

Joint Strategic Framework

Palestine



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List of Abbreviations

AIDA	Association of International Development Agencies
BTC	Belgian Technical Cooperation (Belgian Development Agency)
CSO	Civil Society Organization
HR	Human Rights
IA	Institutional Actor
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
JCA	Joint Context Analysis
JSG	Joint Strategic Goal
JSF	Joint Strategic Framework
GRM	Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism
MoH	Ministry of Health
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NDP	National Development Plan
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RASIT	Royal Academy of Science International Trust
RRR	Reconstruction Relief and Rehabilitation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Introduction

This Joint Strategic Framework (JSF) Palestine is based on the Joint Context Analysis (JCA) Palestine, approved by the Minister of Development Cooperation, Mr. De Croo in December 2015. All items listed hereafter can be found in the JCA and are therefore not included in this JSF: context and stakeholders analysis (JCA chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6); analysis of risks related to the context, strategic goals and approaches (JCA chapter 9); identification of opportunities for complementarity and synergies between accredited organizations, including common partners (JCA chapter 10); description of the JCA-process (which is the base for this JSF), and in particular the elements to prove the active participation of accredited organizations and their local partners (JCA chapter 1). The participants have consulted the various strategy and policy papers during the JCA-process, including the official Belgian strategy paper for Palestine and the EU Roadmap on Civil Society for Palestine. The latter will be discussed with local partners in 2016.

9 CSOs/IAs have participated in this JSF. The list of participants can be found in Annex. The participants mainly used the methodology proposed by the umbrella bodies via the Manual, which was distributed on the 8th of February 2016. Broederlijk Delen took the lead in this process and was sub-lead for the themes of Education and Research; and Good Governance, Civil Society and Human Rights. G3W-M3M was sub-lead for Health and Oxfam Solidarity for Agriculture and Water; and Reconstruction, Relief and Rehabilitation. The process to determine the common goals consisted of: e-mail exchanges, exchanges between participants and their partners and a discussion and validation meeting on April 19th. Since the local partners were largely involved in the development of the JCA and in the ongoing development of the programs, there was no formal partner consultation organized at the level of the JSF but participating organizations were able to consult their partners in the elaboration of this JSF.

This JSF has taken into account the relevant comments from the JCA-assessment sheet. A consultation meeting with the involved organizations and DGD on March 16th resulted in new ideas for synergy and exchange of information with DGD and BTC.

The JCA for Palestine refers to the JCA Decent Work, as this theme is important for Palestine. The joint strategic framework for this theme is described in the JSF Decent Work. Palestine was integrated as one of the countries where CSOs/IAs will work towards the objectives of decent work. Agreements for complementarity and synergy between CSOs/IAs of the JSF Decent Work and CSOs/IAs participating in the JSF Palestine are included in chapter 3 of this JSF and the JSF Decent Work. In this sense they complement each other and need to be read together. They form one total strategic framework for Palestine.

Some CSOs/IAs active in this JSF are also conducting advocacy in Belgium. Their partners' activities therefore have an impact on advocacy efforts; as such they nourish and legitimize the activities in Belgium.

Although realized under time pressure, the JSF exercise has enabled further action between CSOs/IAs building on the JCA. The end result is a clear set of common goals and approaches and a range of commitments with regard to synergy and complementarity.

The CSOs/IAs who are active in Palestine share the same understanding on the basic parameters of the conflict (as elaborated extensively in the JCA). We strive for a just peace in Palestine and Israel, based on international humanitarian law and human rights. On the ground we support partners in order to strengthen the resilience of the civilian population and to meet their basic needs and rights. Some CSOs/IAs also support Israeli partners who are active in the field of human rights and education. They do advocacy to create change in Israel. Furthermore, Belgian CSOs/IAs increasingly focus on advocacy (media work, campaigning and lobby) in Belgium and the EU as we want to strengthen the awareness on this protracted conflict. At the institutional level, we are pleading for a more coherent approach with regard to Israel, and insist that the deepening and strengthening of relations with Israel should be conditional to its respect for international law. We also urge the donor community to mitigate the devastating consequences of the contradictions between the different Palestinian political factions and encourage reconciliation, in order to reverse the ongoing de-development.

It is important to note that the legal framework was not published at the launch of the JSF-process (February 8) or today (April 20).

