to:	Priority:	Resource:	Timing:
ILO Country Offices, CWA, AICS, international stakeholders	Medium	Medium	Medium and Long-Term

## 3. Promotion of Cooperative Culture and Entrepreneurship

In order to foster a vibrant cooperative culture and encourage entrepreneurship, the project will undertake targeted initiatives with a dual focus: engaging the general public, particularly the youth, and empowering women to assume leadership roles within the cooperative sector.

## *Key Strategies*

### Digitalization of Learning Materials for Youth:

- Develop and implement a comprehensive digitalization strategy for learning materials tailored for the youth demographic.
- Create engaging and interactive online content that highlights the principles, benefits, and success stories of cooperatives, encouraging a tech-savvy audience to explore cooperative entrepreneurship.

### Youth-Focused Pilot Programs:

- Pilot the digitalized learning materials through youth-centric programs to test their effectiveness and gather insights for further refinement.
- Collaborate with educational institutions, youth organizations, and digital platforms to maximize the reach and impact of the pilot initiatives.

### Promotion of Women's Leadership in Cooperatives:

- Design targeted awareness campaigns and workshops specifically addressing women, emphasizing the significance of their leadership within cooperatives.
- Implement mentorship programs to support and empower women in assuming prominent roles in cooperatives, unions, and related sectors.

### Encouraging Women's Participation in Unions:

- Advocate for increased representation of women in union activities by fostering an inclusive environment and addressing gender-specific barriers.
- Collaborate with women's organizations and unions to create tailored programs that promote women's active involvement in decision-making processes.

### Utilize CDI and CDF Resources:

- Integrate the resources and support available through the Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) and Cooperative Development Fund (CDF) to strengthen the impact of youth-focused and women's empowerment initiatives.
- Explore synergies between CDI/CDF and the youth and women-focused programs to enhance capacity-building, financial support, and mentorship opportunities.

## *Rationale*

Leveraging digital tools aligns with the preferences of the youth, making cooperative concepts more accessible and appealing. Furthermore, focusing on women's leadership not only promotes gender equity but also enhances the diversity and resilience of the cooperative sector.

## *Implementation Steps*

- a. Collaborate with Youth Platforms: Forge partnerships with digital platforms, social media influencers, and youth-oriented organizations to amplify the reach of the digitalized learning materials.



- b. Establish Women's Leadership Workshops: Organize specialized workshops aimed at cultivating leadership skills among women in cooperatives, unions, and affiliated entities.

Addressed to:	Priority:	Resource:	Timing:
ILO Country Office, CWA, GCU, other international stakeholders	High	Medium – High	Medium and Long – Term

## Appendices

### Annex 1. Lessons Learned

<b>LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT</b>	<b>TEXT</b>
<b>Brief description of lessons learned</b> (link to specific action or task)	<p>The Cooperative Support Programme (CSP) in Palestine has navigated through a multifaceted landscape of challenges and opportunities in enhancing the cooperative sector amidst socio-political complexities. The experiences and insights derived from the project's implementation have illuminated key lessons, particularly in relation to the operational, legal, and relational dynamics among cooperative entities and unions.</p>
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	<p><b>Historical and Socio-Political Context:</b> The cooperative sector in Palestine has a rich history, providing essential services in various sectors, such as agriculture, housing, and consumer sectors, amidst a complex socio-political environment.</p> <p><b>Operational and Legal Domains:</b> The sector experiences challenges in applying cooperative laws and managing operational aspects effectively, despite having some of the best laws and systems related to cooperatives globally.</p> <p><b>Relational Dynamics:</b> Relationships among cooperative entities, particularly between the CWA, GCU, and Sectoral Cooperative Unions, have navigated through cooperation and conflict.</p>
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active cooperatives and their members in Palestine.</li> <li>2. The CWA, GCU, and Sectoral Cooperative Unions.</li> <li>3. Stakeholders involved in the cooperative sector, including international organizations and donors.</li> </ol>
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Misunderstandings and Misalignments:</b> There are prevalent misunderstandings about the nature of cooperatives, with some viewing them as charitable organizations and others as profit-oriented entities, which is misaligned with their true nature as economic institutions not aiming for profit.</li> <li>2. <b>Fake Membership:</b> The issue of "fake membership" refers to inactive members who do not engage in cooperatives, which is a significant challenge that needs addressing.</li> <li>3. <b>Communication and Coordination Issues:</b> Relationships, especially between entities within the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, have experienced stagnation and dissatisfaction.</li> <li>4. <b>Management of Projects and Funds:</b> Managing resources, especially those involving international collaborations, has presented challenges.</li> <li>5. <b>Awareness and Training:</b> A persistent challenge involves raising awareness and providing adequate training within the cooperative sector.</li> </ol>

