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USAID/WEST BANK AND GAZA GENDER ANALYSIS



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Front Cover Photo Caption: Engineering Fellows and a contractor at a construction site in the West Bank. CHF International implements the USAID-funded Local Government and Infrastructure program in cooperation with the Engineering Association Jerusalem Center (EAJC).

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USAID/West Bank and Gaza Gender Analysis

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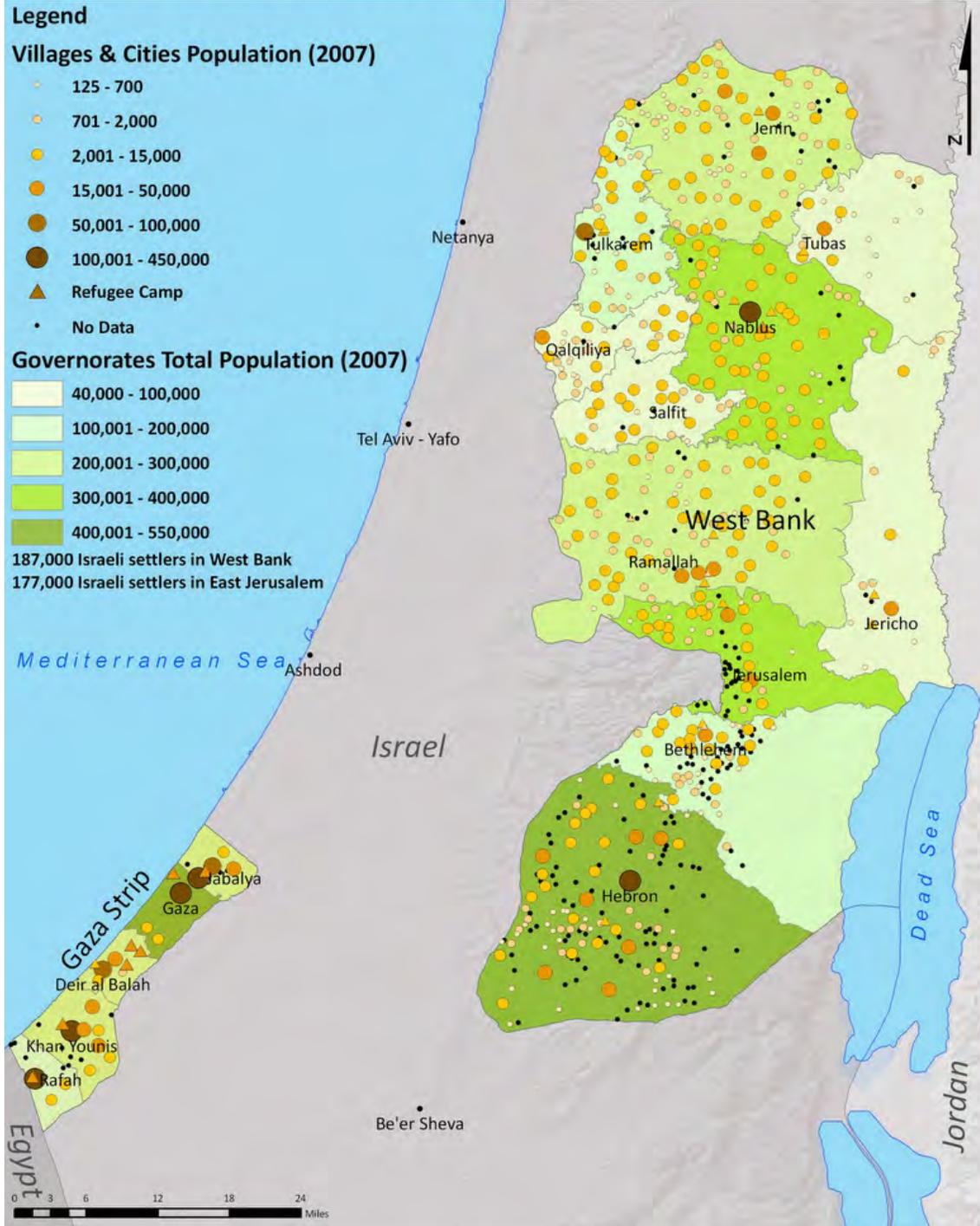
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West Bank & Gaza - Population Center



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The training workshops held November 29 and December 2, 2011 were remarkably well attended. Managers and staff showed eagerness and openness to learn more about mainstreaming gender into their programming and activities. The GA team hopes that the Mission finds its observations, suggestions, and this final report useful in achieving a greater degree of gender integration in the Mission's on-going and forthcoming strategic planning and programming in the West Bank and Gaza.

PREFACE

The United States Agency for International Development Mission in the West Bank and Gaza (USAID/WBG) identified the need to conduct a gender analysis to inform its strategic planning process. In 2011, in coordination with USAID's Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GenDev), a scope of work (SOW) was developed and implemented via GenDev's Task Order for Short-Term Technical Assistance and Training. A team of gender experts conducted fieldwork in the West Bank and Gaza from November 28, 2011 through December 19, 2011. The SOW is in Annex 3. The schedule for interviews was developed in collaboration with USAID/WBG; persons contacted are listed in Annex 4.

During the time the gender assessment team was in the field, two training sessions were delivered (November 29 and December 2, 2011) —one for senior Mission staff on USAID's Gender Policies and Procedures, and one for the entire Mission staff on gender mainstreaming in projects.¹ Out-briefings were held with the Mission Director, Deputy Mission Director, Senior Staff and focal points from each program area, and with the Program Office.

The Mission recommended that suggestions be actionable and integrated into the Mission's operational framework, constraints, and processes, and that it provide concrete best practice examples, not only from the West Bank and Gaza program but, if possible, from other parts of the world as well. The team strove to disaggregate the data by sex when available and to identify differences in gender gaps between the West Bank and Gaza.

The report contains the following sections:

- An overview of the context in which gender issues are to be analyzed in West Bank and Gaza; and it identifies the systemic issues which cut across all sectors.
- Sector-specific gender analysis of the current USAID/WBG program that identifies gaps and highlights promising practices.
- Recommendations for USAID/WBG future strategic planning efforts.
- Annexes for bibliographic references, terms and concepts, the scope of work, and a list of persons contacted.

¹ In addition, under the task order, a two-day (May 2 and 3, 2012 training workshop was held for 46 USAID staff and partners, and a separate session was held for the contracts office (13 people in attendance) on May 4, 2012.

ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
ANERA	American Near East Refugee Aid
AO	Assistance Objective
AOTR	Agreement Officer's Technical Representative
ASALA	Palestinian Businesswomen's Association
CBOs	Community-based Organizations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CEP	Civic Engagement Program
CMM	Conflict Management and Mitigation
CO	Contracting Officer
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DG	Democracy and Governance
DGO	Democracy and Governance Office
DO	Development Objective
EAJC	Engineering Association Jerusalem Center
EDIP	Enterprise Development and Investment Promotion
EDO	Education Development Office
EGAT	Bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade
ESI	Emergency Severity Index
EWAS	Emergency Water and Sanitation
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization (of the United Nations)
FATEN	Palestine for Credit and Development
FI	Financial Institution
FIDA	Palestinian Democratic Union
GA	Gender Analysis
GenDev	USAID Office for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GIZ	German International Cooperation Agency
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GUPW	General Union of Palestinian Women
HFH	Holy Family Hospital
HHA	Health and Humanitarian Assistance
ICD	International Coalition for the Disabled
ICI	Investment Climate Improvement Project
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IE	Inclusive Education
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labor Organization
INP	Infrastructure Needs Program
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IR	Intermediate Result
LACS	Local Aid Coordination Secretariat
LDR	Local Democratic Reform
LGI	Local Government and Infrastructure Program

MAS	Palestine Economic Research Institute
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFI	Modernizing Financial Institutions Project
MSN	Model Schools Network
MoH	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health
MoE	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Education
MoL	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Labor
MoHPW	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Housing and Public Works
MoPAD	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development
MoSA	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Social Affairs
MoT	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Transportation
MoWA	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Women's Affairs
MoYS	Palestinian Authority Ministry of Youth and Sports
NDP	National Development Plan 2011-2013
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PA	Palestinian Authority
PACE	Palestinian Authority Capacity Enhancement Project
PCAP	Palestinian Community Assistance Program
PCBS	Palestinian Authority Central Bureau of Statistics
PEO	Private Enterprise Office
PFDP	Palestinian Faculty Development Program
PIP	Palestinian Investment Partnership
PITA	Palestinian Integrated Trade Arrangement
PJEP	Palestinian Justice Enhancement Program
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PPDO	Program and Project and Development Office
PRDP	Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (2008-2010)
RF	Results Framework
RFA	Request for Application
RFP	Request for Proposal
RH	Reproductive Health
TFP	Trade Facilitation Project
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
SC	Save the Children
SIGI	Social Institutions & Gender Index
SOW	Scope of Work
UN	United Nations
UN CPRD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UN Women	United Nations Agency for Women

USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value-Added Tax
WB	West Bank
WBG	West Bank and Gaza
WE	Women's Empowerment
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women in Development
WHDD	Women's Health and Development Directorate (MoH)
WRI	Water Resources and Infrastructure
WTO	World Trade Organization
YSLCs	Youth Shadow Local Councils

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID Mission in the West Bank and Gaza (USAID/WBG) focuses on building the institutions of a future Palestinian state, strengthening the fundamental tenets of the economy and improving the everyday life of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza within a context of conflict, violence, and legal and physical constraints. This report examines how men and women are affected differently and unequally and identifies potential avenues for moving toward equality. The report reviews key gender inequalities that impede development in WBG, presents an assessment of gender integration in the Mission's current portfolio, and identifies recommendations for the Mission as it prepares for a new strategy.

Gender Context in West Bank and Gaza. Gender relations in the WBG are unique and complex given the political and socioeconomic contexts of the two geographic areas. Despite a long tradition of women's engagement in political life and aspirations to gender equality, a traditionally male-dominated social structure and cultural values prevail.

Gender gaps are most evident in women's lack of access to and participation in the labor market, and in discrimination in employment and the application of legal frameworks. Despite gender parity in access to the education system, schooling does not translate to equal opportunities in employment or entrepreneurship. Women and men are encouraged by the structures in place (societal and family) into career and educational tracks often defined by gender, and women are expected to prioritize unpaid reproductive and family care roles over a full-time job or a profession with varying degrees in rural and urban areas. Women's roles in the *care economy*² are further entrenched by the lack of mobility inside the country and the weak social safety net in both the West Bank and Gaza.

Deep inequalities also persist in representation and decision-making in the civic and political spheres. While the successive PA's Council of Ministers include female ministers, men hold more positions than women in political offices (17 of 22 ministers as of 2011), as well as in management-level positions in the civil service, academia, and industry. The traditional position of men as decision-makers within the household continues, even when women work outside the home to bolster family incomes.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a persistent problem in both the West Bank and Gaza, exacerbated by the climate of widespread violence and constant challenges to economic well-being and, in particular, human dignity. Statistics on gender-based violence reveal that there has been variation across time in the types and form of violence and prevalence in West Bank and Gaza. In a 2005 PCBS survey, women in the West Bank reported a higher incidence of psychological abuse (69% to 50%) than in Gaza with similar levels of physical (24% and 23%) and sexual abuse (12% and 10%) perpetrated by their husbands.³ This comparison had reversed

² The term gained prevalence due to research conducted under the rubric of the UN system: Shahra Razavi (2007) *The Political and Social Economy of Care in a Development Context*, UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). The care economy includes the activities to care for children, the sick, and the elderly.

³ PCBS Domestic Violence Survey (December 2005-January 2006) reported in World Bank 2010. *Checkpoints and Barriers: Searching for Livelihoods in the West Bank and Gaza: Gender Dimensions of Economic Collapse*, p. 100.

by July 2011 when the PCBS survey found that psychological violence was 49% in West Bank and 76% in Gaza; sexual violence remained comparable (11% and 15%); and physical violence showed a difference of 35% in Gaza compared to 17% in West Bank.⁴

These gender gaps and inequalities impede development in both the West Bank and Gaza. To achieve the objectives related to improving economic growth, reducing youth unemployment, strengthening democracy and governance, and improving social and infrastructure services, deliberate actions are required to:

- Expand access to the labor market for women and reduce barriers for women to create businesses;
- Promote women's representation and participation in decision-making in the private and public sectors;
- Increase awareness of and actions to counter GBV and abuse in Palestinian society;
- Strengthen the health system and social safety net for all (men, women, children, and persons with disabilities);
- Reduce gender stereotypes in workforce development that hinder women and vulnerable groups from entering the labor market on equitable terms; and
- Reform aspects and applications of the legal framework that discriminate against women and girls.

Gender Analysis of Current Programming: Gender gaps and inequalities in the West Bank and Gaza context affect the current USAID/WBG portfolio. Despite mixed success in integrating gender considerations into the design and implementation of programs and projects for each of the five Mission Assistance Objectives (AOs), opportunities to further address gender-based constraints remain.

AO 1. Private sector-led economic growth increased: The gender gaps in private sector development in WBG are linked to the low level of women's participation in the labor market and as entrepreneurs, the exclusion of rural women from social protections, continued stereotyping and channeling of women into lower-paying sectors of the economy, and lack of physical mobility in WBG.

In implementation, the capacity for gender analysis has been limited by the amount and quality of sex-disaggregated information available on some aspects of the economy. For example, while quarterly data are available on labor force participation in the formal market among non-refugee populations, the data available on women's participation in agricultural employment and the informal economy is limited. Improving the data in this area is recommended.

Promising practices offer USAID a framework to strengthen gender integration as the Mission prepares its five-year strategy. For example, the USAID-supported (and created) microfinance institution Palestine for Credit and Development (FATEN) has demonstrated promising results. FATEN provides skills-building to its customers, more than 80% of whom are women, and has

⁴ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics 2011. Press Release: Major Findings of Violence survey in the Palestinian Society, p. 17.

received an A- rating from Planet Rating. Yet, gender-based obstacles that hinder women from starting businesses persist.

AO 2. Access to public infrastructure and services increased: This objective has the potential to address several significant barriers to women's full economic and political participation. Women bear a disproportionate burden in the care economy and are dependent on inadequate public services. Without a public infrastructure that affords access to water, transportation, and social infrastructure, and in the continued absence of male participation in care-taking roles, women's empowerment opportunities will be limited.

Although gender integration has not been a focus of project designs for the four main water resource and infrastructure projects, a gender approach has implicitly informed the implementation stage. Effectively integrating women as participants in the design and implementation of infrastructure and services development is the next step towards fully promoting gender equality. A systematic inclusion of women in a variety of careers, perhaps through internships, could be undertaken with continued support for the gender approaches and strategies for the Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Water, and Ministry of Transport. In addition, gender requirements in solicitation documents should be strengthened.

AO 3. Effectiveness of Palestinian education system improved: Although gender parity in educational enrollment has largely been achieved in the West Bank and Gaza, access to education has not translated into women's equal economic opportunity and access to employment. The education system has the potential to challenge and change entrenched gender stereotypes that constrain opportunities. For instance, the Model Schools Network (MSN), which is a USAID-supported activity, has taken important steps to encourage girls' active participation in math and science (two subject areas in which women are globally under-represented). Other promising practices focus on and recognize women's leadership in academia.

Investments are still required to enable the higher education system to be both more responsive to the labor market and gender-sensitive. The civil society and non-governmental sectors are organized and prepared to redress gender gaps that persist in education. USAID can be a facilitator of public-private partnerships in the education sector, with a focus on education quality and a commitment to gender integration.

AO 4. Reformed and strengthened local health institutions in a functional and self-sufficient health sector: There are gender paradoxes in a health sector that suffers significant challenges due to the long-standing conflict. The sector is dependent on donor aid. Health facilities are operated by the MoH, UNRWA, and NGOs. In recent years, the Ministry of Health has increased the number of health facilities in West Bank and Gaza, but there are fewer physicians per capita than neighboring countries. High numbers of residents must seek treatment outside of West Bank and Gaza. A gender gap exists in that men are more able than women to travel and seek outside health care. In both the West Bank and Gaza, women's participation in the health sector as practitioners and in decision-making roles continues to lag behind that of men.

There have been some recent successes related to women's health issues. Fertility rates have decreased and there is a rise in the utilization of family planning methods. Yet, fertility is still

relatively high and gaps persist in the amount of attention paid to men's reproductive health. Both pregnant and non-pregnant women continue to suffer from higher levels of anemia than men, although the prevalence rate among women in West Bank is lower than the regional average for pregnant and non-pregnant women (Gaza has levels similar to the rest of the region).

USAID has funded several promising activities and interventions to address gender gaps in women's participation as health care providers. Community-based initiatives that empower women to participate in and lead innovative behavioral change are having an impact. For example, USAID's "Flagship" project is upgrading standards of quality of care and emphasizing gender integration and women's roles as change agents. USAID can continue to promote transparency and increase women's roles in the decision-making structures of the Ministry of Health (MoH).

AO 5. Strengthened democratic practices and performance of selected public-sector institutions and non-state actors: USAID's democracy and governance programming supports women's leadership, judiciary reform, strengthening of local governance, and civic engagement. This assistance was planned to benefit both men and women. However, organizational and institutional barriers prevent women's full and equal participation in official governmental bodies and/or decision-making roles. Considerable work remains to be undertaken in cooperation with government ministries to promote diversity and gender equality.

The Democracy and Governance portfolio provides several useful and promising practices that demonstrate the benefits of integrating gender to benefit sustainability. The Palestinian Authority Capacity Enhancement (PACE) project incorporated gender into its activities through continuous consultation with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) during the design and implementation of interventions with PA institutions. A gender strategy was applied in judicial reform activities. The Youth Shadow Local Councils are changing perceptions of gender norms and demonstrating the benefits of integrating gender into civic engagement.

As USAID formulates its strategic plan for the next five years, the Mission should prepare a gender strategy that systematically aligns with the PA's National Development Plan, reinforces the role of civil society and civic engagement, prioritizes the principle of gender equity, incorporates gender analysis in project design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, and addresses the gender gaps outlined in this report.

As USAID builds its strategy, there are several key steps the Mission may consider taking to implement gender integration:

- Build on best practices from current projects and activities;
- Strengthen the integration of gender into contracting and grant-making processes and procedures, providing training to Mission staff, and specifying expectations about gender integration in solicitation documents;
- Provide or support participatory gender training for staff and implementers, focused on concrete activities and programs;
- Support efforts to improve data collection, monitoring, and evaluation through increased reporting on gender aspects of program activities; and
- Adopt USAID gender indicators.

1. INTRODUCTION

The United States Agency for International Development Mission in the West Bank and Gaza (USAID/WBG) identified the need to conduct a gender analysis of socio-economic and political conditions in WBG and of existing USAID programs to inform its strategic planning process. This report presents the major findings of the gender analysis conducted by an external team. It highlights relevant elements of the gender vision of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and identifies opportunities for USAID to promote gender equality and female empowerment. In its examination of the Mission's current programming, the report identifies gender gaps, assesses promising practices, and offers recommendations for the upcoming strategy.

To gain insights from key stakeholders about accomplishments, challenges, gaps, and opportunities, the Gender Analysis (GA) team conducted meetings with the Mission, the PA, implementing partners and beneficiary organizations, non-governmental organizations and women's associations, United Nations (UN) agencies, and other donors. Because of time and travel limitations, the team was able to visit only three project sites in the West Bank near Jerusalem and Ramallah: the Nahalin Secondary School for girls, the Cremisan Sewage Network, and the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem. In addition, a team member was based in Gaza and gathered data from USAID staff and partners.

2. CONTEXTUAL OVERVIEW FOR GENDER AND CURRENT STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This section of the report provides a general overview of the demographic, political, economic, and social context in the region that highlights six priority gender issues that constitute the parameters for the USAID Mission programs. It also presents a brief introduction to the Palestinian Authority institutions and strategy for addressing these gender issues.