2. Joint Strategic Goals

2.1 Description of the JSGs

JSG 1 Education and research	Improve and ensure inclusive access to quality education and training, promote lifelong learning opportunities, improve research and stimulate innovation, in a safe environment, in order to contribute to development.	
Approach (contribution)		CSOs/IAs
1A	Improve the quality and provision of higher education and research practices of (higher) education institutions through capacity building and partnerships in a gender sensitive and environmentally sustainable way.	VLIR-UOS
1B	Promote extension and outreach of academic research.	VLIR-UOS, Ixelles
1C	Strengthen individual capacities through relative gender-balanced scholarship attribution and exchange programs for students and teachers.	VLIR-UOS, AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles
1D	Invest in extracurricular activities that lead to the development of social, creative and cognitive skills and empower children, youth and women in an inclusive, gender sensitive and environmentally sustainable way.	BD, AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles, SolSoc
1E	Counter radicalization in Palestinian and Israeli society by enhanced support in the field of lifelong learning, specifically trauma processing and personal development (Palestine), and by sensitization and information provision (both Palestine and Israel) in a gender sensitive and environmentally sustainable way.	BD, AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles
1F	Strengthen capacities of local stakeholders (authorities, communities, CSOs, NGO's...) to improve access, especially to vulnerable groups (girls, youth, disabled...) to adequate education, training and socio-professional insertion services, in an environmentally sustainable way.	APEFE, AADC
1G	Empower local stakeholders to advocate and mobilize for better inclusion of vulnerable groups (girls, youth, disabled...) in education and employment.	APEFE, AADC, Ixelles, AVCB/UVCW
1H	Promote exchange of knowledge among local actors, particularly by favoring digital technology in a gender sensitive and environmentally sustainable way.	APEFE, AADC, SolSoc
1I	Improve the coaching of youth by youth on their socio-economic rights, based on the 'learning by doing' approach, to promote their participation in decision-making processes both on local and national levels.	SolSoc
1J	Raise awareness of primary and secondary school actors on environmental and water issues.	AADC, Ixelles, AVCB/UVCW

JSG 2 Health	Increase the realization of the right to health of Palestinians.	
Approach (contribution)		CSOs/IAs
2A	Increase the attention for social determinants of health, especially those related to conflict and occupation, throughout the Palestinian health system.	GW3-M3M
2B	Build capacity of local stakeholders (communities, health providers) to improve access of all citizens, especially vulnerable groups (girls, disabled), to appropriate health care and rehabilitation services and to address social determinants of health, in an environmentally sustainable way.	G3W-M3M, APEFE, AADC
2C	Empower/strengthen local stakeholders to advocate and mobilize for increased inclusiveness and the right to health for all.	G3W-M3M, APEFE, AADC
2D	Promote coordination and exchange of knowledge among local, national and international stakeholders, by favoring digital technology amongst others.	G3W-M3M, APEFE, AADC

JSG 3 Good Governance, Civil Society and Human Rights	Improve Palestinians' access to rights by a more unified and a strengthened civil society's ability to influence change on the national and international level, through a rights-based agenda.	
Approach (contribution)		CSOs/IAs
3A	Strengthen local CSOs and their public awareness raising on international humanitarian law, human rights and democracy.	BD, APEFE, AADC, AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles, G3W-M3M, OxfamSol
3B	Establish campaigns and strengthen advocacy efforts to promote good governance based on a rights-based approach, reinforce the direct dialogue with governmental bodies (in order to improve their practices) and strengthen capacities of local authorities.	BD, AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles, SolSoc, OxfamSol
3C	Strengthen local CSOs to increase their advocacy efforts towards the European institutions and member states, promoting respect for international law and mitigating the influence of pro-Israel voices.	BD, G3W-M3M, OxfamSol
3D	Strengthen and unify the cooperation between local CSOs and between local CSOs and international CSOs with expertise in the field of advocacy, legal assistance, governance and rights-based approaches to development and democracy.	BD, G3W-M3M, OxfamSol
3E	Stimulate rejuvenation and women's participation in CSOs, promote their networking, and empower youth and women to take part in decision-making processes and advocate their socio-economic and civil rights.	AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles, SolSoc, G3W-M3M

