



## **Transformative Resilience and the Programmatic Approach: Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, Systems Thinking and Portfolio Approach, Adaptive Management**

### **UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People Working Paper**

**(November 2022)**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP) has been leading efforts to define the resilience approach in the State of Palestine through a consultative process that commenced in 2016 with the Palestine Resilience Conference titled '*From Sumud to Transformative Resilience*'. The conference provided a forum for practitioners, donors, government actors, non-government actors, and private sector representatives to discuss resilience-based programming in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). In 2019, UNDP PAPP organised a co-creation workshop in which UN agencies, donors, and the private sector were invited to collectively conceptualise a multi-sector and multi-stakeholder national framework to build transformative resilience in Area C, East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

Over the last two years, UNDP PAPP has been refining the concept of Transformative Resilience in the Palestinian context, and developing a new Palestine Programme Framework (PPF) centred on this vision. In addition, it has been exploring how Transformative Resilience can be strengthened in the oPt, including through a Humanitarian Development Peace (HDP) Nexus approach and the application of portfolio management principles that acknowledge the complexity of challenges and the importance of systems thinking. These perspectives have also fed into UN-wide discussions around the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) as well as Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). This working paper aims to stimulate further discussion, experimentation/implementation, and reflection for continuous improvement, by outlining the current thinking around these interconnected pieces of work.

## **II. TRANSFORMATIVE RESILIENCE IN THE PALESTINIAN CONTEXT**

### **a) Transformative Resilience Conceptual Framework**

The year 2022 marks 55 years of the Israeli occupation and annexation of East Jerusalem, as well as 15 years of the blockade on the Gaza Strip. The ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a dominating factor

in every aspect of the lives of Palestinians in the oPt. At the same time, the intra-Palestinian political divide, weak institutions, and deterioration of rule of law and political accountability are also critical factors that determine their socio-economic, political, and security condition, their living and working environments, and ultimately their ability to exercise and fulfil their rights.

The geographic fragmentation and restrictions imposed on Palestinians to move freely across the oPt and beyond have strangled the economy and hindered social interaction, and consequently shaped their identities. The day-to-day life of a Palestinian is dictated by the unique situation of her/his immediate environment; Palestinians in East Jerusalem live in an entirely different reality from Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The intra-Palestinian political divide and continuing standoff between Fatah and Hamas have further exacerbated this separation.

The lack of Palestinian sovereignty in Area C, H2, and East Jerusalem, as well as unilateral controls imposed on them (both long-standing and unpredictable / ad hoc) means that Palestinians are reliant on the Israeli authorities with regard to access to land, water and energy. Without having the full authority and access to instruments of a formally recognised State and faced with a fiscal crisis, the Palestinian Government is unable to provide adequate access to quality basic services for its people. This has led to an increasing reliance on the international community for financial and non-financial assistance.

Furthermore, the trust of Palestinians towards their own political leadership has been steadily declining, with civil liberties and rule of law deteriorating. The cancellation of the Presidential and Legislative Council elections in 2021 has further eroded the trust in the Palestinian leadership. Civic leadership is under threat, with civil society organisations increasingly under pressure to refrain from expressing their views, advocating for rights, and demanding accountability.

In such a complex environment, what does resilience mean to Palestinians?

While there are many definitions, most descriptions of Resilience include reference to the ability of individuals, communities and institutions to anticipate, absorb, adapt and recover from shocks and crises. However, in the case of the State of Palestine, as in most situations of protracted crisis, there is no one 'shock' or one 'crisis' to 'recover' from; the attacks on lives, livelihoods, and civil liberties are continuous, persistent and corrosive.

The concept of resilience in the oPt must go beyond 'coping' or 'surviving'; it must go beyond the narrative of *Sumud* (steadfastness) in the face of occupation, towards Transformative Resilience.<sup>1</sup>

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***Transformative Resilience, at its core, is about 'Cohesive Palestinian Identity', 'Self-Reliance', and 'Ownership and Leadership'. It is about shaping a world in which all Palestinians can enjoy a dignified life and fulfil their own vision of a unified, peaceful and free society.***

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The question of whether Transformative Resilience can be strengthened in the context of occupation is a moot point, as its essence is rooted in the belief that structural issues *can* be tackled and the status