2.1 Overview of Gender in West Bank and Gaza

Gender relations in the West Bank and Gaza are unique and complex. Despite a long tradition of women's engagement in political life and aspirations to gender equality, traditionally male-dominated social structures and culture endure. The impact of restrictions imposed by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on social, economic, and cultural relations are significant, while internal political divisions also have contributed to undermining established gender relations with a retreat to conservative social behaviors and expectations, including traditional gender roles and norms.

Gender gaps are most evident in employment – access to the labor market, wage discrepancies, and discrimination – in political representation and decision-making in all sectors of the society, and in legal frameworks, where the prohibition of sex discrimination in the Basic Law is contradicted by the traditional Personal Status Laws. Women's unpaid reproductive and family care roles generally take precedence over employment, and roles in the care economy are further entrenched by the lack of mobility and weak social safety net in both the West Bank and Gaza.

2.1.1. Demographic Context

The demographic dynamics in WBG present challenges for development. According to the Palestinian Authority Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), refugees make up 44% of the population.⁵ The annual population growth rate is nearly 3%, concentrated in urban areas. The labor force growth rate is projected at 4% per year. The West Bank and Gaza have among the highest population densities in the world. Compared to a global average of 654 persons per square kilometer, Gaza has a density of 4,722 people per square kilometer. The average household size is 5.6 persons, and the dependency ratio is 75.⁶ For those not living in refugee camps, an overwhelming majority of households are male-headed (90%).

2.1.2 Political Context

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict affects the lives of every woman and man, boy and girl in the West Bank and Gaza on a daily basis. Social and economic life is constrained by an unpredictable system of registrations, permits, authorizations, and inspections that hamper the movement of people and goods and services. Although both women and men are affected by these constraints, women face additional restrictions – some introduced by their families and others by government officials. For example, according to data collected by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for its Social Institutions & Gender Index (SIGI), women are often required by government officials to provide written permission from their male guardian to apply for a passport even though it is not legally required.⁷

Over 580 roadblocks and checkpoints divide the West Bank into more than 240 separate zones. The risk of harassment and closures at checkpoints inhibits women's movements more than men, including reducing access to health care. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), at least 69 women have given birth at checkpoints between 2000 and 2006, resulting in the deaths of 35 babies and 5 women.⁸

The Separation Barrier restricts the land use and access, as the percentage of the total area affected changes across time with varying demographic and economic effects. At the time the separation barrier was found legitimate by Israel's Supreme Court (in 2005), the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics estimated that 149 population centers containing more than 675,000 Palestinians were affected by the barrier and that at least 15 communities (with more than 44,000 inhabitants) live in enclaves surrounded entirely by the Separation Wall.⁹ The people of Gaza live in a completely enclosed area. Some families now refuse marriages into different communities lest their daughters no longer be able to visit. Fewer marriages between Gaza and West Bank couples are taking place, further consolidating social gaps between the two regions and indirectly forcing women to remain within their own communities. The economic effects are

⁵ Palestinian Authority Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) 2011. *Palestinians at the End of Year 2011*.

⁶ Dependency Ratio: The ratio of the persons defined as economically dependent to those in the ages defined as economically productive; arbitrarily defined as the ratio of the elderly (those 65 years and over) plus the young (those under 15 years of age) to the population in the "working ages" (those 15-64 years of age). (PCBS)

⁷ OECD 2012. Social Institutions Index. [See http://genderindex.org/country/west-bank-and-gaza#_ftn68; accessed 7/30, 2012]

⁸ See United National General Assembly A/HRC/4/57. *Implementation of General Assembly Resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006 Entitled "Human Rights Council."* The issue of Palestinian pregnant women giving birth at Israeli checkpoints. Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. 23 February 2007.

⁹ PCBS Press Release, September 2005.

difficult to measure, but the World Bank has examined the effects on private investment and has identified zones in which economic activity is essentially abandoned due to the perceived risk.¹⁰

The conflict, the stalled peace process, and political divisions damaged vital infrastructure and impacted social relations. The tensions between the main Palestinian factions erupted in armed confrontation in 2006 and 2007. In 2007, Hamas took control of public institutions in Gaza. The PA president dismissed the national unity government and appointed a caretaker technocratic government in the West Bank.

When the conflict surged dramatically during the Israeli assault against Gaza at the end of 2008 (“Operation: Cast Lead”), 1,440 Palestinian men, women, and children were killed, and over 5,000 were injured.¹¹ Property destroyed included 14,000 homes, 68 government buildings, and 31 non-governmental organization offices.¹²

Today, civil authority is divided between the government in Ramallah and the *de facto* Hamas authorities in Gaza. Thus, two different philosophies on gender equality—one more liberal and egalitarian in the West Bank, and the other more conservative in Gaza—shape policies concerning women’s societal roles and behaviors.

Gender Issue #1: Widespread violence and abuse, including gender-based violence

Beyond the violence linked to the political conflict and to the constant economic and social pressures, a 2011 PCBS survey documented widespread violence and abuse at the individual level, including gender-based violence.¹³ In 2011, among married women during the last 12 months, 37% have been exposed “at least once” to one or more forms of violence by their husbands—psychological (59%), economic (55%), physical (24%), and/or sexual (12%).¹⁴ Violence against married women was higher in Gaza (51%) than in West Bank (30%). About a third of married women abused by their husbands relocated to a sibling’s house; two-thirds chose to remain silent rather than file a formal report. Only 0.7% sought support or advice from a women’s institution or center.

The UN World Development Report 2012 dedicated to gender and equality concludes that domestic violence tends to have higher incidence rates among economically disadvantaged women and as socioeconomic deprivation increases.¹⁵ National and international surveys of violence against women are not collected on a coordinated schedule; thus comparative data are difficult to utilize. Both the United Nations and the World Bank collect data from national surveys. According to the 2010 UN World’s Women report, among the developing countries for which there are data (27) only four countries (Peru, Ethiopia, and Zambia) had comparable rates

¹⁰ World Bank 2008. “The Economic Effects of Restricted Access to Land in the West Bank,” Social and Economic Development Group.

¹¹ WHO, 2009; not including deaths resulting from lack of access to emergency health care.

¹² UNDP estimate, 2009

¹³ PCBS. Press Release. Main Findings of Violence Survey in the Palestinian Society, 2011. December 2011

¹⁴ Economic violence includes demand from the person to spend income one way versus another, prevention of access to work, forced resignation, and forced disposition of inheritance. (For detailed definition of all types of violence, refer to PCBS December 2011).

¹⁵ United Nations 2012. World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development, p. 84.

of physical violence perpetrated by an intimate partner during the last 12 months.¹⁶ These data include countries with lower levels of conflict than West Bank and Gaza (although higher rates of poverty). The World Bank data suggests that women in the West Bank and Gaza face higher levels of physical violence than neighboring countries: 12% in Jordan (2007); and 18% in Egypt (2005).¹⁷

Intra-household violence also affects children. Fifty-one percent of children were exposed to violence inside the household by a household member (46% in West Bank, and 59% in Gaza). Psychological violence from parents accounted for 69%; and about a third suffered physical violence. Among the elderly, 7% said they had faced some form of violence in the household.

Violence against youth outside the home affects boys more than girls with 20% of youth (ages 18-29) exposed to psychological violence on the street (29% male, 10% female) and 8% facing physical violence in the street (16% male; 0.6% female). The rates for violence in schools are lower at 9% (7% male, 2% female) with teachers as the primary perpetrators of physical violence. Violence from the security apparatus has affected 6% of the youth.

Gender Issue #2: Inequalities between women and men in political representation and decision-making

Palestinian women have been an integral part of political activism since the time of the British mandate, yet still have limited representation in political bodies. Women's roles in the struggle for self-determination has involved both formal and informal involvement through national representative bodies like the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW), and Palestinian political parties and civil society organizations.

With advocacy from women's organizations, the General Elections Law (No. 9 of 2005) introduced a quota system for proportional representation requiring that: "Political parties must have at least one woman among the first three candidates on the list, at least one woman among the next four, and one woman among every five for the rest of the list." The design is to guarantee about 20% women among the candidates but given that the electoral system is mixed (with half of the seats allocated under a majority system and half under the proportional system)¹⁸, the actual percentage of women elected may be less depending on how seats are allocated by the parties. While the lists system and General Election Law yields one of the highest levels of representation when compared to other Arab countries, as of June 2009, only 17 of 132¹⁹ legislative council seats are held by women. In the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections in 2006, 42% of the voters were females and 58% males. Only 15 women were nominated as candidates in the electoral districts (the majority system), and no women were elected.

¹⁶ United Nations 2010. The Women's World 2010: Chapter 6: Violence against women, [<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/Worldswomen/wwVaw2010.htm>; accessed September 6, 2012], p. 132.

¹⁷ World Bank 2012. Datasets on Violence. [<https://go.worldbank.org/NRVI5T44Y0>; Accessed September 6, 2012], dataset download in excel.

¹⁸ IFES Election Guide 2006. [<http://www.electionguide.org/election.php?ID=565>; Accessed September 6, 2012]

¹⁹ European Union 2010. National Situation Analysis Report: Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality, Occupied Palestinian Territory. www.enpi-info.eu/library/sites/default/files/attachments/english.pdf. [Accessed September 13, 2012], p. 8.

At the local level the 2005 Election of Local Council Law establishes minimal requirements for seats for women according to the size of the council (local, municipal, village or project), but exempts this requirement when there are less than 1,000 voters in the election. In the 2004-2005 local election, the two last rounds (third and fourth) were held under this new law. Of the 40 local districts, 17 elected women although 27 districts had the minimum number of voters. Only one district that was not required by the law to elect a woman did (Bazarya, Nablus). Until there are new elections, women officially hold only 18% of the local council seats.²⁰ Only five women head local councils (the current number of councils is 295 in West Bank).

Relative levels of participation are still low in other spheres of formal participation as well. As of 2011, five of 22 ministers in the current government were women (23%). Women occupy some higher decision-making positions within the institutions of the PA, but parity is far from achieved. For example, women comprise about 25% of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs senior staff and 5% of ambassadors. They constitute about 12% of judges and prosecutors. The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), established in 2003, is implementing its mandate by establishing Gender Units in most ministries. Albeit somewhat weak, MoWA is gaining increasing recognition for the design and implementation of the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy.²¹

Women's informal political participation in the various nationalist and secular democratic parties has been significant in terms of visibility and effectiveness, if not in terms of numbers. Women's participation in the membership of party executive committees ranges from 5% in Fateh to 40% in the Palestinian Democratic Union (FIDA), which made conscious and systematic efforts to integrate women.²²

Women play a more prominent role in civil society organizations. For example, women comprise an average of 36% of all non-governmental organizations' (NGOs) general assembly members, 30% of the members of boards of trustees, and another 30% of the members of administrative boards.²³

Gender Issue #3: Women's *de jure* and *de facto* legal rights

The Basic Law²⁴ makes no distinction between men and women and presupposes equality in stating that Palestinians will not be subject to "any discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, political convictions or disability." The country's Personal Status Laws, however, are based on religious laws inherited from Jordan (applicable in the West Bank) and Egypt (applicable in Gaza), and contain discriminatory provisions in the areas of marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance, as described in Box 1 below.

²⁰ See <http://www.elections.ps/tabid/814/language/en-US/Default.aspx> for election statistics and results.

²¹ Available at: http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/UN-Women_oPt_Full-Palestinian-Gender-Strategy_2011_en.pdf.

²² Fida is a small political group which introduced a quota of 40% for women in decision-making positions.

²³ UN ESCWA, Palestinian Women 2007-2009.

²⁴ Equivalent to a Constitution in other countries.

Box 1: Discrimination Against Women

The UN (2004) estimates that almost one-quarter of Palestinian girls between 15 and 19 years of age are married, divorced or widowed. The PCBS carried out a survey in 1999 that showed that 55% of women married out of choice, while close to 40% married following a decision by their parents. While polygamy is legally accepted in WBG as Islamic law allows a Muslim man to take up to four wives, PCBS data indicate that less than 4% of men in the West Bank and Gaza had more than one wife in 1997.

Islamic Personal Status Laws are generally considered to be discriminatory against women, when compared to civil law. For instance, the father alone has parental authority and is considered to be the “natural guardian” of his children. A woman may inherit land and other property from her father, her mother, her husband, her children, and under certain conditions, from other members of her family, but her share is generally smaller than a man’s. For all matters dealing with marriage, divorce, alimony, child custody, and inheritance, Shari’a law, not civil law, prevails.

Citizenship laws are restricted by the Oslo Agreement, which allows citizenship to be subject to Israel’s approval for men and women. However, in addition, women have more limited citizenship rights as they cannot confer their citizenship to their children or to their husbands²⁵ and the Civil Law and the Civil Service Law depict women as dependent on men.²⁶

Although the Criminal Law addresses issues of rape, abortion, and adultery, the health codes do not address the consequences of such events on women’s physical, mental, and emotional health, nor do they address the protection of related health rights from violations such as physical, sexual, domestic, and public violence against women. They also lack codes that address women’s and men’s mental health.

2.1.3 Economic Context

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the West Bank and Gaza grew 8.7% from 2010 to 2011 with the services sector representing 22% of the economy.²⁷ This marks a reversal of a trend of decline since 2000. Unemployment remains high, however, especially given the number of new entrants to the labor market. Incomes are stagnant or declining, and poverty is persistent. The political restrictions discussed above impact every aspect of the economy, increase the cost and risks of doing business, limit access to Israel’s labor market, add to the costs of developing infrastructure, and constrain the ability of the PA to secure fiscal revenues. Since 2000, about 45,000 Palestinian workers, mostly men, have lost jobs in Israel. Border closures and restrictions have reduced international trade, and until recently, foreign investments had come to a virtual halt, forcing many enterprises, especially in the furniture and textile industries, into bankruptcy.

The public deficit and foreign aid are increasing. International financial assistance prioritizes humanitarian assistance, education, and health care and nutrition for women and children. In the productive sectors (agriculture and industry) donor-funded projects have focused on male-dominated large-scale industries (e.g., stone and marble, agribusiness), while women have been

²⁵ A full treatment of this question is given in Islah Jad’s “Citizenship under Prolonged Occupation: the case of Palestine.” University of California International and Area Studies. Digital Collection. Berkeley Electronic Press. 200

²⁶ Islah Jad, Gunda Werner Institute. March 2011. See also World Bank 2012. Women, Business and Law.

²⁷ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012. Palestine in Figures 2011.

targeted for small-scale activities in trade, agriculture, and the informal sector. Recently, financial assistance for infrastructure and the productive sectors has increased.

About one-quarter of Palestinians (23%) live below the national poverty line, and half of those live in “deep poverty” with refugees accounting for half.²⁸ In 2011, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Report²⁹ assigned West Bank and Gaza a score of .641 for its Human Development Index (HDI), a major decline from .716 in 2006. Most of the decline stemmed from economic indicators.

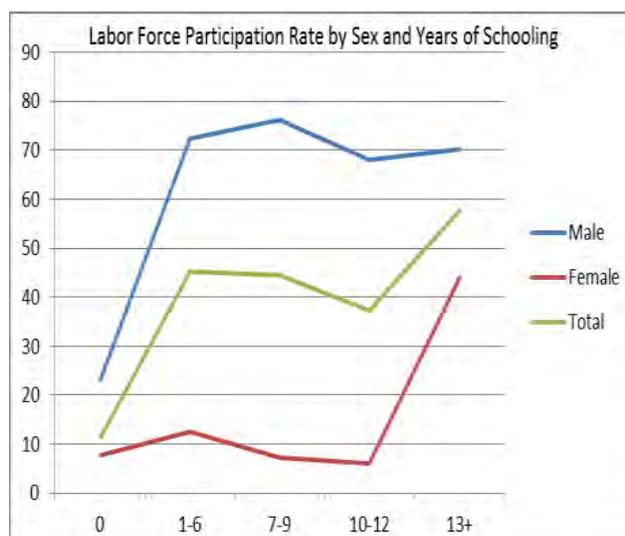
In 2009, the poverty rate among female-headed households was lower than among male-headed households—20% compared with 23%. Several factors may explain this difference: female-headed households are prioritized for humanitarian assistance³⁰ and the average size of female-headed households is smaller (3.5 people) than male-headed households (6.5).³¹

Gender Issue #4: Acute lack of economic empowerment for women

Women’s economic empowerment relative to men is particularly weak along three dimensions: lack of access to the labor market, wage discrepancies, and women’s overriding role as unpaid family workers in the care economy. A 2009 qualitative and quantitative study of women’s participation in the labor market by the PCBS raises some gender-based constraints that make women reluctant to enter the labor market. Among these is that women’s work is greatly undervalued and not worthy of remuneration.³²

Labor Force Participation (LFP). Total labor force participation for men and women fluctuates during the year in the West Bank (39-46%) and Gaza (34-39%), but on average remains low (44%),³³ reflecting particularly low levels of participation of women and youth. The gap between women and men in participation is large, even in comparison with other countries in the region:

Figure 1: Women's Participation in the Labor Force and Education



²⁸ According to PCBS, poverty and deep poverty lines for households of two adults and three children stood at NIS 2,237 (US\$ 609) and NIS 1,783 (US\$ 478) per month, respectively. PCBS. Poverty in the Palestinian Territory, 2009-2010/Main Findings. 2011

²⁹ UNDP. Human Development Report, Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All. 2011

³⁰ PCBS 2011. Press Release on The International Women’s Day 2011.

[http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Woman_day2011_E.pdf; Accessed 8/8/2012], p. 2.

³¹ PCBS 2011. Press Release on World Population Day, 11 July.

[http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/worldpopday_e.pdf, Accessed 8/8/2012], p. 2.

³² Shabenah, Luay and Jawad Al Saleh 2009. “Palestinian Women’s Participation in the Labor Market Challenges and Required Interventions: A Quantitative and Qualitative Study of Women’s Participation in Labor Market.” *Economic Studies series*: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, p. 8.

³³ PCBS, http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/worldpopday_e.pdf

70% for males and 17% for females (for the Third Quarter of 2011). Women in Gaza are less likely to be in the labor force than those in the West Bank, although in recent years female labor force participation in Gaza has increased from a low of 8% in 2006 to 13% in 2011.³⁴

Women's (but not men's) participation in the paid labor force increases (whether employed or unemployed) with education (see Figure 1). Two-thirds of all economically inactive women attributed their absence from the labor market to the urgency and priority of housekeeping duties; none of the men reported housekeeping as the cause of their own economic inactivity.³⁵

Women and men tend to be employed in different sectors of the economy. Women are concentrated in services and other branches, and in agriculture.³⁶ Men dominate in plant and machine operation, crafts, services and sales, skilled agricultural and fishery workers, legislators, and managers, while women are better represented among technicians and clerical staff. Women are 53% of nurses, 45% of pharmacists, 17% of dentists, 12% of doctors, and 15% of practicing lawyers.³⁷

Box 2: Labor Market Snapshot (Third Quarter 2011)	
Males/Females Participation	70.0% Men; 16.7% Women
Participation among persons 15 years and older	43.6% (46% WB/39% Gaza)
Unemployment rate	22.4% (20.5% Men; 30.5% Women). (ILO definition)
Source: PCBS Third Quarter Report 2011	

The 2011 unemployment rates³⁸ in the West Bank and Gaza are high at 22%, but lower than the peak of 28% in 2008. Unemployment rates among men (20.5%) are lower than among women (30.5%). The gap between West Bank males (18%) and females (25%) is significant, but in Gaza, the gap is even wider, 25% among males and 43% among females. The gap between male and female unemployment for youth (ages 15-29) is greater with 55% of females unemployed and 30% of males.³⁹ The highest unemployment rate is 61% among females aged 20-24 years old, compared to 33% for males in the same age group.

The correlation between education and unemployment differs for men and women. For men, unemployment rates become lower as education increases. For women, higher education does not reduce the likelihood of unemployment.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the weak employment response to higher growth during the 2008-2010 periods suggests that the recovery has taken place without much

³⁴ PCBS 2011. Press Release on the Results of the Labour Force Survey July-September 2011 Round.

³⁵ Alpha International for Research, Polling and Informatics 2009. Economic Studies series: "Palestinian Women's Work, A Study on Palestinian's Impressions and Perspectives Towards Women's Work in Palestine." [http://www.pwrdc.ps/site_files/Impressions-alpha.pdf; Accessed 8/8/2012], 16-17.