JSG 4 Agriculture and water issues	Strengthen the Palestinian agricultural sector as a source of food and income for the Palestinian people, by strengthening Palestinian actors while increasing pressure on the Israeli government to allow movement of goods and people.	
Approach (contribution)		CSOs/IAs
4A	Promote "agriculture" as a way to support resilience of Palestinian women and men to stay on their land and advocate concrete measures to improve the economic situation of Palestinian farmers, fishermen and herders.	OxfamSol
4B	Encourage the international community to increase pressure on the Israeli government regarding free movement of goods and people in Palestine and take tangible steps to challenge the Israeli government's permit and planning regime in order to help Palestinians regain access to land and resources.	OxfamSol
4C	Strengthen small scale producers to improve their access to the international market.	OWW
4D	Secure access to water through water tank installation or rehabilitation of existing water installation in an environmentally sustainable way.	AADC, AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles, OxfamSol
4E	Invest in capacity building of farmers, fishermen and herders regarding new farming techniques, advocating, entrepreneurship, etc. to ensure the identity and the effectiveness of the farming sector in a gender sensitive and environmentally sustainable way.	AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles, OxfamSol
4F	Invest in capacity building of the local authorities in order to raise their awareness of the farming sector situation and stimulate them to implement local policies in favor of farmer women and men in an inclusive, gender sensitive and environmentally sustainable way.	AADC, AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles, OxfamSol
4G	Promote more exchange of knowledge and experience among local actors, for instance through digital tools (e.g: online platform, apps, etc.).	AADC, AVCB/UVCW, Ixelles

JSG 5 Reconstruction, Relief and Rehabilitation	Improve the effectivity, inclusion and sustainability of RRR to respond to humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people, by improved coordination between actors, capacity building, and including advocacy in an improved approach.	
Approach (contribution)		CSOs/IAs
5A	Strengthen local NGOs and networks to become more effective and inclusive in humanitarian response and coordination, integrating gender.	OxfamSol
5B	Encourage international donors to respond to humanitarian situations in a sustainable and gender sensitive way.	OxfamSol
5C	Integrate a policy influencing component into humanitarian work and conflict transformation work with a clear role for INGOs and partners.	OxfamSol

2.2 Motivation

JSG 1 Education and research
Improve and ensure inclusive access to quality education and training, promote lifelong learning opportunities, improve research and stimulate innovation, in a safe environment, in order to contribute to development.

The education sector faces numerous challenges: unavailability of qualified teachers, inadequate school infrastructure, a chronic shortage of classrooms (especially in Gaza), restrictions on building, expanding and rehabilitating schools, large classrooms, impeded access to educational facilities and traditional methods of teaching. These factors result in rising dropout rates, low learning achievements and, in some cases, displacement (UNESCO, 2014). By strengthening education and research institutions, Belgian CSOs/IAs want to contribute to a number of national development challenges through innovation, better human resources and development of local technology (JCA 8.2 strategies of change, p.69).

Higher education in Palestine however suffers from insufficient funding which results in a lack of professional development of the staff members of these institutions (JCA 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention, p.30) and rising tuition fees (JCA 5.3 analysis of education sector and strategies to strengthen the sector, p.45), which both have negative consequences for the quality of education and research.

Over the last decades, Palestinian women and girls' presence has increased at all education levels and they are now graduating from universities at a higher rate than Palestinian men. However, they face higher unemployment and are thus an under-utilized source of human capital (RASIT) (JCA 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention, p.29). Promoting gender and capacity building of working in a gender sensitive way in education will receive special attention by the CSOs/IAs.

Despite recent policy efforts to increasingly include children and students with disabilities, their integration in mainstream schools remains a challenge. Children with disabilities are often excluded from education, or they are hosted in special education schools, mostly run by local CSOs. (JCA 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention p. 29) Capacity building of teaching professional, local actors and authorities, CSOs and NGOs about working with vulnerable groups in the education sector is therefore a shared approach for the involved Belgian CSOs/IAs.

In the school environment several forms of violence are prevalent: including psychological and occupation-related violence. Additionally, the armed conflict and hostilities result in direct attacks on the education sector, including killings and injuries of students and teachers, and damages to schools (JCA 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention, p.29).