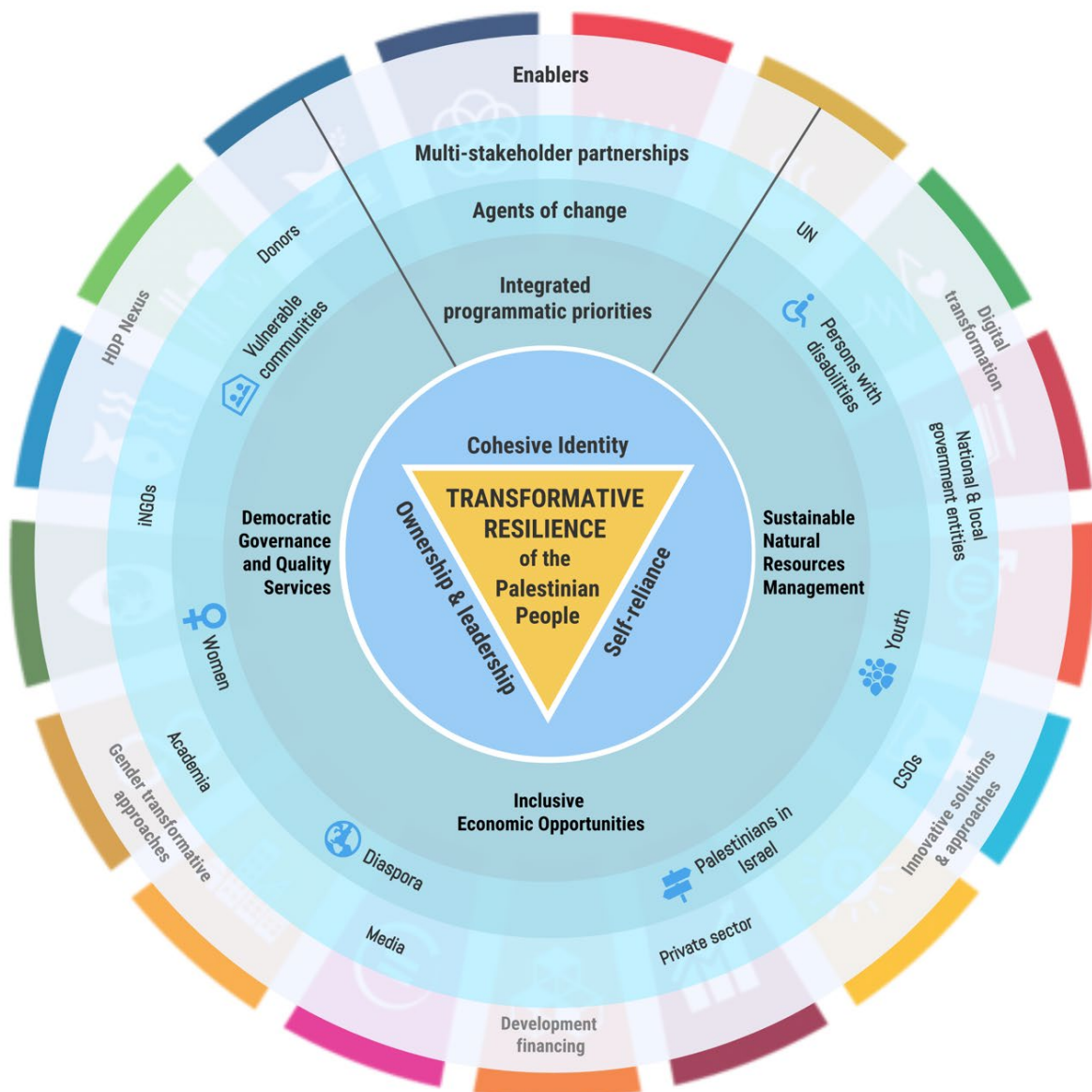
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<sup>1</sup> *Sumud* meaning "steadfastness" or "steadfast perseverance" is a Palestinian cultural value, ideological theme and political strategy that first emerged among the Palestinian people through the experience of the dialectic of oppression and resistance in the wake of the 1967 Six-Day War.

quo *can* be changed, even if in incremental steps and even if it may take a very long time. Rather than wait for the conclusion of a broad political settlement to start working on structural transformation, there are critical changes that must be and can be made within existing constraints that make a difference to the lives of Palestinians, and in preparation for the fundamental shift in the political environment.

Transformative Resilience does not presuppose national processes nor international agreements, although they are needless to say, critical to the full realisation of Palestinian rights. The three key elements of Transformative Resilience - **Palestinian identity, self-reliance, and ownership and leadership**- can be strengthened at different levels: individual, family, community, regional, and national. This is a fundamental point, and is reflected in UNDP’s mandate in the State of Palestine, and its namesake: UNDP PAPP - Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People.

### UNDP/PAPP Transformative Resilience Framework



Transformative Resilience is at the heart of UNDP PAPP's contribution in the oPt and will be reflected in the new Palestine Programmatic Framework (PPF), a strategic document to guide programmatic direction in the coming years.

In order to foster a cohesive Palestinian identity, self-reliance, and ownership and leadership, which lie at the heart of Transformative Resilience, UNDP's programmes are centred around three priority areas of intervention: **democratic governance and quality services; inclusive economic opportunities; and sustainable natural resources management**. Projects implemented by UNDP PAPP often address multiple areas in conjunction, and are managed as a portfolio to strengthen interlinkages (see section on Systems Thinking and Portfolio Approach below).