<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exploration of Solutions: Some solutions, like land allocations and tax issue resolutions, have been explored to address challenges.</li> <li>2. Engagement with International Entities: The CSP has engaged with international organizations and donors, providing a platform for international collaboration and support.</li> </ol>
<b>ILO Administrative Issues</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

## Annex 2. Best Practices

<b>GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT</b>	<b>TEXT</b>
<b>Brief summary of the good practice</b>	Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement for Cooperative Sector Strategy
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	The engagement of all relevant stakeholders in the West Bank and Gaza, including cooperative members, unions, government bodies, and civil society organizations, was crucial in unifying the vision of the cooperative sector. This practice resulted in the successful formulation of the Cooperative Sector Strategy, improving its quality and fostering a sense of ownership among stakeholders. The success was driven by the commitment to inclusivity, active participation, and collaboration.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	The inclusive engagement of stakeholders directly contributed to the successful formulation of the Cooperative Sector Strategy, improving its quality and fostering a sense of ownership.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	Measurable impact includes the successful development of the Cooperative Sector Strategy, improved stakeholder commitment, and increased ownership. The targeted beneficiaries are cooperative members, unions, government bodies, and civil society organizations in the West Bank and Gaza.
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	This practice has strong potential for replication in projects involving cooperative sector development, especially those in complex socio-political environments. It can be replicated by development agencies, NGOs, and other organizations aiming to strengthen cooperative sectors.
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals</b> (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	The practice aligns with ILO's broader goals of promoting inclusive development, participatory governance, and economic empowerment through cooperative initiatives.

<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	This good practice aligns with the cooperative sector's historical context and socio-political challenges in Palestine, emphasizing the need for inclusive stakeholder engagement, especially cooperatives and their members.
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### Annex 3. Evaluation Matrix from ToR

<b>Relevance &amp; Strategic Fit</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent are the objectives aligned with sub-regional, national, and local priorities and needs,</li> <li>2. To what extent are the objectives aligned with the constituents' priorities and needs, and the donor's priorities for the country.</li> </ol>
<b>Validity of Design</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent are the project design, logic, strategy, and elements valid vis-à-vis problems and needs.</li> </ol>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does the efficiency of resource utilization, encompassing financial, material, and human resources, during the project implementation process impact the overall productivity?</li> <li>2. to what extent does the repurposing of resources contribute to mitigating the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on project outcomes?</li> </ol>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent has the project effectively contributed to its stated objectives, particularly in producing the specified outputs, while ensuring gender equality, especially within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic?</li> <li>2. How has the project fostered synergies with national initiatives, and what impact has it had on building collaborations with other donor-supported projects?</li> <li>3. To what extent did the operational arrangements in place contribute to the timely, efficient, and effective delivery of the project?</li> </ol>
<b>Impact</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the positive and negative, intended and unintended changes and effects induced by the project at the national level, with a focus on their impact on social partners, government entities, beneficiaries, and other relevant stakeholders?</li> </ol>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To what extent has the project facilitated adequate capacity building among social partners to establish sustainable mechanisms, ensuring the continuity of activities beyond project completion?</li> <li>2. how effectively are operation and maintenance agreements being implemented to maintain existing results?</li> <li>3. what is the extent to which the knowledge generated during the project, including research papers, progress reports, manuals, and other tools, can continue to inform policies and guide practitioners after the project's conclusion?</li> </ol>

### Annex 4. Data Collection Instruments

<b>FGD: Local Implementing Partners (Ministries, Authorities, CWA Representatives)</b>
<p><i>Perception of the Current Ecosystem for Cooperatives:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do you perceive the current ecosystem for cooperatives in OPT in terms of legal and administrative support?</li> </ol>

2. What impact have recent changes in laws and policies had on the functioning of cooperatives?

*Role and Impact of the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA):*

3. How do you evaluate the role and impact of the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA) in enhancing the cooperative ecosystem?
4. Could you elaborate on the role and impact of the CWA's technical support and training?
5. Can you share specific examples of how the training provided by the CWA has positively impacted cooperative performance?

*Role of General Cooperative Union and Sectoral Unions:*

6. How would you assess the performance of the General Cooperative Union (GCU) in Palestine?
  - a. What can be done to strengthen the GCU and the sectoral unions?