Culture and sports, among other things, are viewed by many local CSOs as relevant media for extracurricular activities allowing youth to express themselves, develop life skills, complete their education (JCA 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention, p. 30) and stimulate a lifelong learning attitude. Belgian CSOs/IAs invest in this domain and work with youth, as well as women, as special target groups. In Israel, sensitization of the public about the occupation is part of this.

As the Belgian government is a major donor in the education sector in Palestine, Belgian CSOs/IAs can explore how to work in a complementary way. Belgium is particularly active in the construction of schools in area C and Gaza.

More attention must be paid to the protection of the environment, by the partners, the target groups and local stakeholders. As donors, the Belgian CSOs/IAs can also contribute to change in this realm. Until now, little attention has been paid to this transversal theme. The CSOs/IAs will seize the opportunity of the JSF process to start a dialogue with partners on environmental awareness, notably on water issues in primary and secondary schools.

By strengthening education, promoting lifelong learning opportunities, improving research and stimulating innovation, Belgian CSOs/IAs will contribute to SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 9 (Foster innovation).

JSG 2 Health

Increase the realization of the right to health of Palestinians.

The health sector faces numerous challenges: low income, inadequate housing, unsafe workplaces and lack of access to health facilities. Direct consequences of hostilities cause injury, death, and disabilities. The protracted conflict increases physical displacement, discrimination and marginalization, and prevents access to health services (WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health). Moreover, the military occupation and the accompanying repressive measures, including arbitrary arrest, forced displacement, house demolitions, land confiscation, among other violations and threats to human security, also affect the health and mental well-being and should therefore be addressed in a comprehensive, rights-based approach of health (JCA 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention p.31).

The multiple fragmentations (political, economic, geographical) are leading to a steady degradation of the health system, deterioration of the quality of care provided and have an impact on social determinants of health. Indeed the division between the PA and the Hamas government has effectively created two Ministries of Health institutions in the West Bank and in the Gaza strip and fragmented the decision-making related to operational issues, investment planning and government initiated reforms in the health sector (JCA 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention p.31). The establishment of the national consensus government in 2015 has led to an improved cooperation in the field of health, yet further improvements need to be made. The blockade of Gaza is leading to a steady degradation of the health system, of the quality of care provided as well as the right to health.

Field observation indicated the growing problem of stress-related disorders and mental health problems, including domestic violence and abuse. Moreover, while the majority of the Palestinian citizens are in a vulnerable situation, especially in the Gaza Strip, persons with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and their needs among the most critical. Persons with disabilities are in dire need of specific services related to their disability but also need to be better included in general health services, especially primary health care. (JCA 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention p.32) In addition, women and girls are facing a double discrimination due to their impairment and their gender.

International organizations and the international donor community play a major role in supporting the sustainability and development of the Palestinian health sector. They jointly work with the MoH in setting up basic standards and internationally adopted implementation methods. Donors provide financial, logistic and technical support to the health sector. CSOs/IAs have a major role for advocating the health situation in Palestine, through enhancing international awareness about the Palestinian health situation and the importance of continuous support to promote the health system's sustainability, also complying with aid effectiveness principles and the MoH national guidelines in this regard. The Public Health Institute (PHI) was established in cooperation with the WHO, to play a major role in strengthening health research, data analysis and health indicators analysis, strengthening NCDs prevention and surveillance programs. (JCA 4.3 Description of the national and decentralized government institutions, and their most important financial partners p.40).

Palestinian civil society plays an important role especially for primary health care. Most of the Palestinian health CSOs are service oriented, providing medical care. Some of them combine this with advocacy work on the access to health care, but focus less on an integrated and comprehensive approach to health and synergy with other CSOs/IAs which work on specific social determinants of health. (JCA 5.4 analysis of the health sector and possible strategies to strengthen the sector, p.47).

Belgian CSOs/IAs have developed specific strategies according to the sector and ministry. Firstly, CSOs/IAs do

advocacy towards decision makers and institutions in Belgium and the EU with regard to violations of international law and development.

More attention must be paid to the protection of the environment, by the partners, local and national stakeholders. CSOs/IAs have an important role in promoting inclusive development in a gender-balanced and environmentally friendly way. As donors, the Belgian CSOs/IAs can also contribute to change in this realm. Until now, some attention has been paid to these two transversal themes. The CSOs/IAs will seize the opportunity of the JSF process to start a dialogue with partners on environmental and gender inclusiveness.

