



International  
Labour  
Organization

► Evaluation Office



i-eval Discovery



# EXTERNAL FINAL INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF STRENGTHENING NEXUS COHERENCE AND RESPONSIVENESS IN THE PALESTINIAN SP SECTOR

## QUICK FACTS

**Countries:** Occupied Palestinian Territory

**Evaluation date:** 01 September 2024

**Evaluation type:** Project

**Evaluation timing:** Final

**Administrative Office:** Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS)

**Technical Office:** SOCPRO

**Evaluation manager:** Marwan TAWFEEQ

**Evaluation consultant(s):** Dr. Khaled RAJAB

**DC Symbol:** PSE/21/01/EUR

**Donor(s) & budget:** European Commission, Budget: 1,5 million Euros

**Key Words:** [Use themes as provided in i-eval Discovery](#)

## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

### Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

#### Purpose

The "Strengthening Nexus Coherence and Responsiveness in the Palestinian Social Protection Sector" project aims to enhance coherence, inclusivity, and responsiveness within Palestine's social protection system. The focus is on better aligning humanitarian and governmental efforts, developing mechanisms that can quickly respond to shocks, and adopting rights-based approaches to assist vulnerable groups, including older persons, individuals with disabilities, and those impacted by crises.

#### Logic and Structure

The project is segmented into two primary components:

1. **Component 1: Cross-Nexus Coherence** – This component focuses on enhancing programmatic coherence by aligning humanitarian aid with developmental goals, ensuring a seamless integration of efforts across different actors and sectors.
2. **Component 2: Responsiveness** – This component aims at strengthening the responsiveness of the social protection system, ensuring it can effectively address and respond to various shocks and crises that affect vulnerable communities.

The initial design of the project had to evolve due to changing political and social conditions, including public opposition to the Palestinian Social Security Law, shifting the focus toward the Triple Nexus approach (Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus).

Stakeholders, primarily the EU and MoSD, alongside ILO, UNICEF, and Oxfam, have contributed to reshaping the objectives and framework of the project to adapt to these dynamic conditions.

### Present situation of the project

- **Implementation Delays**

Despite delays, the project transitioned to full implementation by April 2022, following the approval of key revisions by the Project Steering Committee. A Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) exercise in December 2022 was conducted to analyse delays and recommend actionable solutions.

- **Political and Fiscal Challenges**

The project has faced significant challenges, notably political instability and fiscal crises. Particularly, the war on Gaza in October 2023 necessitated a no-cost extension, shifting the completion date to August 2024. Security issues and political divisions, alongside recurrent fiscal crises and reliance on external funding, have hindered cash transfers and delayed program sustainability.

- **Stakeholder Coordination**

Fragmentation among stakeholders has complicated efforts to streamline processes, sharing of data, and limited technical capacities have impeded the creation of a unified social registry. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated poverty and vulnerabilities, straining existing systems.

Despite these challenges, stakeholder involvement and adaptive measures, such as the ILO's leadership during crises and EU's engagement with MoSD, have helped address these issues. Innovations such as a digital payment system and social registry dashboard have improved coordination and accessibility, laying the foundation for a more inclusive and responsive social protection system.

#### Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The evaluation aimed to assess if the project achieved its intended results, identify key challenges and lessons learned, and provide recommendations for future projects.

The evaluation is conducted between September and November 2024, it evaluated **Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact contribution and Sustainability**.

The main evaluation clients are **International Labour Organization (ILO), Project Implementing Partner and Ministry of Social Development (MoSD)**

<b>Methodology of evaluation</b>	<p>The evaluation methodology employed the ILO evaluation framework and OECD/DAC criteria, utilizing tools such as a thorough desk review of project documentation, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, efforts to conduct focus groups (despite access issues), and triangulation of findings from multiple sources to ensure objectivity, consistency, and accuracy.</p>
<b>MAIN FINDINGS &amp; CONCLUSIONS</b>	<p>The project is highly relevant to the socio-economic context of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), addressing systemic vulnerabilities and aligning with SDG Target 1.3. Integration of a humanitarian-development nexus improved stakeholder coordination and service delivery. Despite institutional gaps, private sector engagement needs improvement.</p> <p>The project aligns with ILO regional strategies and OPT policies, enhancing social protection through Shock-Responsive Social Protection Protocols (SRSP) and digital tools. Challenges during the Gaza war included fragmented governance, logistical delays, and trust deficits.</p> <p>Over 80% of planned outputs were achieved on time, benefiting over 30,000 vulnerable individuals with initiatives like the NCTP reform and rights-based social allowances. Despite challenges, the project demonstrated adaptability and delivered transformative outcomes.</p> <p>Strong efficiency was demonstrated through resource optimization, leveraging existing capacities, and strategic partnerships. Innovative approaches like digital payment systems and virtual consultations ensured progress despite disruptions. Coordination gaps between MoSD offices and limited engagement from Oxfam highlighted areas for improvement.</p> <p>Significant contributions to long-term impact include rights-based social allowances, improved governance, and the establishment of the SPCVA TWG. The SRSP Protocol enabled timely responses during</p>

the Gaza crisis. Capacity-building efforts and innovations like the MoSD Information Management System enhanced resilience and data-driven decision-making.

Sustainability was ensured by institutionalizing rights-based social protection measures, enhancing local resilience, and aligning donor contributions with national priorities. Integration into MoSD's 2024-2029 strategy and the EU-supported phase two project reinforced these efforts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

### Main findings & Conclusions

Institutionalizing platforms like the SPCVA TWG will provide broad representation and alignment, fostering resilience and coordination. Additionally, enhancing the Ministry of Social Development's (MoSD) technical and IT infrastructure will improve social registry and data management capabilities, while ongoing training on emergency preparedness and shock response will equip national and local actors to address challenges effectively.

Strengthening the roles of Participatory Community Planning Committees (PCPCs), enhancing their coordination with MoSD, and investing in capacity-building will bolster their effectiveness. Facilitating data-sharing agreements between MoSD and humanitarian actors, while ensuring compliance with privacy standards, will promote better communication. Mechanisms to align external funding with national priorities will also sustain social protection systems.

Recommendations further include bolstering MoSD's leadership in coordination platforms, refining and institutionalizing the emergency and shock response protocols, and expanding data-sharing agreements with agencies like WFP and OCHA, ensuring political and senior-level intervention.

	These summarized recommendations aim to create a more sustainable, adaptive, and responsive social protection system in Palestine.
<b>Main lessons learned and good practices</b>	<p><b>Lessons Learned</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrating flexibility into project design is crucial for maintaining relevance amidst unexpected challenges or contextual changes. Adaptive management, such as annual Theory of Change workshops, helps reassess and adjust the project's focus.</li> <li>2. A two-year timeline proved insufficient for accommodating adaptive changes and achieving sustainable impact. Extending future project durations to three years is vital for stakeholders to adapt and implement effectively.</li> <li>3. Meaningful participation from government and social partners is essential for sustainability. Inclusive processes ensure stronger stakeholder ownership.</li> </ol> <p><b>Good Practices</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participatory workshops and shared vision-building across the nexus laid a solid foundation for coordination and collaboration.</li> <li>2. The SPCVA TWG demonstrated the effectiveness of structured and systematic coordination mechanisms, serving as a model for future programs.</li> <li>3. Tailored training and technical assistance significantly enhanced the MoSD's capacity to manage increased workloads, improving coordination.</li> </ol>