*Collaboration and Challenges:*

7. Are there specific challenges in the relationships between CWA, GCU, and Sectoral Cooperative Unions?
8. What measures can enhance collaboration and synergy among these organizations?

*CDI and CDF Legal Institutional Framework:*

9. What is the importance of CDI and CDF?
10. What were the main challenges faced in making the CDI and CDF come to fruition?

*Formalization and Policy Alignment:*

11. How is the CWA working towards formalizing the cooperative sector in Palestine?
12. How do the policies and strategies of the CWA align with the socio-economic and structural conditions in Palestine?

*Advocacy and Inclusion:*

13. To what extent does the CWA engage in policy advocacy or lobbying for cooperative-related matters with the government?
14. How does the CWA ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities, in its initiatives?

*Sector-specific Needs and Alignment:*

15. How effectively does the Cooperative Support Programme (CSP) address the needs and priorities of cooperatives on a sector basis?
16. Does the CSP align with national development strategies and international best practices? How has this impacted the growth of the cooperative sector?

**FGD: International Stakeholders, International Organizations, and NGOs**

*Perception of the Cooperative Ecosystem:*

1. How does the cooperative ecosystem in Palestine compare to other regions where you've worked?
2. What contributions have the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA) made to strengthening cooperative operations and governance?
3. How do you assess the impact of the CWA's technical support and training initiatives?

*Impact of CSP and Legislative Changes:*

4. How have recent legislative changes impacted cooperatives' operations in OPT?
5. How do you perceive the performance of cooperative unions in OPT?
6. Do the objectives of the CSP align with international best practices, and does it address the unique needs of the Palestinian cooperative sector?

*Role of International Organizations, INGOs, and NGOs:*

7. What is the role of international organizations, INGOs, and NGOs in supporting cooperative development in Palestine?
8. Could you discuss the strengths and weaknesses of projects supported by international organizations in the Palestinian cooperative ecosystem?

*Collaborative Initiatives and Innovation:*

9. How do Palestinian cooperative unions collaborate with international organizations, and what impact has this had on cooperative growth?
10. How do you perceive the extent to which the involvement of international organization enhanced the collaboration network among different cooperative entities?

*Sustainability and Partnerships:*

11. What steps can be taken to improve the long-term sustainability of cooperative projects supported by international organizations?
12. How do you perceive the engagement of public and private sectors in cooperative development in Palestine, and what challenges need to be addressed?

**FGD: Beneficiaries, Cooperative Members and Cooperative Representatives**

*Cooperative Ecosystem and Operations:*

1. How do you perceive the current ecosystem for cooperatives in OPT? and how has it influenced your cooperative's operations?
2. What are the biggest challenges that are facing Primary Cooperatives within Palestine?
3. How can these challenges best be addressed in the future?
4. What are the most important needs critical to cooperative development in Palestine?

*CSP's Impact on Cooperative Performance:*

5. Have you heard of the CSP project by the ILO? when and how did you hear about it?
6. How have the initiatives of the Cooperative Support Programme (CSP) influenced your cooperative's functionality, performance, and socio-economic empowerment of members? Please provide specific examples.
7. Have you noticed any improvements in livelihoods, income generation, and socio-economic status due to CSP initiatives? Can you share specific instances?

*Impact of CWA's Initiatives:*

8. Have you participated in any trainings, or capacity-building workshops done by the CWA or the ILO or the GCU? When?
9. How was your experience with it?
10. How has the training impacted your cooperative's performance and operations?
11. How have your managerial skills improved as a result of the CWA's training initiatives?
12. How do you view the technical support provided by the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA)? Can you provide feedback on the administration and management system of the CWA?
13. Can you share your experiences with the monitoring process conducted by the CWA? How has it contributed to your cooperative's growth?
14. And how has it contributed to the growth and financial performance of your cooperative?
15. How do you consider the role of the CWA in developing plans and strategies for the cooperative sector and submitting them to the Council of Ministers for approval?
16. Do you think these plans and strategies are cooperative-friendly policies?

*Cooperative Union:*

17. How do you perceive the role of the General Cooperative Union (GCU) in advocating for cooperative-friendly policies and regulations?

18. Has the presence of the GCU and other sectoral unions positively affected the work of you cooperative?
19. What are the services received from the GCU? Rate the services
20. and sectoral cooperative unions? Rate the services
21. How could these services develop to the better?

*Relationships and Advocacy:*

22. How do you perceive the relationship between the GCU, CWA, and Sectoral Cooperative Unions?
23. How has this interaction affected the mandates of each organization?
24. How well do you think your cooperative adheres to the cooperative principles? Can you provide examples?
25. In your opinion, how has the governance structure influenced the decision-making process within your cooperative?