By increasing the realization of the right to health, Belgian CSOs/IAs will contribute to SDG 3 (Good health and well-being).

JSG 3 Good Governance, Civil Society and Human Rights

Improve Palestinians' access to rights by a more unified and a strengthened civil society's ability to influence change on the national and international level, through a rights-based agenda.

The Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories has led to a situation of de-development, in spite of the tremendous financial efforts of the international community. The occupation and Israel's violations of IHL are at the heart of Palestinian de-development and have led to the failure of Palestinian state-building. Israel refuses to respect its obligations as an occupying power and to ensure the needs of the occupied population, nor does it want to give the Palestinian Authority full sovereignty. The lack of change in the political environment has prevented development efforts and humanitarian action from mitigating the impact of the crisis on the Palestinian civilian population. Israel's increased demolitions of EU-funded projects in area C are a concrete example of its systematic violations of IHL, benefiting its own political goals, the expansion of the settlements, and forcibly displacing the protected Palestinian population.

The isolation of the Hamas-led government in 2006 and the takeover of Hamas in the Gaza Strip in 2007, presented the Palestinian proto-state institutions with enormous challenges. Donors have also insufficiently addressed the democratic deficit in Palestine, where parliamentary and presidential elections are long overdue. The only solution to end this stalemate is a genuine reconciliation between Fatah and Hamas. Yet, the ongoing feud between Fatah and Hamas has reached a peak in 2015. President Abbas has unilaterally reshuffled the cabinet of the government of national consensus. The main point of contention was the payment of the salaries of the civil servants in Gaza. As long as this structural and political divide paralyzes Palestinian politics, good governance and accountability in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will remain poor. Yet, as a provider of public services to the Palestinian population the Palestinian Authority has to provide accountability for resource allocation and management. However, various line ministries are weak in the organization, regulation, and supervision of their sector, and in the coordination of policy making and planning. Furthermore, the dialogue with the civil society is not a top priority. Although modalities for CSOs' participation in national planning process are in place (e.g. workshops, consultations and meetings), they are deemed inadequate by the civil society, as the decision makers hardly translate their input into policies, legislation and budgets. (JCA 5.1 Analysis of the local civil society, and the strategies that are being considered to strengthen their positions, p. 44). Moreover, local community participation, especially among youth and women, in planning and policy making is still inadequate (JCA 5.1 Analysis of the local civil society, and the strategies that are being considered to strengthen their positions p.42).

Due to the failure of Palestinian state-building and the inter-Palestinian split, CSOs still play a crucial role in the delivery of basic services in a wide variety of sectors. Yet, they face an important set of challenges: the divisions and fragmentation within Palestinian society, and civil society; the lack of unity and common strategy of Palestinian civil society; the strong focus on service delivery rather than socio-economic development; the permanent condition of insecurity and need for emergency preparedness created by the Israeli occupation; the tendency of many NGOs to lose their linkages with grass roots communities and primary constituencies/beneficiaries; the tendency to follow the project-based and donor-driven agenda which also leads to competition among CSOs (JCA 5.5 Analysis of good governance and civil society and strategies that could strengthen the sector, p 50).

Belgian CSOs/IAs strengthen Palestinian civil society in their role of watchdog versus their own institutions; to improve the performance of government institutions, by campaigns and advocacy on the local and national level, as well as the European level; and legal assistance at the national (Palestinian and Israeli) level to improve compliance with human rights. They promote linking and networking of CSOs on national and international level, to strengthen their complementarity and cooperation and to be more effective. CSOs do not only provide support to advocate authorities but also engage with local authorities on capacity building to improve good governance practices.

Belgian CSOs/IAs increasingly exchange information about policy developments in the EU and its Member States and the advocacy at the EU and Belgian level. This allows a stronger cooperation in the field of rights-based advocacy.

More attention must be paid to the protection of the environment, by the partners, local and national authorities. CSOs have an important role in promoting inclusive development in a gender-balanced and environmentally friendly way. As donors, the Belgian CSOs/IAs can also contribute to change in this realm.

By strengthening civil society in order to improve Palestinians' access to rights, Belgian CSOs/IAs will contribute to SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions).