³⁶ PCBS does not provide detailed explanation of "Services and Other Branches", which usually includes banks, insurance, telecommunication and public sector.

³⁷ ESCWA, Social and Economic Situation of Palestinian Women 2006-2009. July 30 2009

³⁸ The ILO definition of unemployment is all persons not in employment who would have accepted a suitable job during the reference period, and who had actively looked for ways to obtain a job in the near past.

³⁹ PCBS 2011. Labour Force Survey (July-September, 2011) Round (Q3/2011), p. 16 and 17.

business investment and hiring, benefitting the under-employed as well as those with work experience rather than new entrants into the labor force.

2.1.4 Social Services and Infrastructure Context

Access to and the quality and quantity of social services are affected by the challenges of the political and economic environment, particularly in Gaza. UN agencies and the PA, along with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) cover the needs of about 1.5 million people in refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza. The PA provides services to the rest of the population of about 2.5 million.

The PA, international assistance agencies, NGOs, and informal family assistance provide social protection for the poor in WBG. In general, humanitarian services target women and children. Yet, the PA formal safety net in the West Bank and Gaza remains weak. In 2007, it covered only about 30% of the poor population in the West Bank and Gaza, and almost 40% of 57,000 households that received social assistance continued to live below the poverty line. The Social Protection Strategy (2011-2013) estimates that, at the present rate of assistance, the number of households needing assistance will increase to 70,000 by the end of 2013.

Lack of infrastructure services contributes to poverty and poor quality of life. Approximately 10% of West Bank communities remain unconnected to the water network; those without connections must purchase tankered water, which is more expensive and less sanitary than treated water. Women and girls are the most affected, as they bear the brunt of water-related chores as part of their domestic duties. According to the PCBS data from 2011, 55% of Palestinian homes are connected to the sewage system, while 39% of households use porous cesspits.⁴⁰ Overflows and cesspools are frequently found in small towns creating health hazards that place children particularly at risk of disease.⁴¹ Although major improvements have been made in recent years, a substantial proportion of the road network is in dire need of rehabilitation. Road improvements are extremely difficult given Israeli restrictions on road construction and rehabilitation, while the Separation Barrier and the checkpoints interrupt or cut off access to transport services to the West Bank and Gaza. The restrictions imposed by the Separation Wall have differential effects on men and women. For example, males ages 15-35 are at times confined in their movements in Nablus.⁴² On the other hand, women are often precluded from travel due to family obligations and/or restrictions due to concern for their safety.

Gender Issue #5: Gender integration in the health sector remains weak despite partial success improving maternal and child health

There have been some successes in maternal and child health. According to the PCBS, fertility rates in West Bank and Gaza have declined from 5.9 live births per woman in 2000 to 4.2 births

⁴⁰ The 2011 household environmental survey results are only available in Arabic. Data are cited according to a news release in English. Palestine News & Information Agency-WAFA, December 13, 2011. [<http://english.wafa.ps/index.php?action=detail&id=18340>; Accessed 8/8/2012]

⁴¹ World Bank. Assessment of Impact of Restrictions on Water Sector Development. April 2009.

⁴² World Bank 2010. Checkpoints and Barriers: Searching for Livelihoods in the West Bank and Gaza: Gender Dimensions of Economic Collapse, p. 11.

in 2010.⁴³ Since 2000, mortality rates have decreased by approximately 13% for children under five years of age. Despite these positive trends, however, the rate of chronic malnutrition in children under five and the rate of malnutrition wastage have increased over the past 10 years.

Donor efforts to strengthen the health sector remain dominated by maternal and child health initiatives while excluding other chronic diseases (including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer). Since 2000, chronic illness has risen to the top of the Palestinian public health agenda in the Ministry of Health (MoH) 2011-2013 strategy. In recent years, WBG has witnessed an increase in the percentage of persons 18 years and older suffering from at least one chronic disease (18%).⁴⁴ According to the World Health Organization, treatable non-communicable diseases are rising with 50% of deaths attributable to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and respiratory disease.⁴⁵

Men's health issues are under-diagnosed, under-reported, and possibly less understood. For example, the PA Gender Strategy does not report any men's health indicators, though psychological illness related to stress and unemployment is not uncommon. Mental health services are limited, and cultural and physical barriers also impede men and women from using such services when they are available.

PCBS data (2011) show that 2.7% of Palestinians suffer from disabilities, and 32% of the Palestinians over age 75 report disability. Women and girls with disabilities are generally at a double disadvantage, being both female and disabled. Despite a significant history of NGO-provided rehabilitation and disability services in WBG since the 1940s, and the PA's recognition of the need for services (rehabilitation centers, integration into the education system and labor market), people with disabilities still confront cultural hurdles, lack of services, and marginalization. Less than 20% of working-age disabled were employed in 2007, and 55% had no formal schooling.⁴⁶

Gender Issue #6: Conflicting pressures on women to contribute to family income and uphold traditional reproductive and domestic roles

Traditional gender relations favor women's reproductive and domestic responsibilities over other actual or possible roles, but increasing economic hardship and demands on women to contribute to family income are creating new tensions in gender dynamics and relationships. Men and women do not share the same social or economic status in Palestinian society. Family roles and relationships are shaped by a patrilineal kinship system that defines who has authority in the family and how members interact. Men occupy a protective and dominant position over women, who attain status with stature (i.e. as mothers of sons and daughters) and age. Under traditional

⁴³ PCBS 2011. Website Article: Palestinians at the End of the Year, 2011.

[<http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/DesktopModules/Articles/ArticlesView.aspx?tabID=0&lang=en&ItemID=2019&mid=12235>, Accessed 7/30/2012].

⁴⁴ PCBS 2010. Press Release: PCBS Issues the results of the Family Survey 2010,

[http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/FamilyRes2011_E.pdf; Accessed 8/8/2012], p. 1

⁴⁵ World Health Organization 2010. Cooperation Strategy.

http://www.who.int/countryfocus/cooperation_strategy/ccsbrief_wbg_en.pdf; Accessed 9/13/2012.

⁴⁶ PCBS 2007. Press Release on the Occasion of the 13th of December, the International Day for the Disabled. [http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/disability_eng.pdf; Accessed 8/8/2012].

norms, men protect the family by earning a living in the public sphere, while women and girls remain in the domestic sphere.

In practice, the situation is much more fluid, and many different constellations of gender roles exist side-by-side. For example, economic pressures are leading male family members to be more accepting of female family employment outside the home; at the same time, older women still expect younger women to perform a full workload of domestic chores. Younger women themselves still consider marriage as their primary familial obligation. In a group discussion with 24 11th graders during the GA fieldwork, all the girls said they wanted to marry before the age of 20, and were confident that their fathers would find them good husbands. However, they also wanted to complete their post-secondary education. Most of these girls viewed a business degree as a way to acquire economic independence and higher status in the family and in the community.

Box 3: Gender Relations in Transition

Marriage, family and children are viewed as highly important aspects of Palestinian culture. Family life is considered by many as the “only refuge from insecurity,” and many women derive their sense of rights and entitlements from it. This can leave those who don’t marry with an uncertain position at home and in society. PCBS data from 2007 showed a sudden increase in underage marriages. Among 50-54 year old women, only 7.5% reported marrying at 14 or under; among the 20-24 year old women, only 4.3% reported the same, but over 12% of 15-19 year old girls reported marrying at 14 or under. For young men the challenge is not only of getting married, but also finding work.

Source: World Bank 2011. Checkpoints and Barriers. Gender Dimensions of Economic Collapse

The tension is particularly strong in Gaza. As unemployed men have been forced to abandon their traditional roles as breadwinners, women are taking on new roles and burdens in order to work outside the home in low-paying jobs. At the same time they continue to perform household chores, and increasing depression among unemployed men contributes to domestic tensions and violence. The government has not taken a strong role in alleviating these interrelated economic and psychological pressures, and there are few mental health services for men who experience depression and stress. In fact, the political situation in Gaza and reliance on religion and negative cultural traditions are leading to the reinforcement and institutionalization of a gender-discriminatory culture at all levels.

2.2 The PA’s Institutional Approach to Gender: Challenges and Achievements.

The Palestinian Reform and Development Plan 2008-2010 was criticized for incorporating gender only in the social sectors, while failing to consider it in the economic sectors and infrastructure. The 2011-2013 National Development Plan demonstrates improvement. Additional gender-related achievements to date include:

- Endorsement of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) by the Palestinian President in 2009.
- Creation of gender units within PA ministries and adoption of gender-sensitive budgeting.
- Appointment of women to leadership positions that have traditionally been restricted to men, such as governors, Shari’a judges, and directors general of PCBS and the Capital Market Authority.

- Approval of the incorporation of a women's quota in the electoral lists for legislative and local council elections into the Elections Law of 2005.
- Provision of training programs to sensitize PA human resources personnel to gender issues.
- Implementation of numerous awareness-raising, lobbying, and advocacy campaigns to support the adoption of gender issues into agendas and policies at official levels, as well as to raise awareness of women's rights and issues at the community level.
- Implementation of various job creation programs and projects for women to increase their participation in the labor market and reduce poverty and unemployment.
- Development of the Palestinian Women's Bill of Rights in 2008.
- The decision by the Council of Ministers to create a national committee on combating violence against women in 2007, chaired by Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA).

2.3 The PA's Gender Vision and Strategic Objectives

The PA's commitment to gender equality is articulated in its National Development Plan 2011-2013, which stipulates that the social policy agenda should include targeted efforts to address disparities in service delivery outcomes based on sex, age, geographic location, or other social categories and classifications.

In addition, in January 2011, the Council of Ministers approved the National Strategic Plan for Combating Violence against Women 2011-2019, in accordance with the Basic Law, which states that women must be protected from all forms of discrimination, and that perpetrators of violence against women should be punished. The Plan aims to promote the equal and fair treatment of women under the law, and to institute legal protections against violence. It aims to enhance institutional mechanisms to protect and support women in order to build a society based on equality and justice for all citizens, without discrimination on the basis of gender.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs is spearheading a comprehensive effort to ensure that the legal framework and the administration of public policy foster gender equality. The Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy 2011-2013 addresses gender-related disparities by providing guidance for reducing gender gaps and serving as a reference for developing gender-responsive programs, projects, and actions. The Strategy recognizes that women are subjected to various forms of discrimination throughout their lives, and that this discrimination is incompatible not only with the provisions of international conventions and treaties, but also with the Palestinian Basic Law.

The Strategy's strategic objectives are to:

- Enable women to enjoy family law and civil rights that ensure equality and equity;
- Ensure that Palestinian women in Jerusalem preserve their rights to residency, movement, and nationality;
- Reduce all forms of violence against women;
- Improve the status of Palestinian women prisoners;
- Facilitate women's active political involvement and to strengthen their role in decision-making;
- Improve the quantity and quality of educational services for women and girls in West Bank and Gaza;
- Ensure protection of women's health;

- Improve women’s participation in the labor market and increase their participation in economic decision-making; and
- Mainstream gender concerns and issues in the work of Palestinian governmental ministries.

3. GENDER ANALYSIS OF USAID WEST BANK’S PORTFOLIO

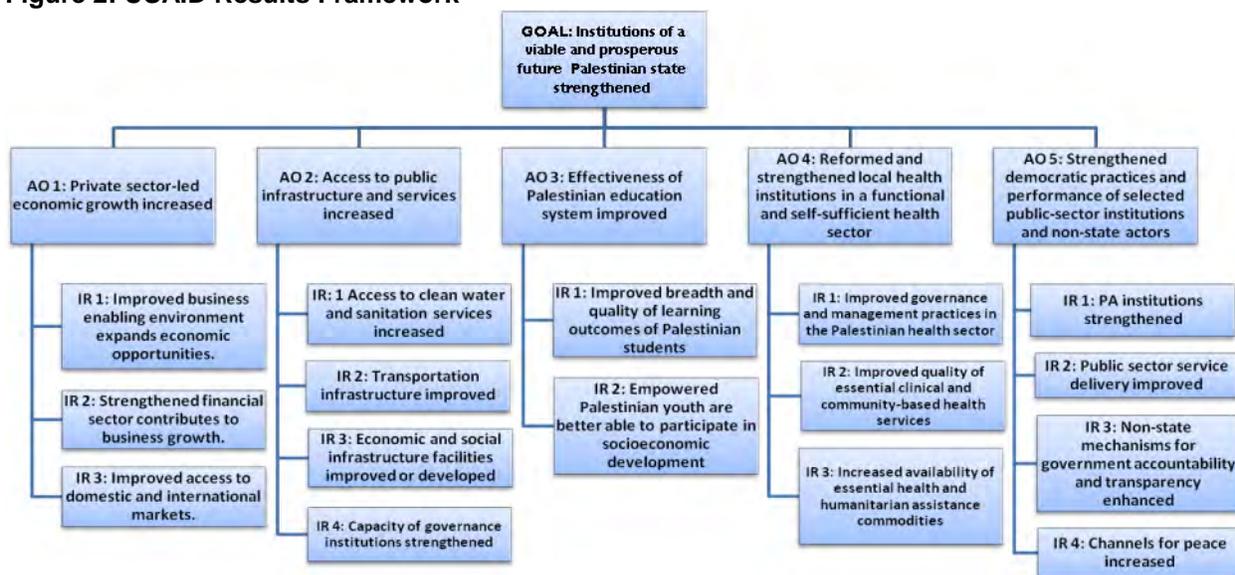
This section presents a **gender integration review** (gender analysis) by program area as defined at the Assistance Objective level under the current USAID/WBG Results Framework (see Figure 2).⁴⁷ The five programmatic areas are:

- Private Sector-led Economic Growth,
- Water, Sanitation, and Other Infrastructure,
- Quality Education and Youth Empowerment,
- Effective and Functional Health Services, and
- Democratic Practices and Governance in Public and Non-State Institutions.

This section builds on the systemic gender issues in WBG identified in the previous section that impede and/or hinder socio-economic and political development with equity. By Assistance Objective (AO), this section:

- Summarizes the strategic priorities or framework of the PA and USAID
- Identifies key gender gaps or issues that impede the achievement of USAID’s programmatic objectives and development approaches that have differential impacts on men and women; and
- Identifies several gender-specific good practices from USAID and non-USAID-funded activities based on interviews, field visits, and the review of documentation.

Figure 2: USAID Results Framework



⁴⁷ The Mission requested that the report follow the structure of the Results Framework, and use Assistance Objectives (AO) rather than Development Objective (DO).

3.1 Assistance Objective # 1: Private Sector-Led Economic Growth Increased

3.1.1 Strategic Priorities

Palestinian Authority. The PA's National Development Plan (NDP) for 2011-2013 seeks to consolidate gains from institution-building activities that were the focus of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan: 2008-2010 (PRDP).⁴⁸ The NDP emphasizes the need to “reunify, rebuild and reinvigorate [its] private sector ... and focus on enabling [its] pioneering private sector to grow and create more jobs.”⁴⁹ Although the NDP's focus tends to limit the discussion of women and gender to the social sector, it sets a strategic objective to promote “the full participation and empowerment of women in society.”⁵⁰ There are a series of specific policy commitments, which include a review and amendment of legislation, a zero tolerance policy of discrimination and violence against women, and dedicated funding for independent monitoring of progress towards gender equality. Funding allocated in the plan (supported by donor trust funds) for gender equality programming represents 2% of the total social sector allocation (which is on average 32% of the total). The predecessor to the NDP, PRDP included a Women's Empowerment (WE) program, which targeted women-owned micro-enterprises, job skills for women, assistance for rural women, and efforts to remove gender discrimination in labor practices.⁵¹

USAID/WBG. In its current Results Framework (RF), the Mission supports (through AO1) Palestinian trade and economic development, and promotes business and agricultural development through technical assistance and loan programs. With its border improvement projects, it is helping ease the secure movement of Palestinian people and goods.

AO1 has three Intermediate Results (IRs):

- IR 1: Improved business enabling environment expands economic opportunities
- IR 2: Strengthened financial sector contributes to business growth
- IR 3: Improved access to domestic and international markets

USAID's Private Enterprise Office (PEO) is focused on reducing systematic constraints to economic growth in order to achieve significant job creation in the next three to five years. USAID/WBG has supported a wide range of economic sectors: agriculture and agro-industries, through loans for equipment purchases and training to owners of greenhouses; export-oriented industries, such as the stone and marble industry in the West Bank where Israel's export restrictions were eased; and the furniture industry in Gaza where export restrictions are still in place; other sectors of high potential growth such as tourism and ICT where training has been provided; and sectors where micro-enterprises are most active, such as handicrafts.

⁴⁸ World Bank 2012. Palestinian Reform Development Plan Trust Fund Details.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/MENAEXT/WESTBANKGAZAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:21781432~pagePK:1497618~piPK:217854~theSitePK:294365,00.html>.

⁴⁹ Palestinian National Authority April 2011. National Development Plan, 2011-13: Establishing the State, Building our Future. p. 9 (accessible: <http://www.apis.ps/up/1332062906.pdf>).

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 34.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 62.

Interviews with staff show that although there are examples of gender sensitive program design, gender has not been systematically considered across the portfolio of projects (six of which were reviewed by the GA team). Interviews with staff reveal a strong emphasis on addressing systemic constraints to economic growth through activities focused on: competitiveness, trade and mobility, access to finance, and the business enabling environment. They report that given their objectives, interventions must focus on results that produce tens of thousands of jobs. Their perspective is that some of the ongoing activities do not lend themselves to targeting female empowerment, especially in the short-term. For example, trade facilitation for the stone and marble industry, which includes about 100 businesses in the West Bank, offers an important opportunity for economic growth. The sector is male-dominated but, there could be more opportunities for the sector to become more diversified as new technologies are introduced (that improve the working conditions for all). The point of gender analysis is to identify these issues and develop a strategy.

A Gender Strategy was carried out in 2011 for the Investment Climate Improvement (ICI) project (although implementation of the ICI was suspended later in the year because of funding constraints). A quarterly report from the project noted that “all project activities have an integrated, gender-sensitive approach that will aim to benefit both men and women, and focus on creating enhanced opportunities for women in both public and private sectors.” The project had already begun working with the Women’s Business Forum and the Palestinian Businesswomen’s Association (ASALA), to expand the registration of women-owned businesses. The ICI gender strategy proposes that the project play an active role in informing women’s business organizations and their members about the rules and opportunities from World Trade Organization (WTO) observer status and compliance, and to ensure sex-disaggregated data collection whenever possible.

Even without formal gender strategies or analyses, the PEO program has generated significant gender-equity results, such as expanded access to export markets and expansion of businesses that benefit female family members as well as male owners or employees of these businesses.

The Modernizing Financial Institutions (MFI) project, which works with financial intermediaries, is particularly gender sensitive. Women experience greater difficulty than men accessing capital because of lack of evidence of asset ownership or because cultural traditions mean that their businesses and bank accounts are registered in a husband’s or a brother’s name. As reported in the Expanded and Sustained Access to Financial Services (ESAF) project’s last quarterly report, “women-owned enterprises ... find it particularly challenging to access bank financing due to cultural norms as well as customs regarding property ownership and inheritance that reduce women’s access to assets.”⁵² The issue is compounded where customary practices and Shari’a law may limit women’s ability to inherit land or other assets.⁵³

The technical assistance provided to ASALA, the only micro-finance institution with a sole focus on women borrowers, has enabled it to tighten its loan management and become more sustainable. It serves more than 3,600 women customers.

⁵² ESAF Quarterly Report August-October 2011

⁵³ Interview with ASALA. ILO-Policy Brief 3. Situation of and Assistance to Businesswomen in the West Bank; see also Annelies Moors, “Women, Property and Islam: Palestinian Experiences 1920-1990.”

Under the Palestinian Investment Partnership (PIP), which provides grants to facilitate quality enhancement and marketing support to Palestinian companies, three of the grantees (8% of the total) are women-owned businesses. These figures, though relatively low, compare favorably with national figures (fewer than 3% of businesses registered with Palestinian Chambers of Commerce are women-owned), and 10% of the jobs created under the PIP went to women. The PIP management even recommended that in the future “a similar grant program should be more focused on targeting women investments in areas of high unemployment and poverty levels, by setting up a portion of the program to help women-owned businesses to improve their business model.”⁵⁴

3.1.2 Gender Gaps and Issues

In this section gender gaps that relate to private sector and economic growth at the strategic-level are identified.