*Sustainability and Beyond:*

26. What strategies or mechanisms do you believe can ensure the continuation of CSP's positive outcomes?
27. What strategies do you envision for ensuring the long-term sustainability and growth of cooperatives within your sector?
28. What are your suggestions for future programming and interventions to support the positive development of the cooperative sector?

**FGD: Beneficiaries, Cooperative Union and Cooperative Sectoral Unions**

*Cooperative Union's Performance and Impact:*

1. How do you perceive the overall performance and impact of cooperative unions in enhancing the cooperative ecosystem?
2. Could you share examples of strategies and plans implemented by cooperative unions that have benefited local cooperatives?
3. Are there mechanisms in place to ensure the continuation of the union's achievements beyond the duration of the project? How does the General Cooperative Union (GCU) plan to maintain the project's outcomes after funding ends?

*International Collaboration and Innovation:*

4. What role do Palestinian cooperative unions play in interacting with international organizations to promote cooperative growth?

*Collaboration and Advocacy:*

5. How do you perceive the relationship between the General Cooperative Union (GCU), Cooperative Work Agency (CWA), and Primary Cooperatives? How does this interaction impact each entity's mandates and objectives?
6. How does the GCU foster coordination and cooperation with relevant ministries, institutions, and organizations to support cooperative development?

*Strategies for Sustained Growth:*

7. What strategies do you believe are necessary for achieving the long-term sustainability of cooperative growth within your sector?

**FGD: Local Stakeholders, Local NGOs**

*Local Stakeholders and Cooperative Development:*

1. How do you perceive the current environment for cooperative development in Palestine from the perspective of local stakeholders?

2. What role do civil society organizations, academia, and local businesses play in supporting cooperative growth in Palestine?
1. What contributions have the Cooperative Work Agency (CWA) made to strengthening cooperative operations and governance?
2. How do you assess the impact of the CWA's technical support and training initiatives?

*Strengthening the Cooperative Ecosystem:*

1. What strategies do you believe are necessary for achieving the long-term sustainability of cooperative growth within your sector?
2. How do local stakeholders envision the long-term sustainability of cooperative growth within their own sectors? What strategies do you consider necessary for achieving this sustainability?

*Role of International Organizations, INGOs, and NGOs:*

1. What is the role of international organizations, INGOs, and NGOs in supporting cooperative development in Palestine?
2. Could you discuss the strengths and weaknesses of projects supported by international organizations in the Palestinian cooperative ecosystem?

**In- Depth Interviews**

*Project Alignment and Relevance:*

1. To what extent do you believe that the goals and objectives of the CSP-OPT align with the specific needs and priorities of the Palestinian cooperative sector?  
Guiding Question: How well do you think the project addresses the challenges and opportunities that Palestinian cooperatives face?
2. In your opinion, does the project adhere to national development strategies and international best practices for cooperative sector development?
3. How effectively does the CSP-OPT consider gender perspectives and ensure inclusivity in its interventions, especially in your interactions with local partners?

*Strengthening Cooperative Effectiveness:*

4. In your opinion, based on your experience, how can cooperatives be further strengthened to achieve economic self-reliance and sustainability?
5. Could you provide insights into how the knowledge-sharing initiatives with third countries have influenced the cooperative sector's development in OPT?
6. What are the main lessons and takeaways from the South-South Cooperation that have contributed to the advancement of cooperative development in OPT?

*Project Resource Utilization:*

7. How effectively are the financial and human resources allocated to the project being utilized to achieve the project's objectives?
8. Are administrative and management processes streamlined and cost-effective?
9. To what extent does the project avoid duplication with other initiatives in the cooperative sector?

*CSP-OPT's Impact:*

10. In your interactions with the cooperative sector, what observable changes or improvements have resulted from the CSP-OPT's interventions?
11. From your perspective, has the CSP-OPT contributed significantly to enhanced livelihoods, income generation, and socio-economic empowerment of cooperative members, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds?

*Integration of Sustainability:*



12. How well do you think the CSP-OPT has integrated sustainability considerations into its capacity-building and institutional strengthening efforts?

13. From your viewpoint, are there mechanisms in place to ensure that the achievements of the CSP-OPT are preserved and built upon even beyond the project duration?

*Effectiveness of CWA's Role:*

14. How effective has the capacity building training provided by the ILO been for the CWA?

15. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of the CWA's activities in supporting cooperative development?

16. Could you elaborate on any significant challenges that the CWA encountered during its reform process, and how were these challenges addressed to enhance its impact?