JSG 4 Agriculture and water issues

Strengthen the Palestinian agricultural sector as a source of food and income for the Palestinian people, by strengthening Palestinian actors while increasing pressure on the Israeli government to allow movement of goods and people.

Agriculture, including livestock, has always been deeply rooted in the Palestinian society and culture and is a primary economic activity. The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for drafting and implementing the national agricultural development plan (latest version NDP 2014-2016) and serves as the public provider of agricultural (extension) services. However, the quality, quantity and timing of provided government services don't meet the needs, and a lack of coordination with other actors in the sector results in overlap (JCA, chapter 4, p.35-42). Belgian CSOs/IAs will therefore follow-up on relevant local authorities to improve agricultural development policies in favor of Palestinian farmers.

The major constraint affecting the agricultural sector remains the Israeli occupation, control and influence. Limitations on development as a consequence of the Israeli control over the economic space result in high dependency on food aid and (relatively expensive) imports (JCA, chapter 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention, p.33). Trade diversification and market expansion could strongly contribute to improving the Palestinians' livelihoods and reducing poverty. By advocating the international community to increase pressure on the Israeli government regarding the free movement of goods and people in Palestine, as well as through the strengthening of Palestinian small scale producers to improve their access to the international markets, Belgian CSOs/IAs hope to strengthen perspectives for economic development and diminish this high food aid dependency, as well as aid dependency in general.

As a result of the Israeli control over Palestinian resources, access to water is problematic. Next to additional transportation to avoid the most problematic Israeli checkpoints, Palestinian farmers in the occupied West Bank have to pay for water that is brought in by tanks, making their produce much more expensive and therefore less competitive than that of Israeli settler farmers. Settlements restrict the availability of limited natural resources such as land and water to the 2.4 million Palestinians living in the West Bank. At least 75 percent of the water in the West Bank, much of which is used to produce agricultural items for export, is consumed in settlements. The dumping of wastewater from settlements into Palestinian agricultural lands further endangers long-term viability and production of the agricultural sector (JCA, chapter 3.3 analysis of the environmental situation, p.27). In the Gaza Strip, Israel applies restrictions to the access to land and fishing areas along the Gaza Strip coast. Since the end of Operation Cast Lead in 2009, Palestinians have been totally or partially prevented from accessing land in a 500 to 1000 meters buffer zone from the border fence with Israel, which encompasses some 35 percent of the agricultural land. The access to the sea, too, has been very limited. (JCA, chapter 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention, p.33). Further, unacceptably high levels of contaminants, including nitrates, have been found in water, resulting in serious environmental health concerns (JCA, chapter 3.33 analysis of the environmental situation, p.27). Considering the detrimental impact of the above mentioned issues on the environment in which Palestinian communities live, Belgian CSOs/IAs will not only aim to secure access to water but they devote special attention to environmental protection in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Today agriculture still remains a significant source of employment for both men and women, representing respectively 10 percent and 20 percent of the Palestinian labour force. Seeing that the contribution of women in Palestinian agriculture is significant, yet often invisible and rarely recognized, CSOs/IAs will pay attention to the gender sensitive aspects in their approaches of capacity building of farmers, herders and fishermen and – women.

Agricultural development is crucial in the improvement of food security and as a source of income and employment, but agricultural production is also an important supplier for various transformative industries and a consumer of inputs and services from other sectors. Besides these traditional roles of the sector and

considering the particular context of the Israeli occupation, agricultural development can be considered a major tool to combat confiscations and forced displacement (JCA, chapter 3.4 analysis of the themes of intervention, p.33).

By strengthening the Palestinian agricultural sector, Belgian CSOs/IAs will contribute to SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 2 (Zero hunger), SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation) and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth).

JSG 5 Reconstruction, Relief and Rehabilitation

Improve the effectivity, inclusion and sustainability of RRR to respond to humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people, by improved coordination between actors, capacity building, and including advocacy in an improved approach.

As extensively explained in chapter 3 of the JCA, the context in Palestine is one of a protracted protection crisis with dire humanitarian consequences. Despite the international donors' efforts, Palestinian poverty and aid dependency have reached an unseen peak.