Under this framework, the individuals, households and communities who are vulnerable and/or marginalised due to their gender, age, disabilities, or social (or refugee) status, geographic location, etc. are not seen as 'target groups' or 'recipients of aid' but 'agents of change'. Even under occupation and in the absence of democratic processes, they have the potential to collectively identify their priorities and engage in initiatives to address these challenges. **Empowerment of women, youth and persons with disabilities, as well as vulnerable communities** are embedded across the interventions, as they are fundamental to the realisation of Transformative Resilience. The **Palestinian diaspora and those living in Israel** can be critical partners in the process of change in the oPt, contributing valuable resources and expertise, and engaging in actions of solidarity.

Key enablers or accelerators of Transformative Resilience in the oPt are **digital transformation, innovative solutions, development financing, gender transformative and HDP Nexus approaches**. Digital technology allows Palestinians, regardless of their physical location and movement restrictions to be interconnected with each other (Gaza, West Bank), across the region, and globally. This strengthens their ties and reinforces a common identity, as well as allow for the sourcing of solutions from across the border. It opens up income generation opportunities through better access to job markets, leading to greater self-reliance despite movement restrictions. Generating, accessing, piloting and scaling up innovative approaches, solutions, and technologies are particularly valuable in contexts such as the oPt, where resources are scarce, and restrictions abound. A shift in approach from development funding to financing is essential in the oPt where the fiscal crisis and donor fatigue are becoming increasingly severe. Transformative Resilience can be achieved for all Palestinians only if gender transformative approaches addressing structural power relations are addressed. Humanitarian, peace and development actors working together to apply the HDP Nexus approach in analysis, planning and implementation, as well as advocacy will significantly contribute to the Transformative Resilience of Palestinian people.

Transformative Resilience requires a holistic systems approach with **multi-stakeholder engagement**, and a key role of UNDP PAPP is to bring these diverse actors together towards a shared vision, as a facilitator and convenor. These actors may be government (national and local), civil society organisations, private sector, media, academia, international NGOs, donor partners, and the UN. In UNDP PAPP projects, institutional structures and platforms are strengthened (or created if absent) to systematically connect the key stakeholders, intended to transition adhoc collaboration into longer-lasting partnerships.

## **b) Transformative Resilience Programming**

UNDP's programmatic interventions over the past few years have been integrating the Transformative Resilience approach: democratic governance and quality services; inclusive economic opportunities; and sustainable natural resources management.

Under the **democratic governance and quality services** portfolio, projects address issues of public trust, and aim to (re)build confidence in government services, improve public resources management, and strengthen the rule of law. Interventions to support national and local democratic processes including inclusive elections complement projects that protect civic space and develop the capacities of civil society organisations, fostering a sense of Palestinian identity and social cohesion. Efforts to strengthen transparency and accountability of institutions and processes also work to improve the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of services. UNDP PAPP projects also contribute to improving the quality and accessibility of services for the most vulnerable individuals and communities, through physical construction, reconstruction, or rehabilitation of facilities such as schools, hospitals, and public buildings. Institutional capacity development and policy level support are provided for public and essential services in areas such as justice, education, health, and waste management, so these services are reliable and sustainable. Early recovery efforts in post-conflict situations also include the rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses (prioritising female-headed households and those with disabilities), hospitals and schools, as well as and playgrounds, for those affected by the hostilities to ensure they have a safe environment to resume their lives. These interventions also contribute to greater community engagement and stronger social cohesion.

Projects under the **inclusive economic opportunities portfolio** focus on improving employment and employability through jobs creation, as well as strengthening micro-small, medium enterprises (MSME) and fostering a conducive environment for entrepreneurship development, private sector investment and growth. UNDP PAPP interventions recognise the critical need for short-term jobs creation in the public sector (especially with the fiscal crisis and extremely high unemployment amongst youth particularly young women), as well as importance of longer-term employment opportunities through developing market-relevant skills for the private sector. MSME support includes recovery from crises such as the COVID19 pandemic or hostilities, and increasing competitiveness and building resilience by improving / adapting business models (e.g. new services/ new mode of delivery, greening products and practices) and integrating inclusivity and sustainability measures. Identifying and supporting the adoption of innovative approaches and incubating new businesses, as well as development of an eco-system for innovation and incubation are key elements of UNDP's MSME support. Creating an enabling environment for MSMEs (particularly women-owned) to access technical and financial services embedded into national schemes, and connecting MSMEs to existing and larger-scale financing opportunities (de-risking investments) allow for greater scalability and sustainability.

UNDP's portfolio of projects in the area of **sustainable natural resources management** address challenges related to protection of, access to, and use of land and water resources, as well as promotion of renewable energy. Waste water treatment plants and sewage systems are constructed or installed to ensure the protection of the environment, and better ways of monitoring the efficiency of water use in water-scarce areas are being explored. Solid waste management, including medical and other hazardous waste, involves the provision/installation of environmentally sustainable systems, technical training of operators, establishment of institutional arrangements and capacity development, as well as development of policies and regulations. UNDP PAPP interventions aim to rehabilitate wetlands to bring back the flora

and fauna as part of ecosystem management and gender-sensitive climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. In order to reduce operational costs, improve reliable energy supply, and mitigate climate change, solar energy systems are integrated into many of the public infrastructure, such as health, education, wastewater treatment plants, as well as industrial facilities and markets. UNDP PAPP is piloting renewable energy models for municipalities, refugee camps, markets, and educational/health facilities that can be scaled up.

