

PD-AED-731



**World Health Organization
Organisation Mondiale De La Sante
West Bank and Gaza**

**Interim Report to the United States Agency for International Development
(USAID)**

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| 1. Project Title: | Strengthening Nutrition Management in the occupied Palestinian Territory | | |
| 2. Country: | Occupied Palestinian Territory | Beneficiary Population: | Palestinian population (3.29 million people), with a special focus on vulnerable groups |
| 3. Start date of project: | 24/08/2004 | End date of project: | 23/08/2005 |
| 4. Project Duration (Period of Implementation): | 12 months | Amount (US\$): | 296,800 |
| 5. Grant No.: | 294-G-00-04-00208-00 | Date of report issuance: | 15/04/2005 |
| 6. LOC Number: | HH-05C5P | USAID Office: | West Bank and Gaza Mission |

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jmy' with a long, sweeping checkmark-like stroke extending to the right.

I. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The general objective of the project is to strengthen the MoH Nutrition Department (ND) in order to achieve an effective, sustainable and functioning body in the area of nutrition. The Nutrition Department will be in charge of policy, planning, monitoring, evaluation and coordination, considering both short-term emergency interventions and long-term activities related to nutrition.

The specific objectives are:

- a. Developing an appropriate functional structure for the ND
- b. Strengthening the technical capacity of the staff of the ND in order to produce a plan of action for the intervention in the health sector and a groundwork for the formulation of a multisectoral policy.
- c. Strengthening the ND leadership in coordination of health interventions and in intersectoral coordination.

II. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Recent nutritional assessments suggest a substantial increase in the number of malnourished children over the past two years. Malnutrition rates seem to be particularly high in Gaza, where 75% of the population lives below the poverty line. Assessments showed the number of children suffering from acute and chronic malnutrition being three (for the acute) and five (for the chronic) times higher in Gaza than in the West Bank.

Women, and in particular pregnant and lactating women, suffer from a high prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies. In June 2002, a study reported that every second mother and child under-five is suffering from mild anaemia and every fifth from moderate anaemia.

Among the reasons for the deterioration of the population's nutritional status are the restrictions on local trade, which are due to closures and result in shortages of basic commodities like imported foodstuffs in some Palestinian areas. Additionally, the lack of income due to high unemployment rates prevents households from purchasing essential supplies. As a result, food consumption patterns are changing. Meat and dairy products, which are usually the main sources of high quality protein, minerals and micronutrients, are being consumed less.

Health services related to nutrition are mainly provided through the Ministry of Health's (MoH) Primary Health Care (PHC) system. However, given the multiplicity and diversity of providers, type, profile and quality of interventions related to nutrition, they are heterogeneous and not necessarily according to the needs of the population.

In relation to policies, food and nutrition issues have been fragmented among several ministries and disciplines. However, the MoH is the main responsible body for all nutrition matters and its related health disorders, as well as for supervising food industry, food safety and marketing.

A Nutritional Department (ND) has been recently established within the MoH. The department should enable the Ministry to develop food and nutrition national basic standards, and to lead and sustain all strategic planning and managing activities related to nutrition. The department should therefore comprise advisory, operational, training and educational functions. The ND is currently a formal, non-operative structure, composed by two units, one in West Bank and another in Gaza. Each unit

has been assigned a minimum staff: a director, who is reporting to the director general of primary health care, and a number of nurses. The MoH is going to prepare a more defined organizational structure of the department, including post descriptions for the staff. Specific terms of reference for the department have not been developed yet.

This project was designed with the objectives mentioned above in order to support the ND in the West Bank and Gaza.

III. ACHIEVEMENTS PER PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES (DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD)

Expected Output 1: Structure and profile of the Nutrition Department of the MoH finalized

Activities	Indicator/s	Achievements	Remarks/Comments
To draft document prepared with organizational structure, mandate, clear job description of key staff for the nutrition department.	1. An organizational structure along with detailed ToR produced. 2. Formal endorsement by the ministry	1. A draft organizational structure and ToR for nutrition department has been produced. Awaiting for MoH comments. 2. Not yet achieved	The Ministry of Health is currently reviewing the proposed structure.