As a result of Israel's occupation policies and practices in the West Bank, Palestinians are subject to forcible displacement, particularly in Area C and East Jerusalem. The Israeli authorities continue settlement expansion, illegal under international law, at the expense of the housing, livelihood, relief and rehabilitation needs of Palestinian communities. The implementation of humanitarian projects is hindered by limitations on projects that involve building, expanding or rehabilitating infrastructure in Area C, where Israel does not hesitate to seize or destroy donor-funded projects.

Israel's ongoing separation policy and the three subsequent wars in the Gaza Strip further obliged the donors to shift even further to providing humanitarian aid. After the last devastating armed conflict in 2014, the PA, the UN and Israel have set up the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM) a temporary mechanism to enable the reconstruction of Gaza and to allow the import of building materials. However, the GRM does not meet the needs of the affected population. Due to faltering financial contributions and Israeli limitations, reconstruction efforts are slow: in March 2016 only 3000 houses were renovated and 300 destroyed houses fully rebuilt. The reconstruction of houses, schools and health structure will take until 2115 at the current pace. At least 80 percent of the population in Gaza is dependent on international assistance and unemployment continues to be at unprecedented levels, particularly among young people (over 50 percent).

International donors need to avoid reinforcing Palestinian aid dependency, by providing humanitarian aid in a way that can lead to more development and reconstruction. So far, the international donor community did not develop a coherent strategy to address Israel's violations of IHL. Nor did they sufficiently address the grave consequences, de-development and the failure of Palestinian state-building, arising from Israel's continued abuse of its control. Therefore, Belgian CSOs/IAs will encourage international donors not only to strengthen local NGOs to provide humanitarian assistance in a sustainable and effective way but also to foresee their own humanitarian response in a more sustainable way, in the Gaza Strip as well as in the occupied West Bank.

In order to safeguard the sustainable character of humanitarian responses, a policy influencing component should be effectively integrated into humanitarian work and conflict transformation work with a clear role for INGOs and partners. CSOs/IAs will further aim to improve networking and coordination among different actors in RRR in Palestine. The Humanitarian Country Team (as referred to in Chapter 4 of the JCA, p.41) can serve as an example of how this could bring different international and national actors together.

By improving RRR to respond to humanitarian needs of Palestinian people, Belgian CSOs/IAs will contribute to SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 9 (Infrastructure) and SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities).

3. Identification of complementarity and synergy

In the process of identifying synergy and complementarity, it was evident that most CSOs/IAs are already involved in synergy projects and that there exists a high level of complementarity among them. Complementarity refers to activities, strategies, or policies that aim at strengthening mutually enabling projects or programs to exceed their individual contributions to reach a common goal. At present, there is already a sustained information exchange among the CSOs/IAs in Brussels. Some operational synergy projects are also taking place, such as joint capacity building with several CSOs and/ or with international NGOs.

The aim for the next level of achieving more synergy is to provide a concrete added value to the individual CSOs/IAs programs, and contribute to efficiency, expertise, consolidation of good practices, networking opportunities and reaching more impact. Expanding the current synergy agenda has been discussed with the aim to identifying synergies across the board, beyond the limits of specific sectors or themes. As presented in the table below, several potential synergy topics have been identified, but they need further exploration and elaboration. There is consensus that more synergy is possible, and various informal exchanges have grown out of the dynamics of the JCA- and JSF process.

As the Belgian government is active in local governance and a major donor in the education sector in Palestine, Belgian CSOs/IAs can explore how to work in a complementary way. Belgium is particularly active in the construction of schools in area C and Gaza. There might be an opportunity for partners active in the field of education to start (extra)curricular projects in these schools or to reinforce advocacy on violations against the right to education. Special attention needs to be given to the fact that schoolchildren are exposed to frequent and numerous forms of violence and attacks on their way to/from as well as inside schools.

CSOs/IAs also see opportunities to improve their work on transversal themes, exchange best practices and learn together. Environment was identified as the transversal theme that needs more attention. The CSOs/IAs will seize the opportunity of the JSF process to improve their practices and start a dialogue with partners on environmental awareness.