### Investment Programme for Resilience

The Transformative Resilience framework has been purposefully integrated into the design of the Investment Programme for Resilience (IPR). The IPR evolved from the Employment Generation Programme (EGP) implemented since 2002, incorporating a strong focus on building Transformative Resilience.

The Euro 100 million EGP supported 765 community infrastructure projects generating close to 3,000 jobs and over 1.2 million workdays during the eleven phases of the programme. While the EGP focuses on creation of short- and longer-term employment, the IPR aims to strengthen Transformative Resilience by complementing infrastructure investments with social cohesion initiatives, and building the capacities of local communities and service providers to identify needs and deliver high quality socio-economic services in a sustainable manner.

The EGP has indicators primarily related to workdays generated and labour costs, as well as number of community projects that are operating as planned. On the other hand, the IPR results framework includes improvements in access to socio-economic services, as well as enhanced social engagement and greater economic opportunities. Under the IPR, UNDP PAPP is developing measures in line with the three elements of Transformative Resilience: cohesive identity, self-reliance, and ownership and leadership (see diagram below).



Many of UNDP's interventions contribute to Transformative Resilience by addressing multiple priorities simultaneously, which reinforce positive impact. For example, interventions to create short-term dignified jobs in health facilities allow those who are unemployed to earn a temporary income, while providing much needed essential services to the most vulnerable. Solid waste (including medical / hazardous waste) and wastewater management projects integrate environmentally friendly measures that reduce running costs, including the installation of solar energy systems to operate the facilities. This approach reduces public health risks, improves financial sustainability, while contributing to climate change mitigation. Community infrastructure projects include rehabilitation of cultural centres, and some economic revitalisation efforts focus on cultural tourism opportunities, contributing to the preservation of Palestinian identity. Youth empowerment interventions equip the youth for future employment and civic leadership, create a sense of agency, increase ownership, and foster greater social cohesion.

### **III. HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE (HDP) – NEXUS APPROACH**

The 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) highlighted that approximately 2.1 million Palestinians across the oPt will require some form of humanitarian assistance, of whom 64 per cent, or 1.3 million people, live in Gaza. The Humanitarian Flash Appeal issued in May 2021 estimated that critical assistance needs for protection, shelter, water and sanitation, health, education, etc. would total USD 95 million.

The recently completed UN Common Country Analysis (CCA) emphasised that the stagnant economy, repeated rounds of conflict and outbreak of COVID-19 have led to deepening poverty and compounding vulnerabilities. The pre-COVID poverty rate of 29 percent (53 percent in Gaza and 14 percent in West Bank) is estimated to increase to as high as 64 percent in Gaza and 30 percent in the West Bank.

While the HNO and CCA are separate documents, the factors analysed are intimately interlinked, precisely because the root causes and drivers of instability and insecurity, as well as inequality and vulnerability are inseparable. Many are political (e.g. Israeli occupation, status of the State of Palestine, intra-Palestinian divide) and are dependent on the peace process (e.g. hostilities between Israel and armed groups in Gaza, geopolitical dynamics). Thus, a lasting resolution of these issues would be essential in reducing humanitarian need, accelerating development and building peace.

In recent years, the UN, humanitarian and development partners including donors, civil society, and academia have been advancing the thinking around the Humanitarian, Development, Peace (HDP) Nexus approach. In the oPt, a paper titled 'Reducing humanitarian need, accelerating development, and building peace: A nexus approach in the Occupied Palestinian Territory' was drafted by the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) with extensive consultation and input from the UN agencies. Recognising that the root causes of insecurity and drivers of vulnerability are the same, one critical first step envisioned in applying the HDP nexus approach was a joint assessment.

The Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment (MSNA) phase I and phase II exercises that fed into the HNO and CCA demonstrate that data can be collected (in this case at the household level) for both humanitarian and development purposes, but analysed from different perspectives to gain a holistic insight into the situation Palestinians face. While the MSNA yielded valuable data to calculate how many people are in need in what sectors, it also provided an opportunity to identify multiple dimensions of overlapping vulnerabilities across geographic locations (Areas A & B, Area C, H2, and East Jerusalem in the West

Bank and governorates in Gaza), population groups (e.g. refugees/non-refugees, female headed households), and household situation (e.g. families with persons with disabilities).