Women in WBG are keen to start businesses but face severe constraints, particularly in obtaining credit. According to a study on women’s entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North African (MENA) countries, Palestinian women, regardless of marital status, have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship.⁵⁵ However, they feel their skills are inadequate. Although they rank high in their desire to start a business as a career choice, compared to their peers in the nine study-countries, the risk of failure makes them hesitate to start a business. This is confirmed by the low prevalence of early-stage entrepreneurial activity among women: most female-owned businesses are less than 3.5 years old. Women in the 25-34 age group account for the majority of business owners/managers. The majority of women entrepreneurs has some or has completed secondary school education (24% and 18% respectively), 12% have completed college or a technical training program, and 18% have university degrees. Most of the businesses are very small one-person businesses, consumer goods oriented, and geared principally toward the domestic market.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) Doing Business indicators rank the West Bank and Gaza at 177 out of 183 countries in terms of starting a new business, at 166 in terms of getting credit, and 183 for resolving insolvency. Although the indicator is not gender-specific, women reported in the above-referenced MENA survey that they have the perception that they face gender discrimination, especially when applying for loans from banks that require male guarantors and additional collateral.⁵⁶

Even if there may be no discrimination between men and women, the legal framework – commercial and banking laws and regulations – is not conducive to business expansion, in particular for women-owned businesses. Some of the legal impediments to women’s business development are due to family law rather than commercial law. Women-owned businesses are largely informal and the disadvantages of entering the formal business sector often prevail.

⁵⁴ Interviews, Gender Assessment Team December 2011.

⁵⁵ Hala Hattab: “Towards Understanding Women Entrepreneurship in MENA Countries. 2010. The study analyzes the data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2009 cycle under the umbrella of IDRC. The countries included are: Algeria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Simple requirements such as obtaining notary deeds are full of hurdles - fees vary from place to place, travel time poses a burden, and other difficulties inhibit women from taking certain initiatives; sometimes women are reluctant to engage with fiscal offices or the judiciary system. In addition, the cost of business registration can exceed \$10,000.

Women experience discrimination in the labor market. Although the labor laws do not discriminate between women and men, in practice employers discriminate against women and other groups such as youth and older adults, and between rural and urban employees and the formal and informal sector, where most women are economically engaged. Social protection among those employed in the private sector remains low. According to PCBS, 54% of women working in the private sector receive paid maternity leave; only 23% of all waged employees contribute to a pension fund; and only 25% have paid annual leave.⁵⁷ In addition, women (when they participate in the labor market) tend to join as informal or become hidden workers.⁵⁸

Young women face non-legal barriers to entry into the formal labor market. Early entry into the job market (while employees are still in high school or university) provides opportunities to acquire job and life skills that are valued by employers. Part-time or seasonal jobs (largely unregulated in the current labor law) also offer opportunities to build professional experience while earning valuable income.⁵⁹ In accordance with traditional cultural values, families are likely to consider part-time work for the sons more favorably than for their daughters. The law does not exclude part-time employment, as it allows for a three-month trial period before employers have to offer a contract.⁶⁰ From the PCBS Q3/2011 survey data, 58% of the underemployed (those working 1-14 hours/week) are working in the agricultural sector, which offers more limited potential for educated young women than for educated young men. Public sector sex-disaggregated data on part-time employment is not available.

Women are excluded from the labor market due to gender-based constraints related to mobility. Notwithstanding recent increases in women's labor market participation, due to cultural values and the dangers associated with traveling in West Bank, an overriding concern that prevents women from working outside of the home is the amount of time it takes to transit and perceived threats to their personal security. Employers as well as employed women and youth with whom the GA team met repeatedly, mentioned transportation constraints and lack or expense of child care as barriers for women's entry to or ability to remain in the labor market. The uncertainty of transit time needed to travel from home to the workplace and risks associated with the checkpoints may add 2-3 hours a day to women's absence from home. Alternative forms of human resource management, such as telecommuting, compressed workweeks, or part-time employment in services (including in the medical fields) are not commonly practiced, although they could significantly increase the participation of women in the labor force.

⁵⁷ PCBS 2011. Press Release on the Results of the Labour Force Survey: July-September 2011 Round. [Accessed: <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/pcbs/PressRelease/LFsQ32011AE.pdf>; August 6, 2012]

⁵⁸ World Bank 2010. Checkpoints and Barriers: Searching for Livelihoods in the West Bank and Gaza, Gender Dimensions of Economic Collapse. p. 5.

⁵⁹ No. 7, Labor Law 2000.

⁶⁰ Edward Sayre and Mary Kraetsch: "Does Palestinian Labor Law Hurt Employment Possibilities for Palestinian Youth?" Middle East Youth Initiative. Policy Outlook No. 3. April 2011

Rural women are “left behind.” Although rural women constitute the majority of the agricultural labor force, they do not benefit from social protection under the labor law and are not equitably included in the agribusiness training offered under the Enterprise Development and Investment Promotion (EDIP) Project. According to FAO, very few girls opt for or are encouraged to attend agricultural schools (0.5% of girls register at Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) schools). Programs such as EDIP constitute important opportunities for women producers to upgrade their skills and knowledge, especially when new technologies are introduced, such as drip irrigation. Staff also stated that half of the 3,500 beneficiaries in the Gaza Contract Farming Project are women.

Women face barriers to full-time employment in family businesses that are traditionally male-dominated and public sector institutions. Women believe they have no chance to make a career in a family-owned business, even when they are well qualified. In the public sector institutions, women feel they suffer from discrimination in terms of position levels for equal qualifications, and in terms of promotions. This is reflected in the wage discrimination and limited access to senior management positions noted in the Overview section.

3.1.3 Promising Practices

Through its field interviews and review of documentation, the GA team identified numerous promising practices, which could be applied systematically in a follow-up exercise. Those listed below may provide foundations that meet both Palestinian objectives on employment, growth, and private sector participation, as well as the USAID vision on gender equality and equity, and women’s and youth economic empowerment.

Promising Practice # 1: Building the technical and institutional capacities and viability of micro-finance institutions supports women borrowers and entrepreneurs. In 2008, one of the most prominent lending institutions in the West Bank and Gaza, FATEN, was operating at a loss, and also maintained higher than necessary reserves as part of a strategy to attract investor and donor funds. Two years earlier, in 2006, FATEN had undergone its first evaluation with Planet Rating and scored B- with an “uncertain trend.” By project end, FATEN had become the largest micro-finance institution in WBG in terms of number of clients and portfolio size, and helped finance that expansion by acquiring \$4 million in commercial debt. Further demonstrating FATEN’s progress, the micro-finance institution received an A- in a second rating from Planet Rating toward the end of Year 3, placing it among the top 5% of micro-finance institutions globally. As noted earlier, even though FATEN may have lost some of its smaller and less profitable women customers, women still constitute 80% of its borrowers. Building micro-finance capacity and sustainability for targeting women – and providing women with the skills, confidence and networking they need to succeed – is essential to improving the performance and growth of women-owned businesses.

Promising Practice # 2: Facilitated registration of women-owned businesses enables a greater number of informal businesses to join the formal sector. The ICI project was going to fund ASALA to expand a registration initiative for women-owned businesses. The objective of the grant was to increase women-owned business membership in regional chambers of commerce so they can benefit from the services provided under such affiliation. Although this

has not been implemented because of vetting delays and the suspension of the project, the idea itself is innovative and may be implemented in upcoming private sector support projects.

Promising Practice # 3: Assisting the PA in formulating and implementing policy reforms prepares male- and female-owned businesses for WTO accession. A gender strategy was developed one month after the inception of the ICI project in the fall of 2010, at a time when the overall project workplan was still under design to integrate gender mainstreaming in the project activities and enable the creation of a framework that would improve women’s participation in the Palestinian economy. In so doing, it would provide expanded economic opportunities for all Palestinians. The ICI Gender Strategy sought to increase opportunities for women throughout the economy. At the same time, the ICI would endeavor to eliminate impediments to the formation and profitability of women-owned or managed enterprises. The project also sought to encourage greater representation and participation of women owners and managers within business organizations, thus reducing the gap of women’s representation at the industry level. This work and the ESAF sub-component to ensure women participate in decision-making are promising practices if effectively implemented.

Promising Practice # 4: Livelihood and business start-up skills training activities build opportunities for young women’s entrepreneurship. Through the ESAF project, Save the Children (SC) provided opportunities for youth to build key livelihoods skills. The Livelihood Training and Business Start-up Activity for Youth in Gaza is a successful model for engaging men and women in similar training and providing funding (awarded competitively). It is also an opportunity to expose youth to entrepreneurial ideas and attitudes and start changing the limited aspirations Palestinian youth have regarding business and enterprise, and to strengthen their business skills.⁶¹

The results of selected projects for men and women provide strong evidence that young women can be as successful as young men when given equal access to resources. The activity targeted youth from throughout Gaza for enrollment in financial literacy and life skills training. A total of 1,700 applications were received (65% male, 35% female) while 1,274 (62% male, 38% female) were selected to participate in the training. After the completion of the training, a business plan was submitted and 335 (192 males, 143 females) applicants were selected to receive a grant. Business plan topics included poultry farming (35%), sewing and embroidery (14%), hairdressing (10%), general trading (10%), and mobile and web technologies. A full evaluation of the project impact is yet to be completed.

3.2 Assistance Objective # 2: Access to Public Infrastructure and Services Increased

3.2.1 Strategic Priorities

Palestinian Authority. As stated in the PA NDP: 2011-2013, the PA is committed to “continue to invest in the physical infrastructure ..., through both public and private funding, in order to propel our development. Improving the quality of basic utilities and other services, including water, energy, sanitation, transportation and telecommunications, will have a transformational

⁶¹ A fairly similar idea was actually included as an ICI project proposal to set up five “business camps in Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron and Bethlehem for 125 youth. The proposal is on hold until funding becomes available.

impact on the quality of life of our citizens and the growth prospects of our private sector.” The government is also committed to an enabling environment that ensures competitiveness, private sector delivery of services, and consumer protection.

In terms of basic human rights and quality of life of women, men, and children, access to high-quality infrastructure and services is on par with basic health and education services. Furthermore, infrastructure (i.e. water, sanitation, energy, and roads) impacts health, and access to health care and education. In terms of water consumption, 2006-2007 witnessed a continued decline in per capita water use. In the West Bank the rate declined from 68 liters per capita per day in September 2006 to 56 liters in April 2007. The situation in Gaza is even more severe, where the rate declined from 81 to 51 liters over the same period.⁶² Load-shedding and unscheduled power cuts continue, disrupting critical social services, such as health care and economic activities (e.g., agribusinesses, or those relying on telecommunication services).⁶³

Infrastructure sectors are potentially among the largest contributors to employment, and therefore, to the absorption of existing and new talents available in the labor market of West Bank and Gaza. The backlog of deferred infrastructure maintenance in WBG is tremendous due to minimal upgrading and repairs. In Gaza, the Israeli government did not start relaxing trade restrictions until 2010 for construction materials, and some donor-funded projects in the health and education sectors. In addition, the EU paid partial compensation for destroyed private sector entities. The re-opening of the Rafah crossing with Egypt has only re-established the movements of people so far. However, continued efforts to negotiate rehabilitation, upgrades and construction permits in Areas B and C (i.e. administrative divisions established under Oslo), as well as the beginning of reconstruction in Gaza, offer promise that infrastructure sectors will be a growth area for the economy and for employment.

USAID/WBG. The current results framework identified four intermediate results (IRs) contributing to AO2:

- IR 1: Access to clean water and sanitation services is increased
- IR 2: Transportation infrastructure is improved
- IR 3: Economic and social infrastructure facilities are improved or developed
- IR 4: The capacity of governance institutions is strengthened.

Although the Water Resources and Infrastructure Office has the primary responsibility for delivering projects that meet this objective, projects under other offices may also include infrastructure. The WRI programs contribute to achieving other AOs, whether related to (i) private sector-led economic growth, through engagement with private contractors; (ii) the effectiveness of Palestinian education through the school rehabilitation programs; and (iv) the strengthening of democratic practices through participatory planning and support of activity centers for youth, women, and families (e.g., public parks).

The program also serves to introduce new technologies to WBG for environmental conservation, ranging from new water metering systems and green/energy efficient buildings. Skill

⁶² UN, OCHA, Field update on Gaza, 3-5 February 2009; and WHO, Health situation in the Gaza Strip, 4 February 2009.

⁶³ OCHA, *ibid.*

development in these areas could be the basis for developing export-oriented technical service businesses, such as engineering design, construction, and maintenance services. To achieve the assistance objective on public infrastructure and services, USAID/WBG has implemented or is implementing four major activities:

- **Infrastructure Needs Program (INP I and INP II).** The program provides critical infrastructure that promotes economic growth, improves quality of life for Palestinians in the West Bank, and helps the PA address both immediate and long-term infrastructure needs. INP projects include water systems and distribution networks, wastewater systems, and other related services. These projects also create desperately needed jobs that bolster local economic activity, and strengthen the capacity of local governments as well as that of the local construction industry in infrastructure planning, design, and construction of quality infrastructure.
- **Local Government and Infrastructure Program (LGI).** LGI aims to improve living conditions for Palestinians in vulnerable communities in the West Bank through multi-sector infrastructure packages – including water, health, education, and roads projects – for entire communities. The program is anchored in participatory planning at the community level, and works with PA ministries, local leaders and community representatives to build the capacity of local government offices, engineers, as well as the construction industry to design, implement and maintain high quality infrastructure.
- **Emergency Water and Sanitation and Other Infrastructure Program (EWAS II).** The program is designed to provide rapid response and emergency relief to the Palestinian people primarily in the water and sanitation sectors. This project improves the supply of potable water to Palestinian communities facing serious water shortages by rehabilitating, expanding and upgrading small-and medium-scale water and sewage systems. EWAS II also supports the improvement of basic Palestinian infrastructure needs by building and rehabilitating community centers, youth centers, classrooms, community health facilities, and hospitals.

3.2.2 Gender Gaps and Issues

The main water resource and infrastructure projects have been implemented with significant gender sensitivity and innovation. Through interviews with staff and the review of the documentation, the team learned that the USAID/WBG staff in charge of the projects is very experienced, has an acute understanding of gender issues, and is keen to enhance the program's performance on gender equality objectives. The following narrative highlights gender issues for consideration.

Lack of gender sensitivity in community needs assessments. Community needs assessments are extremely important in planning infrastructure on any scale. Under WRI it appears that most efforts center on ensuring that both women and men participate. In some activities, meeting times are selected to be most convenient for all; however, the convenient time for men is frequently not convenient for women and youth (i.e., during evening hours when women are home-bound with domestic chores and youth have to study). Under the LGI project, facilitators are usually men. When it is observed that women attending sit in the back while men are in front, follow-up meetings are held to validate the results. As observed during the field work, the

meetings that had dominant representation of men were focused on the construction of schools for boys.⁶⁴ Exploring the process and results with the contractor could help the Mission staff confirm the results or lead to a gender sensitive redesign. This could include an initial thorough social needs assessment, meeting separately with women and men and other important groups, and including both male and female facilitators in order to attain a more gender-balanced view of the communities' priorities.

Women are perceived as beneficiaries rather than contributors to the infrastructure sector.

Besides female engineers, few women are employed in the wide range of infrastructure professions and businesses. PCBS employment data report some female participation in the construction industry, but it is virtually insignificant (238 in Gaza and 437 in the West Bank). Although the details of the professions in which they are employed are not reported in PCBS data, the observation of construction sites and infrastructure-service companies indicates that the participation of women in this sector is weak. There are many positions in which women can exert their talents besides engineering and architecture – environmentalists, sociologists, quality control, supplies logistics, contract managers etc. Few female-owned infrastructure businesses exist.⁶⁵ Most infrastructure construction companies do not have experience in mixed-labor force management and codes of conduct. Moreover, cultural traditions tend to view women's employment in traditionally male-dominated industries negatively.

And yet, many young women pursue infrastructure studies, in particular engineering and architecture.⁶⁶ Recognizing the importance of infrastructure sectors for women's employment and business creation would be of strategic importance to achieve gender equitable labor market objectives. The Mission has made noteworthy efforts to disseminate success stories through its short documentaries on YouTube. The internship program described in the Promising Practices section is also a definite step in the right direction.

Insufficient opportunities exist for women and youth to participate in maintenance training programs to enable new infrastructure business start-ups. Maintenance of community infrastructure (including roads and buildings) after rehabilitation and/or construction is very cost effective, especially in a context of limited fiscal resources. In many countries, contracting out maintenance to local enterprises has proved to be an effective way to capitalize on women's education, knowledge, and skills.⁶⁷ Given the diversity of skills needed for infrastructure maintenance, and the facilitation provided by ICT, innovative approaches can be developed while fully respecting cultural sensitivities and the need to balance demands between home and work responsibilities.

3.2.3 Promising Practices

The GA team identified many promising water and infrastructure activities. Three outstanding examples are described below.

⁶⁴ CHF. LGI. Third Quarterly Report. April-June 2011

⁶⁵ There is insufficient sex-disaggregated business data by economic sector; when the GA team discussed this question, mention was made of women businesses in the equipment sector but not in construction.

⁶⁶ For instance, riwaq.org, a center for architectural conservation based in al Bireh, was founded by Palestinian women.

⁶⁷ For example, Peru Rural Roads Projects, presented at the USAID Staff Training Workshop on December 2, 2011

Promising Practice # 5: Internships help women’s transition into the labor market. The FORSA (“opportunity,” in Arabic) internship program was designed and implemented as part of INP I.⁶⁸ This six-month program was open to recent graduates in engineering, financial and business administration. Seventy-seven (30 women and 47 men, including 6 with physical disabilities) of the 105 individuals (70 engineers and 35 administration/finance) who entered the program completed it.⁶⁹ The remaining trainees either found permanent jobs immediately or decided to leave. The participants first received a two-week training on “soft skills,” how to present themselves, how to work in a team, and how to manage their workload. They were assigned to a supervisor, mostly men for on-site construction work, and a few women for those doing office work, who provided a performance evaluation every two months. The trainees had to provide a weekly schedule of what they had learned, with the supervisor’s endorsement. Employment rates for those participating in the program were good with monthly salaries for program graduates range from \$600-\$928, with no apparent difference between men and women; in fact, a female mechanical engineer reported the highest salary.

According to the program manager, the program would be more effective if carried out over a full year. Many other organizations have internship programs (LGI’s Engineering Fellows Program), but FORSA was unique for being the first program to include people with disabilities, to provide a two-week training on “soft skills” instead of one week, and to continue monitoring the employment progress of program graduates. As of December 2011, 22 female engineers are working on INP projects; this represents approximately 20% of the engineers employed by this USAID program.⁷⁰

Promising Practice # 6: Gender audits assess women’s involvement. Environmental challenges in the West Bank and Gaza are considerable given the limitations of land and water resources. The PA, civil society, and various communities have endeavored to improve access and management of the water resources, for which girls and women play an important role. The German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) carried out a Gender Audit of the Water Sector.⁷¹ It covered all main institutions involved in the water and environmental sectors, using a rapid appraisal methodology and documentation review. The situation analysis documented that while women play a prominent role in water management in the domestic sphere, they are considerably under-represented in the public sphere. Their presence averaged 8% in service provider institutions (representing 0% of top managers and only 11% of second-tier managers) and 32% in related ministries and authorities (where they constituted only 4% of second top management positions and 20% of the third level even though they constituted about 30% of total employees). Women were over-represented in the administrative and secretarial positions.

Constraints to better representation in leadership positions that were identified included the negative perception of gender roles based on the traditional division of labor. This was reflected in the gender-biased practices regarding employment and promotion. Since highly skilled women are available in the water and environmental sectors, the gender audit has been used to inform

⁶⁸ See also the article in *Frontlines* of April/May 2011.

⁶⁹ One in a wheelchair, three walking with crutches, one limping, and one with an arm missing.