*Strategies and Impact on Unions:*

17. Can you share specific examples of success stories or challenges faced by the cooperative unions as a result of the interventions carried out under the project?

18. How effectively do you think the CSP-OPT encourages collaboration and networking among different cooperative entities?

19. Have you seen an increase in awareness and adoption of cooperative principles among the target beneficiaries due to the project's interventions?

*CDI and CDF Frameworks:*

20. What are the main challenges that are faced concerning the establishment of the Cooperative Development Institute (CDI) and Cooperative Development Fund (CDF)?

*Overall Feedback:*

21. How would you evaluate the overall impact of the Cooperative Support Programme for OPT on the cooperative sector's growth and sustainability?

22. In your opinion, what specific suggestions do you have for future initiatives or improvements that could enhance the effectiveness of the current project or similar endeavors?

## Annex 5. Participants

FGD.1 Cooperative Members West Bank					
13 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2023					
Issa Shatleh	Bethlehem, Al Makhrour Cooperative, Agriculture	0599254707			
Ibrahim Oqabneh	Hebron, Kharas Cooperative, Consumer	0599249978			
Hanan Salman	Tulkarem, Handicrafts Cooperative	0599675914			
Raghad	Tulkarem, Handicrafts Cooperative				
Amneh Mustafa	Salfit, Al Ebda Cooperative, Agriculture	0599968532			

Hiyam Karoush	Salfit, Al Ebda Cooperative, Agriculture				
<b>FGD.2 Cooperative Members Gaza</b> 14 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2023					
Asma Abu Qaidah	Zeina Handicrafts Cooperative	0597253118			
Suad Abu Daqqa	Atar Al-Sham Cooperative	0599326336			
Samira Rashwan	Atar Al-Sham Cooperative				
Nahed Al-Kafarna	Beit Hanoun Agri Cooperative				
Haitham Abu Amira	Beit Hanoun Agri Cooperative	0598320125			
Ali Al-Kilany	Gaza Cooperative				
Ibrahim Samra	Tel Al-Hawa Housinf Cooperative	0599475424			
Ziad Abu Halima	Potato Cooperative				
<b>FGD.3 Sectoral Unions West Bank</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2023					
Jamal Zghari	Cooperative Housing Sectoral Union	0597346681			
Ayman Al-Heeh	Cooperative Consumer Union	0599828924			
Randa Abd Rabo	Cooperative Credit and Saving Union	0598921767			
Siham Abbasi	Cooperative Credit and Saving Union	0598921766 0522206109			
Nidal Dweikat	Cooperative Agricultural Union	0595255590			
<b>FGD.4 CWA Employees</b> 20 <sup>th</sup> Sep 2023					

Fuad Kharma	CWA Ramallah				
Rabie Al-Qasem	CWA Ramallah				
Said Al-Deek	CWA Ramallah				
Samah Makhlof	CWA Ramallah				
Riyad Abu Shihab	CWA Ramallah				
<b>FGD.5 International Organizations West Bank</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct 2023					
Intissar Eshtayeh	FOA	0598929983			
Buthaina	Oxfam				
Bashir Qattan	WFP	0592911909 <a href="mailto:Bashir.qattan@wfp.org">Bashir.qattan@wfp.org</a>			
<b>FGD.6 Local NGOs West Bank</b> 4th Oct 2023					
Ismail Sabah	Agricultural Relief Society				
Rania Al-Asmar	Agricultural Relief Society				
Amro Salama	Agricultural Relief Society				
Haneen Zeidan	RWDS				

<b>In-Depth Interview</b>					
Bilal Thawabeh	CWA WB	Head of CWA			
Ezz Din Abu Taha	GCU	Head of GCU			
Simel Esim	ILO	Head of Coop Unit			
Mohammed Musleh	AICS	Project Manager	0599766324		
Nisreen Shaheen	CWA Gaza				
Imad Abu Jidyann	GCU Gaza				
Ibrahim Abu Samra & Ibtissam	Sectoral Unions				
Nasri Abu Jeish	MoL	Minister of Labor			

Shawkat Sarsour	Sector Expert	Sector Expert			
Rasha El-Shurafa	ILO	National Program Officer			
Diaa Salameh	CARE Int.				

[Annex 6. ToR](#)

[Annex 7. Bibliography](#)

Progress Report, 1 June 2021 - 31 August 2022

Progress Report, September 2022–October 2023

CSP Pro Document

Project Document: BE THE IMPACT: THE COOPERATIVE SYSTEM AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS VEHICLES FROM INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PALESTINE