This was based on a Vulnerability Assessment Framework developed by REACH, UNDP, and RCO, in consultation with UNICEF. The Framework was constructed from 20 indicators selected from among hundreds of indicators in the dataset aggregated into eight dimensions (education, employment, food security, protection, health, shelter and housing, water and sanitation, and monetary resources), measuring different aspects of vulnerability. An [interactive platform](#) was created to allow analysis that would feed into strategy development such as the UN SDG Cooperation Framework, as well as design of programmatic interventions targeting the most vulnerable.

### Vulnerability Assessment Framework in OPT: Dimensions, Indicators and Descriptive Statistics

Vulnerability Dimensions and Indicators in the OPT



In designing interventions utilising such data and analysis, it is critical not to develop separate 'humanitarian', 'development' or 'peace' interventions. The challenges experienced by individuals, families, or communities are not distinct. For example, not having a stable income, or having reduced or no income, and relying on extended family members, or tapping into their savings, or eventually resorting to debt, are issues that cannot be easily categorised as 'humanitarian' or 'development'. They exist in a continuum in the lives of people, where in many cases their situations shift back and forth, like a pendulum.

Yet, in approaching the same issue of inadequate income, it is often the case that humanitarian interventions focus on the symptoms and provide immediate relief, while development initiatives address



root causes aiming to fundamentally alleviate the issue. Humanitarian actors distribute cash vouchers as humanitarian interventions implemented with humanitarian funding. Development actors introduce skills development, empowerment and job creation programmes as development initiatives to be supported by development funding. Roles and responsibilities (and mandates) are defined based on whether an entity is considered a 'humanitarian' or 'development' actor. The sources of funding often set rigid parameters for what the funds can be used for and the timeline for delivering the interventions, with very little flexibility.

In applying the HDP Nexus approach, the idea is to conceptualise a comprehensive set of interventions along the continuum that simultaneously looks at immediate measures required to ensure people and communities are safe and their basic needs are met (e.g. food, health, water, shelter provided), and medium- and longer-term interventions to strengthen their resilience capacities (e.g., support to agricultural production, strengthening health systems for crisis management, stronger social cohesion etc.) In the absence of HDP Nexus-conducive funding sources that are long-term and flexible, different sources of funds with associated limitations can be combined in creative ways to implement integrated programming.

UNDP PAPP's response to the COVID-19 pandemic embodied this approach in the oPt. Prior to the pandemic, it had been supporting solid waste management including medical waste and implementing Cash for Work / short-term dignified jobs creation projects deploying staff in health facilities and municipal offices. Thus, when the crisis hit, the Ministry of Health, municipalities, and Joint Service Council for solid waste immediately reached out to UNDP PAPP for assistance.

Recognizing the immediate as well as longer-term needs in Gaza, UNDP's approach was to utilise emergency funding to respond to urgent needs, and simultaneously strengthen the health system. This would allow service providers to not only respond to the current crisis, but also be prepared for future crisis. For example, the microwave for treating hazardous waste was procured with UN humanitarian pooled funding to treat large quantities of infectious COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as masks and gloves; however, it can effectively and efficiently treat other hazardous waste for years to come in an environmentally sustainable manner. Funding from other donors were also utilised to build a permanent structure to house the medical waste microwave, strengthen the institutional capacities of the Joint Service Council, and conduct training for workers and operators. Sustainability was built into the design of the emergency intervention from the onset.

It must be acknowledged that there are important differences in the principles and approaches of humanitarian and development actors. Development initiatives often aim to strengthen institutions and policy /legislative / regulatory frameworks to ensure sustainability. On the other hand, humanitarian interventions often take place in situations of active conflict (or occupation) where governmental institutions do not exist or their legitimacy and/or authority disputed. In the case of oPt, the intra-Palestinian political divide creates additional complexities that affect not only the operational environment (how to deliver), but also the focus of the interventions (what to deliver). UNDP PAPP has taken a practical approach to find entry points at various levels (i.e., national, local) and with diverse entities (e.g., ministries, municipalities, civil society, academia, and private sector).

A key distinction must be made in the measurement of resilience or Transformative Resilience vis-à-vis measurement of the HDP Nexus. While the HDP Nexus approach aims to bring together humanitarian, development and peace actors across the spectrum to overcome issues of fragmentation and promote

coherence, Transformative Resilience is a substantive programmatic approach. Necessarily, the measurement of HDP Nexus is focused on operational aspects (e.g., joint analysis, common strategy/plan, joint programmes), while the measurement of Transformative Resilience requires indicators to capture the change (e.g., stronger Palestinian identity, increased self-reliance, and greater ownership and leadership). UNDP PAPP is currently leading the process of developing a **Transformative Resilience Index (TRI)** for the oPt. Initial thoughts around some of the key elements of the TRI include aspects of humanitarian, development and peace, such as access to basic services, resource independence, economic opportunities, inclusion and participation, social cohesion and sense of belonging, trust and accountability.