⁷⁰ Third Quarter 2011 Progress Report, INP I.

⁷¹ Unpublished document. GIZ was formerly GTZ.

the water sector institutions and revise the practices of Human Resource Departments. Such gender audits could be replicated in other infrastructure sectors to ensure more equitable participation of women in all professions and positions in sector institutions.

Promising Practice # 7: Documentation, reporting, and dissemination of project results on reducing gender gaps. The careful documentation, reporting, and dissemination of project results is of critical importance, not only for accountability of projects' advancement and results, but also to draw lessons from experiences on reducing gender gaps and to disseminate knowledge to a wide range of development professionals, whether in the West Bank and Gaza or in other countries.

ANERA's (American Near East Refugee Aid) July-September 2011 quarterly report for EWAS II presented a well-organized monitoring and evaluation system that carefully documents all technical social and gender aspects of the sub-projects.⁷² Complemented by relevant visual elements (for example, pictures of the situation before and after intervention), the short reports provide a concrete description of initial challenges, procedures followed, and results attained. Specific attention is given to beneficiaries recording the benefits of project interventions "in their own words." Cumulative results are also presented, giving a better appreciation of the total benefits of the program. Similarly, the short documentary films prepared by the PR Department enable USAID/WBG to reach a very wide audience. Posted on YouTube, they can be viewed worldwide and contribute to creating a positive image of what is happening in WBG. This activity, implemented by local filmmakers, has the added advantage of creating work opportunities for local people.

3.3 Assistance Objective # 3: Effectiveness of Palestinian Education System Improved

3.3.1 Strategic Priorities

Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian education system is comprised of four pillars: enrollment, quality, management, and linkage with the needs of the market and society. The subsectors are: kindergarten, general education (basic and secondary stages), literacy programs, lifelong or continuing education, vocational education, and higher education.

The goals defined for the PA education sector strategy 2011-2013 are:

- To increase school age children's enrollment opportunities and to improve the system's capacity to keep them in school (enrollment);
- To improve quality of education and learning (quality);
- To develop capacities in planning and management and improve the administrative and financial systems and their uses (management);
- To achieve gradual transformation in the higher education sector from supply-oriented education to demand-oriented education that can increase harmony between the higher education outputs and the market needs (relational), especially with regards to higher education, including vocational and technical education.

⁷² ANERA. *Emergency Water and Sanitation and Other Infrastructure Program-EWAS II- Progress Report*. No 12. July-September 2011.

MoE has adopted an inclusive education program but is unable to fully implement the program.⁷³ To date, the program has achieved close gender parity. According to the Inclusive Education (IE) program at the MoE, a total of 50 resource rooms are now available in 18 directorates in the WBG. These are equipped with 38 IE counselors, serving a total of 4,204 boys and girls with special needs (48% of the students served are female).

Strategic Objective 6 of the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy (2011-2013) for promoting gender equality and equity deals with education and seeks to “*improve the quantity and quality of educational services in the West Bank and Gaza from a gender perspective*” [emphasis added].⁷⁴ Policies adopted to realize this objective are:

- Expand and activate the compulsory education policy to cover secondary education;
- Incorporate gender issues into primary, secondary, and higher education curricula;
- Encourage enrolment of girls and women in TVET and agricultural education, both at the secondary and higher education levels;
- Ensure access to education for both males and females with special needs.

USAID/WBG. The Mission’s current results framework defines an education objective under AO3 “Effectiveness of Palestinian education system improved,” which has two IRs:

- IR 1: Improve breadth and quality of learning outcomes for Palestinian students
- IR 2: Empowered Palestinian youth are better able to participate in socioeconomic development

The Mission’s current Youth and Education program interventions fall under the following areas:

- Basic Education (MSN, LGI, and the School Improvement Program)
- Youth Empowerment (YED and Partnership for Youth)
- Tertiary education (Palestinian Faculty Development Program [PFDP])

3.3.2 Gender Issues and the Educational System

The education system in West Bank and Gaza does not suffer from some of the same gender inequalities of less developed economies. For example, according to the MoE, the overall number of female students in secondary education (82,833) is greater than the number of male students (70,178) for year 2011/2012.

The sustainability of this achievement is not assured as systemic gender-based conditions persist that could erode this achievement. Boys typically drop out of school to seek work and provide an income for the household while girls usually withdraw to enter early marriage. These causal factors remain and as the economy continues to suffer may increase the levels of school-drop-out. Secondary education is not compulsory and the minimum age of marriage for girls is 15. Early marriage especially and lack of mobility and unemployment and the overall economic deterioration remain and are a potential cause that may raise the educational access barrier for girls and boys, respectively.

⁷³ Further information on the still largely unmet need in special education is found in MOEHE (2010). Inclusive Education for All in Palestine: A Follow-Up Study of Inclusive Education Project, Ministry of Education Final Report, September 2010.

⁷⁴ Cross-Sectoral Palestinian National Gender Strategy, Ministry of Women Affairs, 2011-2013.

Other key gender issues that present obstacles to having an educational system that benefits both girls and boys are outlined below.

Scarcity of qualitative assessments of gender equality in education.⁷⁵ The major source of almost all the available data on education is the Ministry of Education (MoE) database and almost all are quantitative sex-disaggregated data on gender parity which suggest equality in terms of access to and participation in education. This data does not, however, provide information about differences in quality of education for boys and girls, aspects of school infrastructure and/or curriculum that generate differences for boys and girls, and societal norms and pressures that produce different outcomes for boys and girls.

While there is gender parity in student achievement, persistently high unemployment rates among young women suggest that there are opportunities to better prepare them for the workforce during their school-aged years. At the secondary and tertiary level girls are over-represented in the humanities and under-represented in the sciences and vocational education.⁷⁶ Young women and girls represent only 33% of the total number of students enrolled in vocational education.⁷⁷ Most notably, unemployment rates among all Palestinians are highest among women with 13 or more years of schooling, where unemployment is lowest among women with no years of schooling. The opposite is true for men.⁷⁸ As part of the process of developing economic growth strategies, these issues need to be examined and measured so that the educational system is better aligned with what will prepare women for the workforce and also better prepare boys and girls for a more equitable society.

Weak MoE gender unit. The gender unit in the MoE is among the newest established and it is particularly under-resourced (when compared to other Ministries) Although educational policies indicate evidence of a strong political will within the relevant government ministries to promote and encourage educational development, reforms to date do not go beyond minor structural changes.

Education for boys and girls living in East Jerusalem and Gaza is at risk of a renewed gender gap. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates that there are more than 87,000 school-age children in East Jerusalem, and that restrictions on access to East Jerusalem affect both students and teachers.⁷⁹ Data from the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (2010) estimates that 20% of students in *Waaf* schools in

⁷⁵ For more details see; Subrahmanian, Ramay (2003). Gender Equality in Education: Definition and Measurements. Background paper for UNESCO GMR 2003-043.

⁷⁶ The World Bank Group. (2006). www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2007/10/05/000310607_20071005161816/Rendered/PDF/410430GZ0Educa1or0Analysis01PUBLIC1.pdf

⁷⁷ Ministry of Education and Higher Education. *The development and state of the art of adult learning and education. National report of Palestine*. (Prepared by G. Fannoun, Head of the Non-forma Education Division, MOEHE), Ramallah, April 2008.

⁷⁸ World Bank 2006.

⁷⁹ OCHA (2011). East Jerusalem: Key Humanitarian Concerns. This report also notes that because of the multiple providers in the education sector and limited coordination the total number of teachers and staff with West Bank ID cards who currently work in East Jerusalem schools is unknown; moreover, there is conflicting data regarding the number of schools, the total number of enrolled students, and the drop-out rate.

http://unispa.un.org/pdfs/OCHASpFocus_230311.pdf

East Jerusalem, 20% of teachers, and almost 40% of school support staff cross a checkpoint on a daily basis to access their schools.⁸⁰ This often results in delays and absences, because of closures, arduous routes, and checkpoints.⁸¹ Girls are particularly impacted; because of socio-cultural values and notion of honorable behaviors, Palestinian families are reluctant to have their daughters go through checkpoints or by-pass roads where they are at higher risk of sexual harassment.⁸² In Gaza, the rising conservatism has come at the expense of girls and women. The consequences of this situation are reflected in school achievement data. Although sex-disaggregated data are not available, according to World Bank statistics, 80% of students in Gaza are failing math, while 40% are failing Arabic, their mother tongue. OCHA notes that in the first semester of the 2007-2008 only 20% of 16,000 sixth graders in Gaza passed standardized exams in Math, Sciences, English and Arabic.⁸³ Assessing the relative school performance of boys and girls in East Jerusalem and Gaza would be an important area for research and monitoring.

Lack of equal opportunities for women to transition into the labor market. Universities are independently financed, and the PA has limited leverage to oblige them to reform, particularly with regard to curriculum review, responsiveness to the labor market needs, and gender integration. There are 247 programs and specializations offered by the higher education institutions in WBG. Birzeit University discovered in a recent study of academics and university graduates that these programs are neither responsive to the needs of the economy nor do they serve students' needs and interests. Key gaps have been identified in the education system in preparing students for the labor market. In addition, traditional socio-cultural values make it doubly challenging for women. For instance, some employers believe that women do not need to provide for their families; given the high rate of male unemployment, employers prefer hiring males even when there are more qualified women applying for the jobs. In addition, the Palestinian Faculty Development Program's (PFDP) national study of undergraduate teaching in higher education indicated that there is a growing concern among teachers, students, and parents that a university education is losing its relevance and not keeping up with the changing demands of the labor markets. Students believed that insufficient opportunities for learning enrichment coupled with teacher-centered classroom experiences, create deficits in knowledge, skills, and competencies that inadequately prepare male and female students to compete in the labor market after graduation. A detailed review of males' and females' fields of study and transition into the labor market would be needed to fully assess gender disparities and identify corrective measures. (Assistance from the ILO could be obtained in undertaking such a review.)

3.3.3 Promising Practices

Achievements under the education program portfolio provide many promising practices. Three examples are discussed below.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ OCHA (2007). The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities. <http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/Jerusalem-30July2007.pdf>, p. 31.

⁸² OCHA (2007). The Humanitarian Impact of the West Bank Barrier on Palestinian Communities. <http://www.ochaopt.org/documents/Jerusalem-30July2007.pdf>

⁸³ For more details please see; www.ochaopt.org/documents/un_ngo_fact_sheet_blockade_figures_2009_07_28_eng_lish

Promising Practice #8: Promoting activities that effectively challenge stereotypes and attitudes about gender-based inequalities. The Palestinian educational system does not encourage students to challenge stereotypes and attitudes that reinforce and perpetuate gender-based inequalities. A USAID project, the Model Schools Network (MSN), focuses on math and science, and takes affirmative action to encourage girls' active participation. This is a step toward changing gender norms and portrayals of girls as the "less smart sex" who choose the literary studies that focus more on rote memorization of the "easy stuff." At another level, it engaged boys and girls from different schools in the Network in thought-provoking debates and competitions that challenge stereotypes and traditional thinking, including about gender. The feedback the project received from the participating students, teachers and school administrations was impressive. The participation and victory of girls in the MSN-organized Saffa bike race helped change perceptions of girls' abilities and gender roles.

Promising Practice #9: Supporting teachers' agency and empowerment. MSN held its third annual conference at the Convention Palace in Irtas, Bethlehem in July 2011 where participants of both sexes presented results of their work that came about through their participation in pertinent project activities. Unlike the previous years, all the districts participated together in a single conference to maximize opportunities for networking and exchange of information and experiences among participating MSN male and female teachers and administrators. More than 650 teachers and principals participated, at least half from girls' schools, as well as MoE officials. Although participation was not disaggregated by sex, based on the conference photo gallery it appears that the majority of the teachers were women.⁸⁴ The size, emphasis, and active participation, as well as the quality of the venue, contributed to the success of the event in empowering teachers and building their capacity. It also was an effective vehicle for disseminating the project's results and key findings.

The MSN program provides an information-rich source of data collected from 17,000 principals, teachers, students and parents over three years in its Annual Satisfaction Surveys. These surveys were completed in 40 public schools participating in the MSN Program to measure its impact, and could be utilized for gender analysis to address some of the gaps in gender information noted above. Another survey will take place in the spring of 2012. The plan is to cross-tabulate these data with those collected earlier. While examining the possibility for gender sensitive secondary analysis of the already available data is worthwhile, the next phase of data collection should include gender analysis from the onset.

Promising Practice #10: Promoting the visibility, recognition, and leadership of women in academia. Higher education remains largely male dominated in WBG. Women in Palestinian academia find it difficult to thrive in what is an extremely competitive environment, characterized by discrimination toward women and men who don't conform to more traditional male-dominant behavior patterns. A USAID project, the Palestinian Faculty Development Program (PFDP), did exceptional work in including women in all three of its Academic Colloquia, the PhD and Master's scholarship program, the short-term fellowship program, the

⁸⁴ The five conference halls were designated for Math, English, Science, Leadership and IT presentations. A total of 65 presentations were made over two days, all by school teachers and administrators themselves: 12 in math, 15 in science, 14 in English, 10 in IT, and 14 in leadership and community participation.

“Teaching Excellence Award,” and the Roundtable Series. Women were actively engaged as successful grantees, steering committee members, award winners, and featured speakers.

3.4 Assistance Objective # 4: Reformed and Strengthened Local Health Institutions in a Functional and Self-Sufficient Health Sector

3.4.1 Strategic Priorities

Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian National Health Strategy for 2011-2013 (NHS) recognizes cardiovascular diseases as the leading cause of death, and breast and lung cancers as the leading causes of death from cancer. It thus places them, alongside diabetes at the forefront of the public health agenda. The NHS also notes the need for information campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of timely consultations and diagnosis.

The NHS, which is anchored in the National Development Plan 2011-2013, has four priority strategic objectives:

- Governance and institutional development of the Ministry of Health including: oversight, policy, planning and evidence based decision-making, monitoring and evaluation, regulation, licensing, health information, health management and health systems development.
- Human resources development in the health sector through improving the planning, management, training and education, and financing of human resources. Procurement procedures are central to this objective.
- Healthy behaviors promotion and improvement of disease prevention as an incremental policy and practice in the Palestinian health system. This implies a strong public health focus.
- Assurance that all citizens can access quality sustainable primary, secondary, and tertiary health services, with special emphasis on vulnerable populations, including victims of violence.

In the budget proposal supporting the implementation of the NDP, the health sector has the largest share of the social policy allocations with \$73.2 million and \$96 million for 2012 and 2013, respectively. In the budget proposal, expenditures on the transfer of patients requiring care at tertiary health facilities in Egypt, Jordan, and Israel constitutes 9% of total government expenditure on health. The objective is to reduce this to 7% by 2013. The need for such care outside of West Bank and Gaza has a major gender impact. On the one hand, males of a certain age can obtain a travel permit but have difficulty travelling, and therefore may not receive the needed care on time. On the other hand, women cannot access the health services in any of the three countries, especially in Israel, unless their husbands or male guardians are able to obtain a permit and accompany them.

The MoWA, in cooperation with the MoH Gender Unit, has set forth the following priorities for the health sector:⁸⁵

- Taking all legal and legislative measures to ensure comprehensive health rights and medical services for women throughout the different stages of their life cycle.

⁸⁵ MOWA Cross-Sectoral Gender Strategy 2011-2013.

- Expanding the provision of specialized services for diseases affecting women (physical and mental health).
- Raising women's awareness about their reproductive and health rights.
- Taking affirmative action measures in support of female health professionals.

USAID/WBG. The Mission priorities are in line with the NHS in the following areas:

- Develop and begin implementing a master plan for the construction and maintenance of health care infrastructure to provide comprehensive primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare at a sustainable cost.
- Continue investment in preventive health care, including immunization and screening programs as well as public education campaigns.
- Execute a comprehensive plan to improve and manage human resources in the health sector and invest in the continuous professional development of medical practitioners, enabling them to develop new skills and specializations, particularly in tertiary health care.

In its current results framework, USAID/WBG supports institutional strengthening to help establish a functional and self-sufficient health sector. This strengthening hinges on achieving three intermediate results:

- IR 1: Improved governance and management practices in the Palestinian health sector;
- IR 2: Improved quality of essential clinical and community-based health services;
- IR 3: Increased availability of essential health and humanitarian assistance commodities.

To achieve those results, USAID/WBG supports three projects that include the Palestinian Health Sector Reform and Development Project (the Flagship Project), support to the Holy Family Hospital for maternal and child health, and direct financial support to the UN World Food Programme (WFP). In addition, as noted above, USAID/WBG also finances the construction, rehabilitation or improvement of numerous health care facilities through activities under the infrastructure programs.

3.4.2 The Health Sector and Gender

Gender-sensitive approaches have been adopted in health sector programming supported by USAID/WBG. In addition, the Flagship Project benefited from a Mid-Term Evaluation in 2010 and prepared a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in 2011. The Gender Mainstreaming Strategy places gender equality at the center of decision making, work planning, budgeting, and implementation. Also, a revised Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) was prepared and all project performance indicators which count individuals are sex-disaggregated.

There are several gender gaps or issues that are relevant to the health sector and efforts to strengthen health services systems that are highlighted in the following narrative.

Predominance of male medical officers in top-level decision-making affects access to and control over resources and career opportunities. The majority of women occupy low or mid-level managerial positions. This is particularly critical in the governmental health sector- the

prime employer of health professionals. Only 4% of the hospital directors are women, and women hold only 12% of the MoH health department director positions. Women's representation increases in lower technical and supervisory posts (reaching 37% and 46% in jobs such as head of department and head of division in hospitals, respectively). Likewise, 65% of directors of nursing are women. Yet, the very few who occupy upper level positions do not have equal decision making capacity, access and control of the needed resources and assets. Female health care providers are also denied equitable treatment in fulfilling their needs, rights, and aspirations, in particular personal and professional growth and career progression opportunities. This has its impact as well on the quality of services provided by women health care professionals as they are generally viewed to be less competent.

Good governance is still lacking in the Palestinian health care system and affects key women's health issues. Unresolved issues include: lack of medical malpractice accountability mechanisms, such as death investigation boards and relevant laws on criminalizing medical neglect and malpractice; health system failure to educate the public about their health rights; poor adherence to approved standards in medical practice; and unnecessarily curative/intrusive versus preventive health care. This has significant implications for women's health. For example, maternal mortality of young women and an increase or the rise in caesarean deliveries go unquestioned. Furthermore, needs for family planning services remain unmet.

The gender units at MoH, in the Women's Health and Development Directorate (WHDD), have limited resources. The NDP 2011-2013 and subsequent national sector and cross-sector plans demonstrate the PA's political will to strengthen gender units in each ministry. MoH has the opportunity and leverage to establish a strong gender unit that could reposition gender equity in the MoH to ensure legitimate allocation of and control over appropriate human, technical, and financial resources. This will enable the gender unit to function effectively and better realize its purpose and mandate. The Director of WHDD was tasked to assume the role of "gender focal point" in addition to her normal duties without receiving additional support.

Hospitals lack specialized human resources and facilities, compromising the health and quality of life of all Palestinians. Palestinian men and women and girls and boys have limited access to specialists and advanced care, including urgent women's health needs such as breast cancer screening, treatment, and surgery. Augusta Victoria Hospital is the only oncology-specialized hospital for Palestinians in East Jerusalem.⁸⁶ The hospital director emphatically reported to the GA team the shortage of radiation oncologists, and noted that it is difficult to retain qualified doctors and technicians, especially given that the Israeli health system is far more lucrative and rewarding.

3.4.3 Promising Practices

Numerous promising gender-related practices— especially under Flagship— are evident in the Mission's work in this area. A few of these are highlighted below.

⁸⁶ The hospital is accessed by West Bank Palestinian cancer patients only after and following the Israeli authorities permission regime. The hospital also has a very active and comprehensive outreach service brought to people into their own communities in the West Bank to save them all the road blockages, checkpoints and time spent on permit requirements to access services in Jerusalem. This includes a mammography mobile clinic that was secured with a sub-grant from Flagship.