Expected Output 2: Situation analysis done and disseminated

Activities	Indicator/s	Achievements	Remarks/Comments
To make a situational analysis on food and nutrition situation through technical groups under the leadership of nutrition department.	1. A report on the nutrition situation analysis produced. 2. Presentation of the report in meetings in West Bank and Gaza to the concerned stakeholders. 3. Publication of the report.	1. A report on the "State of Nutrition" produced. 2. Key findings have been presented in West Bank and Gaza 3. The document has been translated into Arabic, and in the process of publication	Completed. Awaiting for publication.

Expected Output 3: Policy document "nutrition strategies in Palestine" complemented and consolidated

Activities	Indicator/s	Achievements	Remarks/Comments
Focus, complement and consolidate the policy document "nutrition strategies in Palestine" through review with the ND staff, other relevant MoH units/departments and partners.	Document completed and agreed integrations and disseminated	Partially achieved.	A national strategy document on nutrition already exists. The project reviewed the strategy document as planned and utilized during development of draft national nutrition policy statement and development of plan of action for nutrition.

Suggested course of action to overcome constraints:

A revision of project time frame (extension) is suggested to complete project's functions and commitments. A detail proposal for extension with due explanation will be provided soon.

Expected Output 4: Plan of action formulated and disseminated

Activities	Indicator/s	Achievements	Remarks/Comments
Formulate a plan of action for nutrition inline with updated "nutrition strategies in Palestine" with participation of all relevant stakeholders.	1. Matrix of activities on nutrition in place. 2. Plan of action endorsed by MoH and main stakeholders.	1. A matrix of plan of action drafted with participation of stakeholders from West Bank and Gaza 2. Not yet endorsed	Only during end March/early April, 2005, the process for development of operation plan of action has been initiated through participation of stakeholders in West Bank and Gaza.

Expected Output 5: Training plan developed, on the basis of the needs assessment

Activities	Indicator/s	Achievements	Remarks/Comments
Make an assessment of training needs for ND staff and propose a training plan.	1. Needs assessment report available 2. Training plan available	Training needs assessment not yet initiated	Ministry of Health has not yet finalized the nutrition department structure, job description and necessary reorganization/deployment of staff.

Expected Output 6: Plan of action started up in its implementation

Activities	Indicator/s	Achievements	Remarks/Comments
Lead, directly contribute to and monitor the implementation of the plan through nutrition thematic group.	1. Nutrition thematic group met at least once every two months 2. Bi-monthly review of progress on training, implementation of planned activities organized.	1. Nutrition thematic group met as scheduled. 2. Other steps are not yet achieved	Due to the only recent initiation of the plan of action for nutrition, this project activity has been delayed.

Expected Output 7: National food and nutrition policy draft formulated

Activities	Indicator/s	Achievements	Remarks/Comments
Contribute to the formulation of a multisectoral national food and nutrition policy	1. A national nutrition policy statement drafted. 2. A detailed food and nutrition policy drafted and endorsed by April 2005 (through National Food and Nutrition Council).	1. National nutrition policy statement drafted and presented at West Bank and Gaza. 2. Process not yet initiated.	For indicator #2, the designated body to work on developing detailed food and nutrition policy is yet to be approved by the MoH.

Constraints faced (internal and external):

There was a delay from WHO regarding the recruitment of the project staff. Until January 2005, short-term consultants from Nutrition Works, UK, were hired to perform specific project-related tasks as described above.

IV. SUMMERY FINANCIAL STATEMENT (AS OF END- MARCH 2005)

Description	Planned	Actual Expenses	Balance
HUMAN RESOURCES			
1 International consultant	90,000	30,000	
2 Local officers	33,000	5,750	
Short-term consultants	27,000	20,831	
Sub-Total	150,000	56,581	93,419
OFFICE SUPPLIES			
Office equipment and maintenance	15,000	2,200	
Sub-Total	15,000	2,200	12,800
TRAVEL			
Travel	10,000	2,000	
Sub-Total	10,000	2,000	8,000
TRAINING			
Training	75,000	4,000	
Sub-Total	75,000	4,000	71,000
RESEARCH			
Research	15,000	0	
Sub-Total	15,000	0	15,000
PROJECT COORDINATION, MONITORING, EVALUATION & REPORTING			
project coordination, monitoring, evaluation & reporting	15,000	2,250	
Sub-Total	15,000	2,250	12,750
MANAGEMENT/ ADMINISTRATION COST			
Administration cost	16,800	16,800	
Sub-Total	16,800	16,800	0
GRAND TOTAL	296,800	83,831	212,969