#### **IV. SYSTEMS THINKING AND PORTFOLIO APPROACH**

With reference to the HDP Nexus approach, addressing multiple dimensions of overlapping vulnerabilities and strengthening Transformative Resilience requires a sound understanding of the different causal factors and diverse actors, and how they relate to each other. It requires a comprehensive approach to programming that goes beyond sector-focused projects implemented in a disparate manner; it requires a portfolio approach based on systems thinking.

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*Portfolio approaches are an integrated way of designing, financing, and managing interventions through a cohesive framework and dynamic process in order to achieve systems transformation.*

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One example illustrating UNDP PAPP's application of systems thinking is in the area of inclusive economic development. UNDP PAPP has been implementing numerous projects focused on directly creating job opportunities for individuals and supporting entrepreneurship and MSME development that lead to sustainable employment. These projects often provide technical assistance directly to the individuals or businesses, allowing them to improve their technical, entrepreneurial, or business management skills. Some have a specific focus on women-owned businesses, or on including persons with disabilities. Some projects also provide in-kind grants to MSMEs, such as equipment to produce, process or package their products. While these efforts have proven to be effective and do bring real benefits to the people, the scale and reach as well as sustainability is limited.

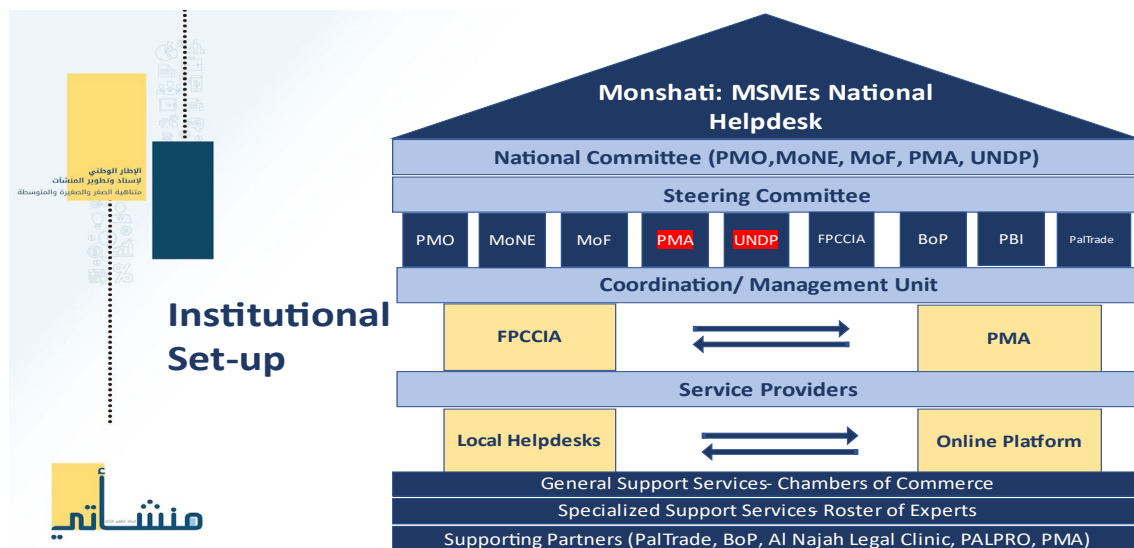
## Monshati National MSME Help Desk

In 2021, UNDP PAPP led the process of conceptualising and piloting the National Helpdesk scheme, Monshati. The initiative was under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), and brought together key governmental entities such as the Palestinian Monetary Authority (PMA), relevant ministries, as well as the private sector including banking institutions, and a non-profit entity. An institutional arrangement was established to ensure strategic and policy level guidance is connected to the coordination and delivery of services through the local chambers of commerce.

A key feature highlighted in the design of this Helpdesk is the integrated nature of the services, both through physical location-specific services and the Monshati online platform. These services include: general guidance on government regulations; financial awareness/ assistance; technical assistance through the deployment of experts in various fields such as product development, packaging, online marketing, crisis management, operational efficiency, and digital transformation; legal assistance and conflict resolution. Having a digital platform where MSMEs register and request / receive services allow data to be collected, analysed, and utilised to tailor services based on need, including those targeting women and youth-led MSMEs.

Bringing diverse stakeholders together allows the Helpdesk to draw on their expertise and knowledge, and capitalise on their connections. Moreover, having a referral system for services beyond those directly provided by the Helpdesk strengthens interlinkages in the MSME ecosystem. MSMEs who improve business practices and standards may be able to access greater financing opportunities. The Helpdesk in essence could help de-risking private investments in the oPt.

The Monshati pilot is currently being evaluated, and one of the initial insights is that the key to a successful portfolio approach is to ensure the main stakeholders have a common vision of the Helpdesk scheme as well as clarity on their roles and responsibilities, and are delivering on those commitments. These aspects are particularly important, as a portfolio approach requires many inter-connected components to be mutually reinforcing, which is dependent on strong partnerships. Key actors working in synergy towards a shared goal leads to joint ownership and sustainability.