Promising Practice # 11: Providing gender-based equity in health through a bottom up and top down approach.⁸⁷ This combined approach employs different types of pressure to bring about health development and promotion to provide all citizens fair access to quality health services. Although this practice did not include predetermined, explicit affirmative action measures for gender integration or women's empowerment, it did serve gender equity purposes. While a bottom-up approach encouraged local decision-making, community participation and grassroots mobilization and awareness building, the top-down approach focused on lobbying and bargaining with the MoH decision-makers.

Promising Practice #12: Gender integration before and after the project strategy. With a sub-grant from Flagship, the MoH Health System Assessment was carried out by MoH's planning team early in the life of the Flagship project with the aim of achieving compatibility between the MoH agenda and priorities on the one hand, and those of the Flagship on the other. Although no gender strategy was prepared at the onset of the Flagship Project in 2008, it has benefited from a Mid-Term Review in 2010 and a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in 2011. The Gender Mainstreaming Strategy involves more than merely increasing women's participation; it also adopts a rights-based gender equity approach to decision-making and budgeting. The scope of the project did not change as a result of this strategy and the project remained in line with the MoH Health system assessment.

Promising Practice #13: Community-based initiatives empower women. USAID (under its Flagship project) and the Ministry of Health are working in towns and villages in the West Bank to meet local health priorities using the innovative Champion Community Approach.⁸⁸ Through this approach, communities and health-care facilities are mobilized to work together for reform and service quality improvements. The approach begins with the selection of a community-based organization to work (with project support) in communities to implement the health promotion activities, coordinate with the community clinic, and take the lead role in engaging the community to become proactive in helping to improve the health services in their area. To promote transparency and participation, clinic-community boards are established, health assessments are conducted to identify gaps in each community, and patient satisfaction surveys are used to measure perceptions of health care services.⁸⁹ In particular, the Flagship project has encouraged this approach in rural communities where women came to the forefront as leaders and change agents, and altered the status quo in which women are typically passive recipients of services.

The mid-term evaluation for the USAID Flagship project (December 2010) identified the approach as something to be scaled-up (which is underway).⁹⁰ Furthermore, based on the information gathered during the gender assessment and project records, these community boards are being led by women. Women are becoming involved in decisions about community-based

⁸⁷ Baum, Fran (2007). IUHPE- Promotion and Education. Cracking the nut of health equity: top down and bottom up pressure for action on the social determinants of health. Vol.XIV, No 2.

⁸⁸ Flagship 2011. Snapshot: Engaging Communities in Health Reform. See flagshipproject.org.

⁸⁹ See Flagship weekly update for 19 May 2011 on its website.

⁹⁰ Global Health Technical Assistance Project 2010. USAID/West Bank & Gaza Health Sector Reform and Development Flagship Project: Mid-Term Evaluation. Accessible: http://www.lacs.ps/documentsShow.aspx?ATT_ID=4276

activities – their size, frequency, duration, and cost– including clinic board activities where they were key members. Highlights of the innovative approaches gathered during the gender assessment include:

- Integrating social media for fund raising (around 60% of the budget of the activities are generated by the community itself). Young community champions integrated social media utilization for fund raising. A young woman from Burqa who had diabetes created a Facebook page through which she sought and received funds for the CBOs' activities from diaspora Burqans.
- A woman political activist in the village of Sabastya was empowered to engage in health activism. Eventually she was the first woman to do a mammography scan in her village; many others followed.

Promising Practice #14: Empowering nurses under a National Emergency Preparedness Plan. The Flagship project helped hospitals prepare institutional emergency preparedness plans, each with the overall aim of providing for a national MoH emergency preparedness plan. The project worked with the MoH to design the facilities according to international standards, establish best-practice management procedures, and provide training and residency programs for respective health staff under the clinical and leadership development programs. Nurses, the majority of whom are women, are being trained and empowered to assume leading roles as the principal caregivers for patients.

Promising Practice #15: Disseminating gender integration and women in leadership roles. Flagship's short films, publication of success stories, and use of social media document the positive role that women can exercise in a wide-range of health-related project activities, in institutional as well as community settings. The materials show the initial challenges, processes, and results that enabled the development of women's leadership skills and their participation as change agents in the communities. The use of such media was particularly effective in documenting women's contributions in rural communities.

Promising Practice #16: Summer camps promote health, gender sensitivity, and cultural change. Flagship Summer Camps have changed health beliefs and practices among young girls and boys by jointly teaching them through fun behavioral change communication (BCC) messages. These were conveyed through different educational tools, games, and participatory approaches. More than 800 children, boys and girls (equally and jointly), attended the Healthy Lifestyle Summer Camp in the Nablus district alone. Key suggested that this experience can make a positive change in the health status and profile of coming generations.

Promising Practice #17: Inclusion of women in procurement. Flagship intentionally used procurement as a mechanism to enhance representation of women at the upper management level within the Ministry. This was done by putting in place a standardized procurement procedure and practice that fostered collective decision-making and gave voice to non-medical health professionals and departments in determining procurement needs and priorities setting. This approach promoted transparency and empowered women professionals in women-led departments within the MoH, such as the nursing department which was otherwise excluded from the procurement process.

Promising Practice #18: Bringing services closer to women . The Holy Family Hospital (HFH) accommodated women’s gendered constraints by offering services in the local communities. Women did not need their husbands’ consent to seek the service since their freedom of movement is greater within own community. Furthermore, the HFH health education contributes to women becoming more knowledgeable about their own body/health, increasing their ability to make informed health care decisions.

3.5 Assistance Objective # 5: Strengthened Democratic Practices and Performance of Selected Public-Sector Institutions and Non-State Actors

3.5.1 Strategic Priorities

Palestinian Authority. In order to achieve this PA vision for governance and democracy (see Box 4), the government supports a large number of programs for educating people to vote and exercise their rights. Consultative processes at various levels of government take place regularly, often in cooperation with NGOs, and UN and bilateral donor organizations. Opinion polls and consumer surveys are common practices. Radio, television, the print press and the Internet offer open debates that demonstrate considerable freedom of expression. Women, who have been extremely active historically, continue to be very engaged in the democratic process, and youth are encouraged to be engaged and take initiative on major societal issues.

Box 4: The PA Vision on Governance and Democracy

“The eventual Palestinian state will be founded on democratic and pluralistic principles and humanistic values. Its institutions will protect human rights, religious tolerance and the rule law promote gender equity, create an enabling environment for a free and open market economy, and serve the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, enabling all citizens to fulfill their potential.” *PRDP, 2008-2010, p. 4.*

The objectives of the PA’s NDP for 2011-2013 are to build up the capacity of Palestinian government institutions at the national and local level, and to increase the participation of citizens in decision-making. The NDP provides a vision of

“independence, sovereignty and open borders as essential ingredients for [the] sustainable social and economic development.”⁹¹ According to the NDP “citizens need to be sure they will be treated fairly and equally under the law.”⁹² The NDP aims to “promote more openness and accountability, strict compliance with the principle of separation of powers, and the peaceful transfer of governing authority through free and fair elections.”⁹³

USAID/WBG. The Mission supports the development of institutions conducive to a future independent, accountable, and transparent Palestinian state by promoting the rule of law, enhancing respect for human rights, and increasing civic engagement. These measures aim collectively to improve the capacity of the PA to meet constituents' needs, communicate effectively with local governments and NGOs, and thereby enhance its stature and legitimacy as a governing body.

⁹¹ NDP 2011, p. 6.

⁹² Ibid., p. 10.

⁹³ Ibid.

The current results framework AO5 has four Intermediate Results:

- IR 1: PA institutions strengthened
- IR 2: Public sector service delivery improved
- IR 3: Non-state mechanisms for government accountability and transparency enhanced
- IR 4: Channels for peace increased

3.5.2 Gender Issues in Governance

Future DG programming will require a clear gender integration approach. The overview of the democracy and governance context as it relates to gender highlights that gender equality in the political sector continues to lag (as it does in many countries). Since the political process of elections in the context of West Bank and Gaza is complex, the following narrative highlights two gender issues that may be able to be addressed on a technical level.

Hiring practices and wages in the civil service continue to discriminate against women.

While the PA and MoWA have made significant efforts to integrate gender into planning, budgeting, and human resource policies, according to the World Bank's Women, Business and the Law database, there are no laws that mandate nondiscrimination in hiring practices.⁹⁴ Thus, most women interviewed in focus groups or individually said they feel as if they are "left behind."⁹⁵ They are offered low entry level positions despite good qualifications, and their salary progression is slower than that of their male colleagues. Practices vary across ministries, often in response to the political will of high-ranking officials. In addition, access to promotion opportunities can be impeded by such things as required prolonged maternity leave.

Some government ministries continue to resist gender integration. While the official policy of the PA is for gender equality, the application of the policy is inconsistent across institutions. In Gaza, challenges are more systematic as the overall political, economic and social situation does not allow for meaningful achievements in terms of gender equality in government institutions since they are controlled by a Hamas-led de facto authority.

3.5.3 Promising Practices

Despite the lack of gender strategies in the DG programs, quite a number of gender-sensitive approaches have been adopted. For example, the Palestinian Justice Enhancement Program (PJEP) document mandates that "*gender issues are identified for each component activity and interventions developed that have a positive impact on women and men.*"⁹⁶ The Civic Participation Program (CPP), Local Democratic Reform (LDR) program, and Civic Engagement Project (CEP) have involved women in leadership training, supported the construction of women's centers in various localities, and specifically targeted women and girls in the 'people-to-people' program Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM) projects. The following are examples of achievements that were identified during the field research:

⁹⁴ World Bank 2012. Women, Business and the Law. See <http://wbl.worldbank.org/data/exploreconomies/west-bank-and-gaza/2011#getting-a-job>.

⁹⁵ The Gender Assessment Team conducted a focus group during its field assessment.

⁹⁶ Chemonics International 2011. "Palestinian Justice Enhancement Program: Gender Integration Strategy," p. 4.

Promising Practice #19: Learning from experience. Two lessons can be drawn from existing activities, and are detailed in Box 5:

- *Integrating Gender: Applying a Gender Strategy model at the outset:* The PJEP, which began implementation in early 2011, is a good example of a project that reflects the strengthened mandate for gender integration. The contractor was asked to deliver an implementation plan including a gender integration strategy. As far as the assessment team could determine, this was the first time that USAID/WBG formally asked for a gender strategy from the onset of a project. The PJEP could serve as a model to be evaluated at a later stage to benefit other projects.
- *Engaging the MoWA throughout the design and implementation process:* Before the end of the Palestinian Authority Capacity Enhancement Project (PACE), an evaluation of its performance recommended the preparation of a gender strategy (which in fact was prepared two months before the conclusion of the project). Although late in the life of the project, the experience offers and opportunity for the future and provides USAID a basis for project design. Specifically, it suggests the benefit of including a representative of or input from MoWA in projects such as PACE to ensure gender integration and harmonization with the work of government.

Box 5: Gender Strategies in DG programming

Two projects – PJEP and PACE – had gender strategies prepared in 2011. The PJEP Gender Integration Strategy lists four avenues of opportunity:

- Gender-related issues that female judicial staff face within judicial institutions
- The handling of cases related to women by the judiciary
- Women's experiences with the court as users
- The delivery of justice to individual women who seek resolution of a dispute, protection of their rights, or justice for a gender-based crime committed against them

Each of these avenues is consistent with the PA's priorities for the judiciary according to several key strategies: the Strategic Plan for Judiciary 2010-2013, the Strategic Plan for Combating Violence Against Women, and the Gender Cross-Sector Strategy (the latter two developed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, MoWA). These strategies indicate the judiciary's role in protecting and realizing women's legal rights. The proposed changes to the Penal Law to impose punitive sentences on perpetrators of the honor killing of women and the move to exchange the old Personal Status Code to the new Unified Palestinian Family Law are two important examples of legislation that provide women further legal protection. The Ministry of Justice Gender Unit will play a crucial role in promulgating these laws as policy once they are enacted by the Palestinian Legislative Council.

The PACE gender strategy is less clear, but was designed to respond to one of the recommendations in its final evaluation, noting that gender must be incorporated in any subsequent effort. The strategy listed a number of recommendations including an increased interest in data and M&E. The M&E model proposed focuses on the following areas: sex-disaggregated data collection, gender sensitive indicators, and mainstreaming gender in the design of M&E tools and activities.

Promising Practice #20: LDR's Youth Shadow Local Councils (YSLCs): Changing Perceptions of Gender Roles. The YSLCs are designed to engage youth in local government and provide them with experience in democratic governance. YSLCs recommend activities to the local government units, help organize activities in the community such as clean-up days and tree

planting, and shadow the mayors and municipal councils. The YSLCs are a relatively advanced example of gender integration. For example, the voters for these councils are divided among males (62%) and females (38%). Females also comprised 39% of the administrative boards and 36% of the elected council members. While the quantitative indicators are important, qualitative indicators are more telling in this case. Some of the training for youth was focused on gender equality and women's rights. It was also reported by the project staff that young women in conservative communities were able to break social and cultural barriers and become active in public issues. One of the mayors reported that women on the YSLC overcame their fear to be more active.

4. INTEGRATING GENDER: RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND CONCLUSIONS

This section outlines an approach for the USAID/West Bank and Gaza to integrate gender equality results into a new framework.

The US foreign policy objectives that have guided the current USAID/WBG Results Framework focus on the achievement of a “negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, leading to the emergence of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side-by-side in peace and security.”⁹⁷ It is expected that these policy objectives also will guide the new strategy. Although these objectives have no specific gender reference, they call for the Mission to engage in activities to support the emergence of a democratic Palestinian state with strong and transparent institutions, capable of delivering efficient services to its population, and to strengthen the capabilities of all Palestinians to elect their government, to access and use their resources efficiently and productively, and to improve their living conditions.

The PA's vision of gender equity and equality is presented in its Basic Law and strategic documents, which were reviewed in the overview section. USAID/WBG is in a position to align its strategic objectives with the PA's Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy.

This section summarizes basic principles for gender integration, presents recommendations for an implementation plan, and proposes sector-specific recommendations for the strategic planning process. These recommendations focus on identifying sector activities that can promote gender equality in WBG through USAID programming.

4.1 Basic Principles

4.1.1 The Conceptualization of a “Gender Vision”

While a wide range of gender elements are included in the current program, gender integration has been construed primarily as tracking the number of male and female beneficiaries. To move beyond counting beneficiaries, gender integration begins with articulation of a clear gender equity goal to achieve equality and empowerment. A well-enunciated gender vision can enable the Mission to more effectively develop criteria and priorities for the selection of development

⁹⁷ USAID/WBG Results Framework.

objectives and activities. This vision can then be used as a reference to determine the gender-related aspects of these objectives for each project, as well as the output and outcome indicators.

4.1.2 Gender Alignment of Processes and Procedures

The GA team recommends the Mission establish a Mission-wide, sex-balanced, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Team that includes staff from each of the technical teams, the Program Office, and the procurement and communications staff (early members of the Team might include the individuals who worked with the GA team on the assessment). The team could meet on a regular basis to discuss progress/challenges/ideas for gender integration across the portfolio, and members would report back to their respective offices. The role of the Gender Focal Point (or Gender Advisor) should be recognized as an essential part of staff responsibilities, and evaluated and rewarded accordingly.

4.1.3 Communications

Internal and external communications are important to successfully align the Mission's gender vision, goals, development objectives, and procedures. All staff will need to be fully "on board," and the expectations on delivery, performance and accountability should be clearly understood. Likewise, USAID/WBG is encouraged to clearly communicate its commitment to gender equality to all government partners and to all existing or potential implementation partners. government and non-state actors (including donors), the consultation process for the strategy preparation with government and other stakeholders may provide the right opportunity to refine the alignment of the USAID gender vision with the PA objectives. For implementation partners, the procurement process offers appropriate opportunities. For beneficiaries and other contributors to program implementation, needs assessments and town-hall invitations could be used to strengthen alignment between the Mission's objectives and the aspirations of the Palestinian people. Systematic communications about project results and knowledge sharing will contribute to sustainable success.

4.1.4 Focus, Selectivity, Flexibility, and Innovation

The challenge of effective implementation lies in flexibility. Picking 'low hanging fruit' frequently offers good results that are easy to demonstrate/document. For instance, the Mission reviewed the SOW for an education project and incorporated infrastructure activities, obtaining the necessary construction permits for sewage systems, to the benefit of thousands of women, men and children. Conversely, it is widely understood that more difficult issues such as checkpoints, require perseverance and extended commitment.

Finally, innovation is always needed to continue improving the design of activities. One of the challenges is to recognize the risk associated with innovation, including the risk of failure. Some focus groups during the fieldwork expressed an aversion to risk-taking, given the political and socio-economic context. For example, a young woman saw the idea of borrowing from a bank to start up a business as risking life-long indebtedness. USAID-funded programs could include measures to accompany risk-taking on entrepreneurial innovation to foster behavioral change.

4.1.5 Monitoring Results and Evaluating Impacts

Beyond the GEO-MIS tracking system, data issues – lack of data, inconsistent data etc. – came up time and again during the assessment. Ensuring that baseline surveys are carried out at the onset of activity, and collecting sex-disaggregated indicator data are key to the Mission’s measurement of the gender results and impacts of its programs. Periodic documentation of results and impacts during implementation will also be needed to monitor the alignment of the Mission program with the PA and USG strategies, and the Millennium Development Goals.

4.2 General Actions for the Mission

The gender gaps and promising practices identified during the gender analysis suggest several cross-cutting or general actions that the Mission can take to promote gender equality and improve results of its interventions.

Recommendation #1: Identify opportunities to support Ministerial Gender Units.

Gender units (formerly named women’s units) were established in “24 ministries and governmental institutions shortly after their establishment.”⁹⁸ According to the National Gender Strategy for 2011-2013, the gender units are required to begin monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving gender mainstreaming in their respective ministries and report to MoWA. As outlined in the strategy (page 32) the main areas of challenge (need) are:

1. Some ministries “lack of commitment to implement [gender unit] decisions.”
2. Lack of an “adequate number of qualified staff.”
3. “Inadequate budget allocations.”
4. Exclusion, at times, of gender unit staff from participation in planning and budgeting.
5. “Low level of coordination and cooperation between gender units and the other directorates and units within their respective ministries.”
6. Incomplete and “comprehensive sex-disaggregated database” that is up to date in all Ministries.

Not all of these challenges can necessarily be addressed by USAID. However, there are actions that can be taken at the policy-level as well as through projects. These include:

- Clarify the opportunities to promote gender equality and equity when beginning the negotiations and design with PA.
- Provide customized gender training for high-level public officials to help achieve this objective.
- Ensure that all work with PA ministries takes the role of gender units into consideration.
- Build the capacity and skills of MoWA, gender units and administrative, planning and executive personnel in gender mainstreaming. Ensure the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data.
- Include a review of human resource policies and procedures across ministries to document practices and inform policy makers as well as potential entrants into the

⁹⁸ Ministry of Women’s Affairs-UN Women. Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy: Promoting Gender Equality and Equity, 2011-2013, p. 32.

civil service. This might also help define a recourse system, mediation services, and sanctions for discriminatory measures.

Recommendation #2: Continue strengthening the integration of gender into assistance and acquisitions.

The Mission's contracting and grant making practices should continue to follow (and where appropriate) exceed relevant Agency guidance on gender. For example, the texts elaborated for the INP II implementation contract and for the Request for Application (RFA) under the LGI program are already well advanced. Some improvements may be needed for a clearer definition of reporting indicators in the implementation contract, as well as impact indicators and methodology for the RFAs. With minor enhancements, such as a requirement for gender equity in employment and internship programs, these documents can be the benchmark for all other infrastructure contracts and RFAs.

Recommended actions include:

- Identify gender training refreshers for procurement/contracting staff and technical staff.
- Identify clear expectations concerning gender equity in all bidding documents, including assigning evaluation points for criteria such as demonstrated experience in managing gender-sensitive projects, etc.
- Establish processes for reviewing draft bidding documents and proposals through a gender lens; a SOW that does not address gender adequately should be sent back by the Contracting Officer (CO) with the appropriate questions.
- Include gender modules in all bidding conferences and training to underscore the importance of gender, clarify the applicable criteria, and establish the relevant tools for managing diverse workforces.