The following engagements were defined:

Synergy - Complementarity	Between 'us' (CSOs and IAs)	Between 'us' and INGOs	Between 'us' and the Belgian coop
Cross-cutting level			
Improve common lobby and advocacy work on the Belgian and European level through the Middle East Platform, common advocacy campaigns such as Made in Illegality, actions around 50 years of occupation (2017) and organizing advocacy tours to Palestine and Israel for policy makers.	x		
Better exchange and explore opportunities for synergy with DGD and BTC through yearly exchange meeting about context, plans and search for synergy (Brussels) and advocacy, in yearly meetings.			x
Improve exchange on the ground with the Belgian consulate and partners by continuing the Belgian Forum that was re-activated last year, by organizing a yearly meeting with partners and collective field visits.			x
Exchange among Belgian CSOs/IAs on how they can improve coordination on the ground and build more synergy and/or complementarity where relevant (for example having the same local partner) in yearly meetings.	x	x	
Share best practices, lessons learned and information on gender, environment and human rights and the integration of vulnerable groups (women, youth, girls, disabled people) in decision-making processes, in yearly meetings.	x		x
JSG 1 Education and Research			
Optimize complementarity on inclusive education by sharing strategic and operational information through an annual dedicated inclusive education meeting.	x	x	x

Promote joint actions about inclusive education by sensitization, information, communication, advocacy.	x		
Share information about scholarship opportunities and in the areas of capacity development, research, technology transfer.	x	x	x
Actors share the results of research with other actors for potential extension/upscaling.	x	x	
JSG 2 Health			
Optimize complementarity on health and rehabilitation by sharing strategic and operational information through yearly dedicated inclusive health meetings.	x	x	
Promote joint actions in sensitization, information sharing, communication, and advocacy about disability and the right to health, amongst others by reinforcing the Palestinian section of the People's Health Movement.	x	x	
JSG 3 Good Governance, Civil Society and Human Rights			
Promote common advocacy in Belgium, the EU, Palestine and Israel. Exchange information on policy developments in the EU and the Member States.	x		x
Exchange information and analysis about violations of international law and the the situation of HR defenders in Palestine and Israel to define opportunities for common advocacy efforts based on RBA.	x		x
Exchange information through a Belgian Local Authorities Network for Palestine with the aim of better coordination in the field.	x	x	x
Develop common awareness-raising strategies regarding youth and workers in partnership with Belgian union bodies.	x		
JSG 4 Agriculture and water issues			
Exchange experiences and good practices on water and agriculture in a yearly meeting.	x		
Develop a systematic and protective response to destruction of farmers' facilities by Israeli authorities in Area C.			x
Build effective campaigns and work towards ending agricultural trade with Israel that finances and rewards the destruction of Palestinian farming.	x	x	x
Promote trade of Palestinian agriculture products.	x	x	x
JSG 5 Reconstruction, Relief and Rehabilitation			
Enhance coordination between actors in RRR.	x	x	x
Participation in AIDA.		x	

Annex: List of participants JSF Palestine, April 2016

All CSOs and IAs planning to have a program in Palestine in the next 10 years participated in the process resulting in this JSF-Palestine. It involved the following 9 organizations with their respective addresses and lead persons.

	CSO/IA	ADDRESS	CONTACT
1	AADC (Association pour l'Action de Développement Communautaire)	Place Albert 1er, 34, 7031 Monceau-sur-Sambre	Ariane de Saeger Chantal Vandermeiren
2	APEFE	2, Place Saintelette, 1080 Brussels	Sigrid De Meester
3	Broederlijk Delen (BD)	Huidevettersstraat 165, 1000 Brussels	Marleen Willemsen Brigitte Herremans Toon Vrelust
4	G3W –M3M	Haachtsesteenweg 53, 1210 Brussels	Fiona Ben Chekroun Wim De Ceukelaire
6	Oxfam Solidariteit – Solidarité (OxfamSol)	Vierwindenstraat 60, 1080 Brussels	Catherine De Bock
6	Oxfam WW	Ververijstraat 17, 9000 Gent	Floor Michiels
7	Solidarité Socialiste (SolSoc)	Coenraetstraat 68, 1060 Bruxelles	François Sarramagnan
8	UVCW/AVCB (Union des Villes et Communes de Wallonie) Commune d'Ixelles	Rue de l'Etoile 14, 5000 Namur	Hicham Boumezzough
9	VLIR-UOS	Bolwerksquare 1, 1050 Brussels	Inge Vandevyvere
	JSF Decent Work		Katrien Beirinckx