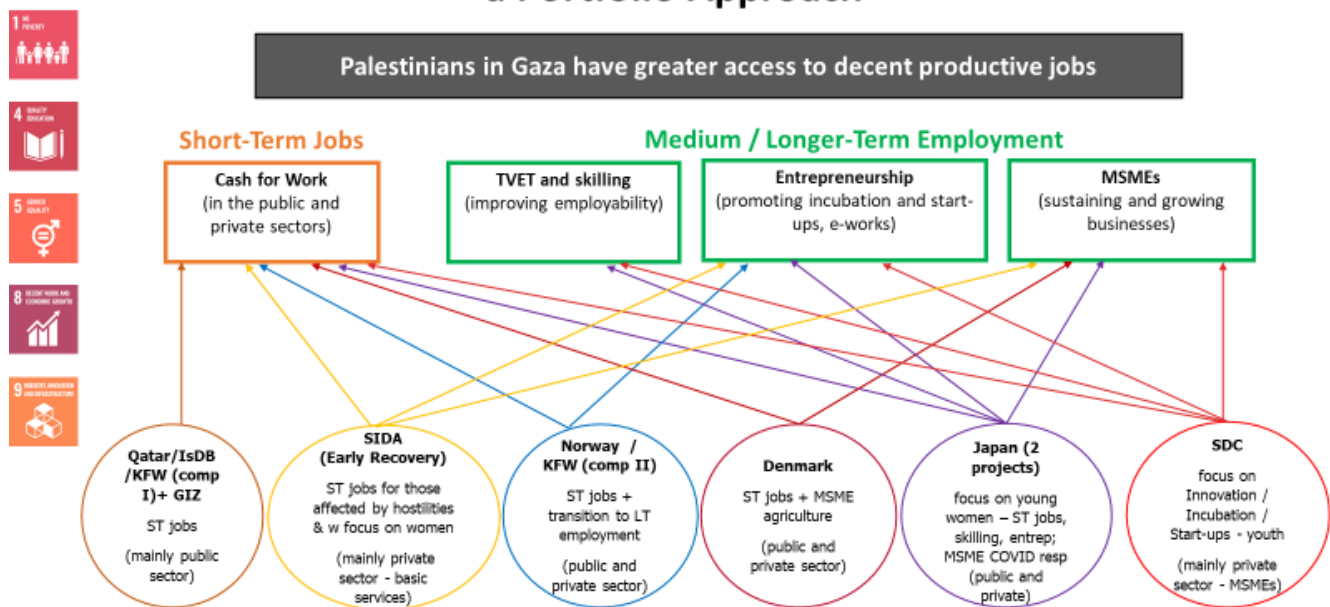


PMO: Prime Minister's Office, MoNE: Ministry of National Economy, MoF: Ministry of Finance, PMA: Palestinian Monetary Authority, FPCCIA: The Federation of Palestinian Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, BoP: Bank of Palestine, PBI: Palestinian Banking Institute, PalTrade: The Palestine Trade Center

Ideally, a comprehensive analysis – whether it be an ecosystems analysis, political economy analysis, conflict sensitivity analysis, institutional and context analysis, or any other analysis, would lead to the design of an integrated portfolio of projects. However, there are often on-going projects that are being implemented and effectively bringing real benefits to the communities. Thus the challenge is to transition existing and new projects into a portfolio of projects that are complementary and reinforcing, and are able to bring greater lasting benefits to the communities.

One example of the evolution of UNDP PAPP’s programmatic interventions is the Path to Economic Recovery Programme in Gaza. The initial project that had one donor focused on cash for work and subsequently another donor focused on additional elements has been transformed into a four-year comprehensive and integrated programme supported by nine donors with a budget of \$40 million (of which \$32 million has been secured). The programme now includes components of cash for work or short-term job creation, longer-term sustainable employment through skilling, entrepreneurship and MSMEs. (See diagram below.)