Recommendation #3: Support regular staff training (with partners as appropriate).

During the fieldwork, the GA team delivered two short trainings. The first targeted management and senior staff and focused on USAID gender policy and operational guidelines; the second was open to all staff and focused on gender integration in projects. A follow-up training was conducted in May 2012, and included USAID/WBG managers and senior staff, as well as other Mission staff. Future efforts may consider integrating partners. Periodic refresher courses are recommended as new staff comes on board and policies change.

Recommendation #4: Strengthen monitoring of gender results across the portfolio and evaluate promising gender practices.

There are several dimensions to monitoring and evaluation.

- *Continue Ongoing monitoring of Mission Programs:* Require that implementing partners report beneficiaries into the Geo-MIS system, segregated by sex and different age groups. The Mission requests this information at present, and it is very important that this requirement be continued.
- *Monitoring future Mission Programs:* Equally important is the need to develop a new results framework that includes gender equality and equity goals in West Bank and Gaza that are not limited to sex-disaggregated data. The Mission should ensure that each project has one outcome-level gender indicator. Furthermore, it is recommended that

each sector work with the relevant PA agency/office to integrate gender into their monitoring.

- *Regularize gender monitoring in West Bank and Gaza.* By working with the PA and its implementing partners, USAID can contribute to the advancement of gender indicators in West Bank and Gaza. Illustrative examples by sector include:

Economic Growth. Monitoring the development of the labor market in terms of sex disaggregated statistics and the elimination of discriminatory practices is essential to inform the results and impacts of activities and future programs. For this to occur, three actions are required:

- Develop protocols with PCBS, which is well equipped to collect data and undertake periodic surveys and relevant PA ministries;
- Coordinate closely with other donors that have a mandate to integrate gender equality in labor market development, such as the European Union, the IMF, UN agencies, and the World Bank/IFC; and
- Analyze gender results and widely disseminate the results both in the West Bank and Gaza, with international investors and in potential export markets.⁹⁹

Education. MSN and PFDP executed two impressive well-designed national level surveys. Although sex-disaggregated data were collected, there are additional opportunities to expand the analysis of these data. This needs to be done in order to garner gender-related insights from the surveys. The remaining phase of the MSN survey should apply gender analysis from the outset.

Democracy and Governance: Monitor and evaluate the progress of PJEP and PACE's gender strategies, learning from them and building on them for other USAID/WBG interventions.

Recommendation #5: Reinforce promising practices and disseminate results across sectors.

The gender analysis identified several promising practices in each AO. The next step is to establish a systematic approach to evaluating and disseminating these practices (per Recommendation #4). In addition, there are several promising approaches that have emerged that when evaluated should specifically include gender analysis and the gender dimensions. As appropriate these approaches can then be shared across sectors.

- **ESAF Model of grants to young people.** The model has been relatively inclusive. Improvements could ensure that strategic objectives are addressed, and resulting benefits would include income generation and fortification of existing framework, talents, competencies, and networks.
- **Grants to businesses.** As recommended by the implementing partner under the ICI Palestinian Entrepreneurship/Business Partnership, grants could include set-asides to reach

⁹⁹ IFC's "Doing Business" report does not mainstream gender in the indicators, and business practices which may be are unfavorable to women are not 'penalized' as a result, nor are good gender-equality practices rewarded. Source: EDRM. February 2011.

women-owned businesses. These grants would strengthen the position of businesswomen to join the pool of advisers for WTO negotiations, expand gender-equitable employment, expand exports and explore new market and export opportunities, and increase foreign exchange earnings.

- **Internships.** A lesson from the INP I program is that there is benefit in using common design features, administrative processes, implementation, and monitoring schemes across similar programs. For instance, one of the important aspects is the monitoring of interns upon the completion of their internships, whether they will pursue higher studies or a career in the field of their internship. For higher education graduates, it would be important to document their entry into the job market, the time spent looking for a job, and whether there are gender gaps in professional placements or salary levels. Surveys of the interns a few years later would generate additional insights for universities and potential employers.
- **Systematic employment of people with disabilities.** Again, the INP I program has proven very successful for people with disabilities, an experience that could be extended to other USAID programs. Building in gender criteria will ensure that women with disabilities are not left behind.

Recommendation #6: Further coordinate with national and international organizations.

As there are many international and national actors working in West Bank and Gaza, it is especially important to synchronize future gender work with other organizations. For example, the MoWA leads the efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and is thus a strong partner for this type of work. The MoWA coordinates with UN Women and other international organizations as well as civil society organizations. The Local Aid Coordination Secretariat (LACS) supports local aid coordination in many fields; donors are now interested in systematically integrating gender in the LACS's work. One sector in which to begin coordination on gender integration is the water and sanitation sector, where USAID has had some successes in its own activities, and thus can share these lessons. Although the Local Aid Coordination Secretariat for West Bank and Gaza (LACS) has not yet mainstreamed gender, this is a potential agenda item for the LACS Water and Sanitation Sector Working Group.

4.3 Recommendations for the strategy development process

The situation of the West Bank and Gaza is unique and complex. It is characterized by a long tradition of women's engagement in the political life and aspirations to modernity and gender equality, against a backdrop of a male-dominated social structure and culture. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and political divisions are constraints that contribute to the further breakdown in established gender relations and the retreat to conservative social behaviors. In spite of major strides and commitment to gender equity, meaningful gender gaps persist.

The PA has demonstrated its intention to work toward gender equality and keep the momentum on gender equity through its recently adopted Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy. The PA's gender strategy provides a solid reference for the USAID/WBG to develop its own gender vision for the coming five-years.

The Mission has developed a strong program that already addresses many of the gender issues identified. A number of good practices exist on which the Mission can capitalize. The Mission

staff is already very gender sensitive, knowledgeable, and committed to addressing gender issues. In this context, the integration of gender equality into the Development Objectives for the forthcoming strategy may hinge on two key considerations:

1. In what areas can the Mission have the greatest gender equality impact while helping to achieve the US political and development objectives as well as the PA objectives?
2. Given its leverage in the geo-political and socio-economic spheres, how can the Mission contribute to resolving the main gender issues?

The present analysis (presented in the same order as the AOs in Section 3) suggests that at the strategic-level of the development objective USAID/WBG focus can strengthen gender integration and its results by setting objectives to:

- Increase equitable access to, and development of, infrastructure
- Support inclusive economic growth
- Improve access to quality health service and education for men, women, boys, and girls
- Promote gender equity in decision-making and support vulnerable populations

4.3.1 Inclusive Economic Growth

USAID/WBG, which has supported private sector development since 1994, has a comparative advantage in promoting the development of a labor market that offers equitable access for women and men to job growth of a private sector-led economy.

For its new programming, the Mission can assess gender barriers and opportunities across the whole value chain, from adaptation of education to the labor market (from high-school through technical and higher level training and education), to alleviating constraints to business development, including the legal framework, ensuring the appropriate skill sets are available, facilitating trade for the movement of goods and people, and providing access to market information and financial intermediation. USAID/WBG can exercise its leverage not only in high growth and export-oriented sectors (e.g., stone and marble, ICT, furniture manufacturing), but also in high employment potential sectors such as agriculture and agro-business, garments and textile, furniture, and construction where Palestinian women and men have well demonstrated skills. Focusing on the agricultural sector would provide an opportunity to address gender-equitable access to land. Furthermore, including tourism and the development of ICT (to bring in jobs outsourced from other countries) provides opportunities to promote women's employment in engineering design, interior design, and furniture design, which, thanks to ICT, can be developed as home-based businesses.

As outlined above, overall labor force participation of both men and women in West Bank and Gaza is low. By including female empowerment in an economic growth development objective, the Mission will strengthen its overall results. There are several sources of data that the Mission will be able to utilize to conduct regular gender analyses related to gaps in female economic empowerment. These include:

- PCBS Labor Surveys (quarterly) that include the proportion of women, men, and youth that participate in the labor force and disaggregate unemployment by sex.

- Business Monitoring Reports: IFC-Doing Business (with USAID's BizCLIR and other initiatives); Women Business and the Law.
- UN Women Monitoring Reports that include tracking of employment, unemployment, and gender-based violence.
- Periodic Business Surveys by PCBS, academia, research centers, Chamber of Commerce and trade associations
- Financial institutions loan records to monitor distribution of loans (quantity and size).

As the Mission develops the new strategy, this report recommends that the Mission utilize the above sources of information to develop a two-pronged approach to provide sector development that reduces barriers to female economic opportunities.

Recommendation # 1 (Economic Growth): Expand opportunities for women to participate in the labor market.

Reducing gaps in labor market access for women and youth can lead to better market efficiency and improve their ability to participate equally in private sector development. Increased participation of women in all sectors is one of the solutions to capitalize on women's education and to grow the job market, particularly in export-oriented activities.

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- (Standard F) Proportion of female and youth participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment).

Some entry points to address gender gaps in labor force participation include:

- Affirmatively recruiting women in training activities developed as part of a workforce development activity (see education sector discussion).
- Reviewing the current labor law and secondary legislation to find opportunities for the government to provide more incentives for part-time employment and to encourage greater participation of women in the formal sector. This may include childcare facilities at or near the work place for employees in both the public and the private sectors.
- Reviewing the current provisions of the law that deal with teen and youth employment to provide a suitable mechanism to creative incentives for increased students' employment. This is an effort that could be taken jointly by the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Education.
- Continuing to provide gender-equitable apprenticeship support for the employment of youth and young graduates. The current apprenticeship programs provided by different donors are short-term (three months or less); they do not allow the apprentice to accumulate skills, and do not give the employer enough time to evaluate an apprentice's potential for continued employment after the support ends.
- Working with private sector employers to identify opportunities to promote gender equity in employment regardless of their kin ties.
- Introducing new work methods and technologies in some of the traditional male-dominated sectors (e.g., marble and stone, furniture, and construction) that will require higher-level and different skill sets and provide new employment opportunities for women in these sectors (e.g., interior design, product and packaging design, consulting services).

- Helping establish a systematic complaint mechanism at the Ministry of Labor to receive complaints on violations of labor rights stipulated in the Labor Law with special focus on women's rights.
- Engaging in policy dialogue with the PA and employers to expand child care and other types of services that support female labor force participation.

Recommendation #2 (Economic Growth): Expand opportunities for women entrepreneurs through improving the enabling environment for business creation and access to assets, inputs, and product markets for women-owned businesses.

Business Enabling Environment. While technical assistance to facilitate business creation should support female- and male-owned business equally, women face additional barriers for which specific types of interventions may be considered. These include:

- Provide market counseling and access to information on business opportunities
- Promote the increased participation of women in business and trade associations at the decision-making levels.
- In the agricultural sector (agribusiness), continue providing financial and technical training to women working in and/or owning agricultural businesses to start small projects similar to what was provided by the ESAF project in Gaza through CARE International and Save the Children while ensuring equitable access to such services by both men and women.

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- (Standard F) Proportion of females who reported increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG-supported training/program (Outcome)
- Proportion of land and other fixed assets registered in women's and youth's names
- Proportion of credit given to female entrepreneurs
- No. of days it takes to open a business (disaggregated by sex and age of owner)
- Proportion of women-owned businesses in domestic and international trade negotiations
- Level of exports (goods and services) of women-owned businesses

Access to Assets and Inputs. There are several entry points to help redress some of the gender gaps in women's access to assets and inputs. They include:

- Incorporating a gender analysis of the legal framework and judiciary system in existing programs to identify key bottlenecks, and coordinating with organizations such as the World Bank/IFC to provide technical assistance to prepare the needed amendments to the laws and regulations.
- Facilitating entry of women-owned enterprises from the informal to the formal sector. Some organizations (e.g., PalTrade, ASALA) are advocating for a reduction of registration costs to \$1,000. This work needs to continue to differentiate registration cost between micro/small business and medium/large business.

4.3.2 Increase equitable access to, and development of, infrastructure

Given the difficulties to obtain permits, it is suggested here that USAID/WBG consider giving priority to water for irrigation, sanitation in the West Bank, and transport and trade facilities in both West Bank and Gaza.

Recommendation #3 (Infrastructure): Expand the participation of women in decision-making related to infrastructure.

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- To be developed (see narrative)

Barriers to women's participation in the infrastructure sector include skills preparation (see below) as well as obstacles that disadvantage women. There are several entry points to expand the participation of women in decision-making.

Adopt a comprehensive approach to women's participation in the infrastructure sectors.

This would include:

- Development of codes of conduct and training, including policies against sexual harassment in the workplace, in mixed labor force management for private enterprises, in partnership with chambers of commerce and/or professional associations;
- Incentives for women to start their own infrastructure businesses through set-asides in local procurement for goods and services, and training to start their own infrastructure export-services; and
- Public recognition (through awards and publicity both domestically and internationally) of women and men who advance the gender equity agenda in the infrastructure sectors in the West Bank and Gaza.

To assist in the monitoring of gender integration, USAID/WBG can consider the following actions for existing projects:

- Develop customized indicators to track how infrastructure projects are reducing gender gaps;
- Use gender indicators and sex-disaggregated data to analyze changes in gender gaps, women's empowerment, and community assessment of gender equality in infrastructure projects; and
- Conduct periodic, participatory, community satisfaction surveys as inputs to updates of gender sensitive needs assessments.

Recommendation #4 (Infrastructure): Reduce gender gaps for skills development in the infrastructure sector.

To fully benefit from experiences to date, the following could be done:

- Conduct sensitization on non-traditional infrastructure professions besides engineering and architecture for high-school students, with the possibility of providing summer internships in infrastructure companies (water, transport, energy, telecoms, etc);
- Establish a minimum target for female participation in internship programs for TVET and university students in infrastructure companies during their studies;
- Review the design of the various internship and fellowship programs, and identify the best elements of success to be retained as the benchmark elements: advertising with clarity on gender equality, targets for women's participation, two-phase training (soft-skills, fieldwork), mentoring, trainee self-and supervised monitoring, feedback, job placement monitoring (type of job and salaries) upon graduation, to ensure gender equity throughout the value chain;
- Provide feedback to universities/schools on the gender specific initial levels of knowledge and competencies of the trainees so that they can adjust their curricula and training methods to a) appreciate the different knowledge and skills of men and women, and b) meet the learning and skill needs of male and female students to meet the needs of the job market;

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- Proportion of women/men by profession by age.

- Develop a feedback system with enterprises/institutions on subsequent job placement, in order to adjust as needed the quality of the internship and to the specific needs of women and men;
- Identify systematic opportunities for women and men with disabilities, expanding beyond the types of disabilities included to-date, and as feasible; and
- Explore, with the relevant ministries and local governments responsible for infrastructure maintenance, the possibility of developing a maintenance program targeting women and youth businesses.

**Recommendation #5 (Infrastructure):
Expand access to infrastructure for women**

The entry-points to expand women's access to infrastructure:

- Train women farmers in water use optimization.
- Utilize Information, Communication and Technology (given mobility obstacles, innovative means to expand access to health services for both men and women is a good strategy) to:
 - Support hospitals and clinics that benefit from telemedicine, including from Israel supported (thereby removing a significant barrier to access for women); and
 - Increase Internet access in schools to access teaching materials and virtual libraries supported.

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- (Standard F) Proportion of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)
- Number of permits for land use and construction or rural and water infrastructure (recognizing that USAID has no control over this but can facilitate process)
- Levels of availability of water, rural roads, and agricultural storage/processing infrastructure
- Proportion of women trained in water and land use optimization

Recommendation #6 (Infrastructure): Develop capacity of the PA and the private sector to conduct gender-based socio-economic assessments and spatial planning.

Infrastructure is an area which requires very close coordination with local governments, technical ministries and other donors, both to exercise leverage and avoid duplication of effort. This calls for comprehensive spatial planning.

There are several entry points, for example:

- Supporting through affirmative action an increase in the number of women and youth specialized in historical and cultural preservation hired for infrastructure project; and
- Participation of women and youth in infrastructure market promoted by outreach to these groups and, as appropriate, set-aside programs.

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- Priorities established for infrastructure investments that promote gender equality

4.3.3 Improve access to quality health services and education

Access to quality health services and education remains a challenge in WBG. Rising rates of child malnutrition, poorly attended people with disabilities, and death rates from non-communicable (and treatable) diseases are costly to society and add to women's burden for family care.

In the education sector, USAID Education Strategy includes three goals (improving reading skills, workforce development, and access to education in crisis and conflict). Utilizing the gender analysis of the gaps in the education system in West Bank and Gaza, a priority area of intervention is to strengthen workforce development programming by including a gender approach.¹⁰⁰

There are several sources of data that the Mission can utilize to conduct regular gender analyses of gaps in human development service. These include:

- PCBS labor statistics,
- Health Ministry statistics,
- UNICEF and WHO monitoring reports, and
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CPRD)/International Coalition for the Disabled (ICD) monitoring reports.

Recommendation #7 (Health): Develop an intermediate result to improve health services for men, women, boys, and girls.

To address the gender gaps identified in Section 3 the following areas of activity might be included in a prospective IR.

Continue to support health sector reform, including preventative health care, with a balanced focus on women’s and men’s health issues.

More focus is needed to promote healthy behaviors among both women and men. This should include increasing awareness of early diagnosis and treatment, and health education and information on the risks associated with early marriage, high fertility, and other reproductive health related issues. The issue of stress-related mental health diagnosis and treatment, and its association with gender-based violence, also needs to be addressed.

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- Number of preventative consultations, disaggregated by sex of patient and type of service
- Number of specialized consultations, disaggregated by sex and type
- % of children receiving post natal care disaggregated by sex
- Wastage and stunting rates of children, disaggregated by sex
- Number of people with disabilities served, disaggregated by sex and age

Include a gender approach to nutrition as a key element of the health sector. Where possible, address nutrition as an opportunity to reduce the incidence of chronic illnesses, anemia among women, and wastage and stunting among young children.

Improve women’s access to MoH decision-making structures through clearly specified support for the Gender Unit and Directorate of Women Health and Development.

This requires affirmative action to support the inclusion of women’s professions such as nursing and midwifery through carefully identified entry points, for example, through the quality of care

¹⁰⁰ There is no gender gap in reading achievement; therefore according to the USAID Education strategy the area of intervention is related to workforce development for this context.

thematic group. Close monitoring of women's career positions in MoH decision-making hierarchy is needed, as well as the gender balance of overall staffing.

Sensitize male health sector decision makers on gender equality and on the need to increase women's leadership roles. Instruments and tools are needed to identify and address micro-political practices in the MoH institutional culture that exclude women. These could include gender integration practices in men's and women's professional performance reviews, as well as transparency and good governance instruments.

Recommendation #8 (Education): Develop a workforce development intermediate result to address gender gaps in the labor market (linked to Recommendation #1)

There are three basic areas of intervention that could help reduce these gaps.

Strengthen and upgrade the higher education system to better respond to the labor market needs and research capacity with utmost gender sensitivity.

Policies in higher education need to be streamlined, including a curriculum review to upgrade content for market

responsiveness and increase graduates' ability to compete in the increasingly saturated job market. Higher education policies related to research could be strengthened, in order to build the capacity of Palestinian researchers. This would align with the recommendation of the National Undergraduate study PFDP completed in 2009 that research capacity in higher education be developed.

In higher education, scholarships have provided opportunities for new knowledge and teaching approaches. From a gender perspective, improvements to the short-term fellowship component would include encouraging women applicants by offering support for dependents, restructuring the grant from two intermittent semesters over two years to one post-doc academic year, and integrating a certification process upon completion. Such modifications would help career progression, and reduce stress on households and families when the mother/spouse is studying abroad.

Strengthen public-private partnerships in the education sector. There are two types of partnerships that can strengthen workforce development. The first includes NGOs working with Palestinian ministries. Program/projects design and planning need to be informed with gender analysis and more aligned with the National Gender Strategy and the strategy on education. Working with both public institutions and NGOs increases leverage, scope, and impact. A strengthened MoWA should remain a central partner alongside MoE in all education portfolio projects. The choice of partners depends on the nature and focus of the projects. For example, for an expanded version of Ruwwad for Youth that promotes youth leadership and employability potential public partners include MoWA, Ministry of Labor (MoL), MoYS, UNRWA, ILO (which have demonstrated gender sensitivity and accountability), as well as NGOs that demonstrate a commitment to gender equality. Such a coordinated approach would help

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- (Standard F) Proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG supported training/programming.
- Proportion of target population reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political opportunities.

overcome overlap and competition among institutions. Together with consultations with national stakeholders, it would also help build ownership and accountability for gender results.

The second type of partnership is with the private sector to provide internship opportunities. USAID/West Bank and Gaza has experience conducting this type of intervention, and can apply the lessons learned to ensure that both young women and young men benefit, and that internship opportunities are not based on gender stereotypes.

Support programming that seeks to increase the acceptance of women’s participation in the workforce. Cultural barriers remain strong with respect to women’s mobility (and access to work) especially when they are exposed to risks that directly affect their dignity. Other cultural barriers often prevail for lack of information on social situations (e.g., at the workplace, in schools, or in sports). Furthermore, the low rates of male participation in the labor force have had an impact on men (with the potential of adversely affecting women as a result of violence in the home). Some areas of activities might include:

- Strategies to share information on “safe” work or social opportunities for women and youth
- Activities that support for informal sector workers (outside and inside the home) and formalize at-home enterprises

4.3.4 Promote gender equity in decision-making and reduce gender-based risks and vulnerabilities

Lack of representation of women in decision-making is one of the main constraints to progress on gender equality, in both the private and public spheres. Development and enforcement of policies and laws to eliminate discrimination and gender-based violence will ease the barriers to women’s empowerment.

There are several sources of data that the Mission can utilize to conduct regular gender analyses related to gaps in participation and decision-making and gender-based risks and vulnerabilities. These include:

- PCBS Annual Reports on Civil Service Employment
- MoWA Annual Report
- CEDAW and NGO monitoring reports

**Recommendation #9 (Governance):
Develop an intermediate result to increase participation of women in policymaking bodies (legislative, ministerial, and civil society).**

Develop technical assistance activities to strengthen gender units in ministries

As discussed above, activities in each sector should identify opportunities to cooperate with and strengthen these units, which provide an institutional home for gender analysis in the relevant sector.

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- (Standard F) Proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG supported training/programming.
- Proportion of ministries with active (define) gender units
- Levels of participation in civil society organizations supported by USAID, disaggregated by sex and age

Continue to Reinforce the Role of Civil Society. Democracy and Governance are not restricted to government institutions. Civil society, schools, and media must be further empowered to continue to play a role in projects targeting government, such as PACE and PJEP. The integration of women in governmental and non-governmental institutions is promoted through advocacy, lobbying, and coalition building. It is also facilitated through proper media campaigns (Enhancing Palestinian Independent Media program). Legal and institutional reforms must be introduced (PJEP and PACE). Youth might play a significant role in raising awareness and bringing about community acceptance (LDR). Additional strategies can be identified during a democracy and governance assessment that includes increasing women's participation in civil society as an objective.

Recommendation #10 (Governance): Increase programmatic focus and consider developing an IR to reduce gender-based violence.

The US Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence globally identifies the inclusion of GBV in the strategic planning process as a means to sharpen program policies. At the project-level, specific areas of potential intervention include:

- Supporting legislative reforms related to gender-based violence
- Improving GBV case management by policy and courts with respect to family law
- Strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to lobby on behalf of women's empowerment, implementation of laws against GBV, and punishment for perpetrators of GBV.

Potential Gender-Related Indicator(s):

- (Standard F) Number of laws, policies or procedures drafted, proposed, or adopted with USG assistance designed to improve prevention of or response to sexual and gender violence.
- (Standard F) Percentage of target population that views GBV as less acceptable after participating in or being exposed to USG programming

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ANNEX 2: BASIC CONCEPTS

The following concepts consolidate USAID guidance and best practices. These definitions were developed under the Short-Term Technical Assistance and Training Task Order, and are included in the annex of all reports produced under the task order.

Sex and Gender

The terms "sex" and "gender" are often used interchangeably; however, in fact, they have different but related meanings.

Sex is a biological construct that defines males and females according to physical characteristics and reproductive capabilities. USAID policy calls for the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data (male vs. female) for individual-level indicators and targets. Gender and sex are not synonyms.

Gender is a social construct that refers to relations between and among the sexes, based on their relative roles. It encompasses the economic, political, and socio-cultural attributes, constraints, and opportunities associated with being male or female. As a social construct, gender varies across cultures, is dynamic and open to change over time. Because of the variations in gender across cultures and over time, gender roles should not be assumed but investigated. Note that "gender" is not interchangeable with "women" or "sex."

The definition for "sex" is, therefore, universal, while "gender" is a socially defined category that can change. This distinction is important since it means that gender differences and dynamics between men and women (and boys and girls) must be identified and analyzed since the way in which "masculinity" and "femininity" are expressed and understood differ among settings.

Gender Equality and Gender Equity

Gender equality and gender equity have different meanings but are related terms. Gender equality is a development goal; gender equity interventions are the means to achieve that goal. Gender equality is a broad concept and a development goal. It is achieved when men and women have equal rights, freedoms, conditions, and opportunities for realizing their full potential and for contributing to and benefiting from economic, social, cultural, and political development. Equality does not mean that women and men become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities, and opportunities do not depend on whether they are born male or female. It means society values men and women equally for their similarities and differences and the diverse roles they play. Gender equality is not a "women's issue" but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. It signifies the results of gender equity strategies and processes. Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on an equitable basis, or a "level playing field." Equity leads to equality.

Gender Analysis

Gender analysis is the systematic gathering and analysis of information to identify and understand the roles, divisions of labor, resources, constraints, needs, opportunities/capacities, and interests of men and women (and girls and boys) in a given context. Gender analysis is required by the ADS in the design of country strategic plans, activities/projects, and must be reflected in associated activity approval documents, SOWs and RFAs/RFPs.

Country Gender Analysis for Strategy Development

A forward-looking document that combines socio-economic and demographic analysis of the country from a gender perspective with an eye to the scope and aims of the anticipated Development Objectives (DOs) that the Mission plans to include in its strategy, which will guide its work during the next five years.

Gender Assessment

A gender assessment involves carrying out a review, from a gender perspective, of an organization's programs and its ability to monitor and respond to gender issues in both technical programming and institutional policies and practices. USAID Missions often carry out a gender assessment of their portfolio to determine whether gender issues are being effectively addressed in Mission-supported programs and projects. A gender assessment is a very flexible tool, based on the needs of the Mission, and may also include a gender analysis at the country level. If a gender analysis is included in a gender assessment, this meets the ADS requirements. If a gender assessment reviews the internal policies and practices of the operating unit (e.g., USAID Mission), this is very similar to a gender audit.

Gender Audit

A gender audit addresses not only gender in programming issues but also in the practices and policies of the Mission as a whole, such as human resource issues, budgeting, and management, to provide a comprehensive picture of gender relations at several levels within the organization. Findings from a gender assessment have been used, for example, to inform a country strategic plan or a Development Objective and/or develop a Mission Gender Plan of Action or a Mission Order on gender.

Gender Gaps

A gender gap represents the disproportionate difference between the sexes in attitudes and practices. A gender gap can exist in access to a particular productive resource (for example land), in the use of a resource (for example credit), or levels of participation (such as in government).

Gender Bias

Gender bias refers to unequal and/or unfair treatment based on attitudes and expectations of what is appropriate for a man or a women; this includes prejudice in actions (such as, sex discrimination in employment, promotions, pay, benefits, technical assistance, and trainings) and the allocation of resources (such as income, food, nutrition, health care, land ownership, and education).

Gender-Based Constraints

Gender-based constraints are factors that inhibit either men's or women's access to resources or opportunities of any type. They can be formal laws, attitudes, perceptions, values, or practices (cultural, institutional, political, or economic). Some examples include:

- Customary laws dictating that only men can own land is a constraint on agricultural production since it can prevent women from producing or marketing or obtaining credit.
- A law that prevents pregnant teenagers from attending school is a gender-based constraint since it disadvantages girls relative to boys in obtaining an education.
- An HIV/AIDS program that is located in an ante-natal clinic is a gender-based constraint if men are reluctant to get tested in this setting.

Gender Integration

Gender integration involves identifying and then addressing gender differences and inequalities during program and project planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. Since the roles and relations of power between men and women affect how an activity is implemented, it is essential that project and activity planners address these issues on an ongoing basis. USAID uses the term gender integration in planning and programming. Conducting a gender analysis and/or gender assessment is the first step for ensuring successful gender integration into programs and policies.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

At the operational plan level to attribute USAID funding, GBV includes activities or programs aimed at preventing and responding to GBV, which results in physical, sexual, and/or psychological harm to either women or men. GBV is considered to be mutually exclusive from the Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment—Primary and Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment Secondary key issues. Trafficking in Persons, which can be a form of gender-based violence, is reported under the Trafficking in Persons Key Issue, not Gender-Based Violence.

Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment-Primary

At the operational plan level to attribute USAID funding, Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment-Primary includes activities in which gender equality or women's empowerment is an explicit goal of the Implementing Mechanism (IM) and fundamental in the IM's design, targeted results, and impact.

Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment-Secondary

At the operational plan level to attribute USAID funding, Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment-Secondary encompasses activities within an IM in which gender equality or women's empowerment purposes, although important, are not among the principal reasons for undertaking the IM. To be considered in this sub-key issue, the Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment component must be integrated into key parts of the IM, explicitly associated with an Intermediate Result or sub-Intermediate Result in the program's Results Framework or where it is clear that females will be substantially engaged in program design, represented as participants in and benefit from the IM.

ANNEX 3: SCOPE OF WORK (SOW)

USAID/West Bank Gaza Statement of Work Gender Analysis, Assessment, and Training in the West Bank and Gaza

Draft 11/15/2011

Background

The U.S. Agency for International Development Mission to the West Bank and Gaza (WBG) is committed to the USAID Administrator's vision of gender equality and women's empowerment as critical elements of U.S. policy: "Strengthening human rights and fueling sustainable economic growth in developing countries both depend on empowering women and working toward gender equality. Eliminating hunger, mitigating the effects of global climate change, and drastically reducing maternal mortality relies on bolstering the role women play in their societies" (USAID Administrator's General Notice on Strengthening USAID's Gender Programming and Organizational Structure; April 25, 2011).

USAID policy makes a clear commitment to gender equality as an objective of development programs. USAID regulations require that operating units take gender into account in strategic planning, project/activity planning, procurement, and monitoring and evaluation. The Agency has defined a process for integration of attention to gender considerations through its programming. The process focuses on two primary questions: 1) *How will gender roles and relations affect program results?* and 2) *To what extent will men and women be affected differently by the anticipated results?*

In past years, a major objective of the WB assistance program has been building the capacity of the PA to build transparent, accountable, and effective public institutions that can deliver higher quality public services. The WBG program provides support to Democracy and Governance; Education Development; Health and Humanitarian Affairs; Private Enterprise; and Water Resources and Infrastructure. USAID programs focus on the development of corruption-free democratic governance and the rule-of-law; a functioning economy that can provide jobs for the Palestinian people and revenue for the Palestinian Authority (PA); and access to adequate water and sanitation and the provision of essential infrastructure.

The Mission's FY 2011 budget is \$400.4 million; \$54 million of which is committed to recovery programming and humanitarian assistance in Gaza. The Mission staff is comprised of 30 U.S. direct hires, 11 U.S. personal service contractors, and 106 Foreign Service nationals. Security considerations affect virtually all Mission operations and personnel. Travel to the West Bank is limited, requires a full security package, and allows for limited trips which are prioritized on a case-by-case basis. Direct-hire USG personnel are prohibited from traveling to Gaza.

Purpose

The purpose of this Statement of Work (SOW) is to define the parameters for a task order for short-term technical assistance from the USAID Office of Gender Equality and Women's

Empowerment (GenDev) in order to prepare to 1) analyze key gender issues that should inform the development of the Mission's overall strategy, 2) review and document how WBG's current program has already mainstreamed gender integration and identify opportunities to enhance its effectiveness in advancing gender as an integral element of ongoing and planned activities, 3) with Mission staff and implementing partners, identify strategic priorities from among those issues, and 4) improve the Mission's staff and implementing partners' capacity to implement Agency policy and comply with requirements on gender. The activities to be conducted under this SOW will enable the Mission to ensure that it implements the Agency's overarching policies on gender and also complies with more specific Automated Directives System (ADS) regulations.

Tasks and Deliverables

GenDev, with support from the Mission, will provide staff and consultants (the Team) to perform three principal tasks:

- 1) Produce a **Gender Sector Assessment** that reviews key gender issues, and constraints and opportunities for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the West Bank and Gaza;
- 2) Carry out a **Gender Integration Review** (aka Gender Analysis) that documents gender integration in ongoing WBG activities and provides specific recommendations for further integration with current and planned activities; and
- 3) Provide **Gender-Integration Training** to increase the capacity of WBG staff and partners to incorporate gender concerns in all aspects of program planning and implementation, support USAID gender policy, and comply with USAID gender regulations.

The Gender Sector Assessment is intended to document key factors affecting gender issues as well as the differences in roles of men and women in WBG, in the context of the Mission's Program Areas: 1) Governing Justly and Democratically; 2) Economic Growth; 3) Education; 4) Health and Humanitarian Affairs; 5) Water Resources and Infrastructure. Since the Analysis is intended to inform the Mission's overall strategy, which the Mission plans to finalized by mid-2012, it will be conducted at the macro-level, assessing socio-cultural, economic, health, demographic trends, and legal policies and practices in the West Bank and Gaza. The report will include a comparison of WBG's work on gender with that of other principal donors. Once the Team has identified strategic gender priorities with Mission and implementing partner staff, the Assessment will recommend critical entry points with illustrative activities and indicators that will inform the design of the Mission's overall strategy and results framework.

The Gender Integration Review will record and analyze WBG's efforts to integrate gender issues and identify opportunities to strengthen those efforts. This Analysis is a gender-focused evaluation of ongoing and planned activities. It should document work in current projects, highlight successes, identify new entry points for addressing gender issues in current projects, and suggest how the Mission might more effectively integrate gender throughout its portfolio. The Analysis should be structured around: 1) WBG's approach to mainstreaming gender in the context of Agency policy documents and ADS requirements and; 2) WBG's approach to gender equality and women's empowerment in active programs; 3) recommendations for how the Mission can deepen its work related to gender equality and women's empowerment through its

Mission-wide strategy. The final report should include analysis of gender integration in the approximately 25 projects currently being implemented.

The third deliverable is a set of Gender Integration Training sessions for the Mission's staff and partners to strengthen their capacity to contribute to the achievement of the Mission's gender-related goals and compliance with relevant regulations. Specifically, this will include a presentation on recent Agency policy statements and initiatives, an in-depth review of ADS regulations, and an opportunity to exchange best practices in gender integration. Training sessions will be held at the Mission in Tel Aviv with senior leadership and Contract/Agreement Officers' Representatives (CORs/AORs) and in Ramallah for implementing partners. The team will implement at least a one-day course for Mission staff and a separate course for partners that trains the attendees on integrating gender into programming, including an in-depth review of USAID policies and regulations, how to conduct gender analysis, criteria for successful gender integration, and how to document gender analyses and integration. The training will help participants align USAID activities with the ADS, including the incorporation of gender in project design and results frameworks, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Estimated Level of Effort

Note: *WBG defers to GenDev to determine the level of effort and the size and composition of the team.*

GenDev will lead implementation of all preparation, assessment/analysis activities, and final reporting under this SOW in close collaboration with the WBG Program and Project Development Office (PPDO).

The Team will prepare a workplan, which must be approved by the Mission. The workplan will allow for the Team to conduct research in advance of traveling to WBG. The Team will conduct interviews with key stakeholders including Mission senior staff, CORs/AORs, implementing partners, PA and local officials, a cross-section of civil society representatives, academics and other experts in the field. Training sessions with Mission staff will be held in Tel Aviv. Training sessions with partners will be held in Jerusalem and the West Bank, and in some cases Tel Aviv. The level of effort should allow for discussions of strategic priorities based on initial findings, and will be planned to produce the three principal deliverables. It is anticipated that GenDev will arrange a follow-up visit to conduct in-depth training designed to follow-up on the findings of the Assessment and Analysis. The second set of training activities will focus on applying the findings of these reports to the Mission's individual programs and activities, working with selected Mission staff and implementing partners.

During its time in the West Bank and Gaza, the Team will draw on its previous experience and knowledge of cross-sector gender assessment as well as its understanding of USAID regulations and policies to produce draft documents. The Team will provide an introductory briefing upon its arrival in WBG, the interviews mentioned in the previous paragraph, and a debrief to selected Mission staff prior to departure. The Team Leader is responsible for the final production of the documents and the presentation with recommendations. PPDO will provide guidance and support throughout the work period, including assisting with local logistics arrangements

(country clearances, travel requests, scheduling, etc.). The local consultants will draw on their technical and WBG-specific knowledge to contribute to the Assessment and Analysis.

In preparing its workplan, the Team must take into account the operating environment in the West Bank and Gaza and constraints associated with U.S. Government travel in the area. Fieldwork and site visits will be an important element of the Team's work. The Mission will assist with site selection and related logistics, although the team may choose to make arrangements for its own logistical and transportation support.

USG direct-hires can only travel in the West Bank in fully armored vehicles with security escorts arranged by Consulate General Jerusalem's Regional Security Office. Precise schedules must be approved in advance for all official travel in the West Bank. Unexpected delays can occur at crossing points between Israel and the West Bank and at checkpoints within the West Bank. Approximately fifty percent of Mission trips are canceled on short notice due to the limited availability of security details or prioritization of competing trips. The Team may choose to stay overnight in Tel Aviv when holding meetings at the Mission and in Jerusalem to meet with staff at Consulate General Jerusalem and to reduce travel time in and out of the West Bank. USG personnel are prohibited from traveling to Gaza.

In 2010, USAID committed more than \$77 million worth of programming in agriculture, food distributions, microfinance lending, medical equipment, cash for work programs, small-scale infrastructure improvements, psychosocial and economic recovery programs in Gaza. For 2011, USAID support is expected to be approximately \$54 million worth of recovery assistance including health, education, agriculture, sports, agricultural road rehabilitation, cash-for-work, water and sanitation improvements, and infrastructure activities. There are 16 USAID projects currently implementing activities in Gaza. Arrangements may be made for Foreign Service nationals and local or third-country national consultants to conduct meetings in Gaza, but USG direct-hires are not permitted to enter there.

Performance Period

The performance period begins on or about [XX], 2011 and ends no later than [XX], 2012. The onsite assessment will be conducted in the West Bank and Gaza for approximately three weeks, beginning on/about November 28, 2011. EGAT will also arrange for a second visit to provide more intensive training to Mission staff and partners, planned for March 2012. The following is an illustrative schedule for the assessment, to be developed by the Team in consultation with

WBG/PPDO:

Prior to traveling to Tel Aviv: Development of workplan, desk review of available project level documents (results frameworks, PMPs, quarterly reports, etc.) to identify current level and type of gender engagement.

Week 1: Interviews with Mission staff, interviews with partners and stakeholders - primarily in Tel Aviv;

Week 2: Site visits and meetings with USAID partners and stakeholders, training sessions for partners and stakeholders - primarily in Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza;

Week 3: Training for Mission staff on Agency gender policy and ADS regulations; follow-up with Assistance Objective Teams/partners; produce preliminary outlines with findings and recommendations; present debrief of assessment and recommendations to staff – primarily in Tel Aviv.

The following illustrative timeline describes the production of the Gender Assessment [during implementation this was updated to be Gender Analysis] and the Gender Integration Review to be submitted by the Team to the Mission:

- The Team will submit preliminary detailed outlines of the two documents, with tables of contents, synopsis of research, and summary of recommendations to PPDO upon completion of fieldwork.
- PPDO will provide comments on the preliminary outlines.
- The Team will provide the full drafts of the two documents to PPDO. Mission senior staff will review and provide comments.
- The Team will then submit the final draft to PPDO.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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