## Gaza Economic Recovery Programme - a Portfolio Approach



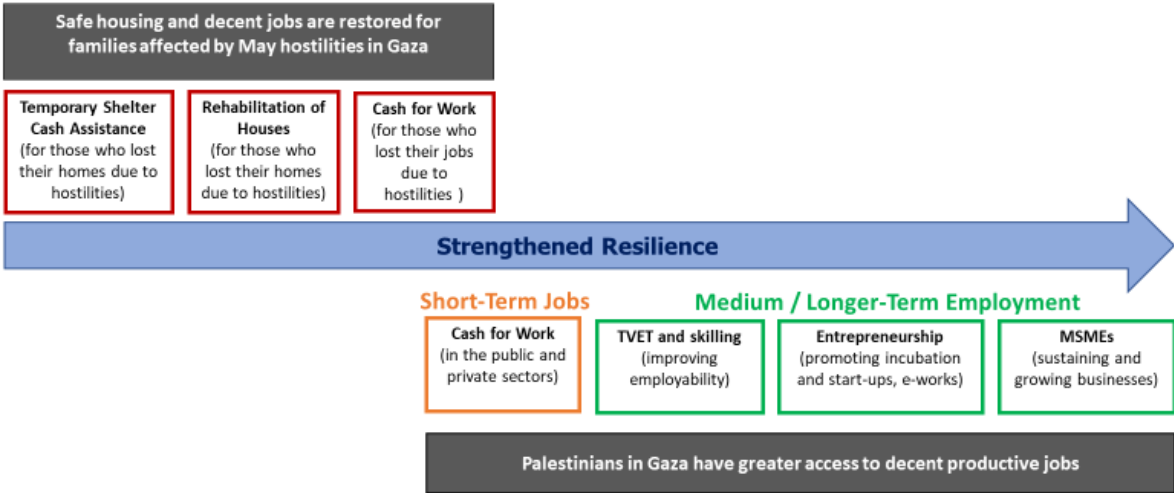
In the Gazan context where unemployment rates have risen above 60% (or 90% among young women), cash for work / short-terms jobs with a minimum wage provide a lifeline for families who cannot afford to buy basic necessities. As the government is experiencing a fiscal crisis and is unable to pay the salaries of essential workers, cash for work/ short-term job creation in the health and education sectors, and in municipalities directly contribute to improved quality and access to basic services. Moreover, cash for work / short-term job creation is attractive to donors wishing to demonstrate tangible results within a short time-frame (e.g. X early people have been employed, X number of workdays have been generated).

While the value of such short-term interventions is undisputed in the Gazan context, sustainability is clearly limited; a stronger link between short-term job creation and longer-term employment interventions is required. The key is to improve the worker’s employability through market-relevant skilling and practical work experience. Moreover, employment in the private sector is critical for economic development, even within the constraints faced by Palestinians living in Gaza. When considering Gaza’s longer-term inclusive economic development, there needs to be a combination of approaches that target individuals (i.e. workers and entrepreneurs) as well as businesses that employ these workers.

In May 2021, UNDP PAPP saw another opportunity to further expand the portfolio approach - this time in a more purposeful manner from the design of the programme. In response to the hostilities by Israel on Gaza (sparked by clashes between Israeli security forces and Palestinians in East Jerusalem and across the oPt), and the devastating impact it had on lives, livelihoods, and infrastructure, a comprehensive Gaza Early Recovery Programme was developed. This included damage and losses assessments, rubble removal and reuse, rehabilitation and reconstruction of houses, temporary shelter cash assistance, and short-term dignified jobs creation. The Programme is currently supported by four donors under one comprehensive programme.

Transformative Resilience and the HDP approach are embedded in the two portfolios – particularly in the Path to Economic Recovery Programme due to the longer-duration and significant size of the programme. However, the Early Recovery Programme has been designed in a way to reduce the affected communities’ reliance on temporary shelter cash assistance, by expediting the rehabilitation of houses and facilitating their return to the job market. The criteria for the short-term dignified jobs creation component prioritises those who have lost their homes or jobs due to the hostilities. The component on rehabilitation of houses employs a self-help modality to empower families to make their own decisions regarding what is required for their homes, creating a greater sense of ownership and dignity. The two programmes complement each other and are connected with the cash for work/ short-term job creation component bridging the two. (See diagram below.)

### Gaza Early Recovery + Economic Recovery Programme - a Portfolio Approach



UNDP PAPP is currently developing the Gaza Economic Resilience Programme that is a further evolution of this thinking. The MSME component incorporates a value-chain approach that considers the entirety of the process starting from sourcing of inputs to production, packaging, marketing, and distribution, etc. Moreover, it focuses on import substitution, while keeping in mind the longer-term horizon of exporting out of Gaza.

## **V. A WAY FORWARD**

Transformative Resilience (a strategic vision and substantive framework), HDP Nexus (an approach that facilitates collaboration and complementarity), Portfolio Management (a way of managing interventions that promotes integration and coherence) based on a Systems Approach (recognising complexity and how key players and factors interact) are mutually reinforcing. These concepts, frameworks, approaches, and modalities are particularly relevant for UNDP PAPP and partners seeking to contribute towards fundamental change in the Palestinian context as they help to make sense of and make a difference in a complex and rapidly evolving context.

UNDP PAPP will continue to convene dialogues with partners across the HDP spectrum, including national counterparts, donors, UN entities, NGOs, civil society, academia, and the private sector, to refine the conceptual framework and develop measures of Transformative Resilience. As an organisation that has a broad mandate of socio-economic development in the oPt, and extensive experience and expertise across all sectors, UNDP PAPP will continue to engage in efforts to bring the humanitarian, development, and peace actors together towards an integrated approach to promoting resilience, including through UN-wide processes. At the same time, UNDP PAPP will continue to implement concrete programmatic interventions that embody Transformative Resilience, and explore, pilot and document approaches that are most effective, with the support of donors who appreciate experimentation and risk taking.

UNDP PAPP is committed to working with partners to strengthen the Transformative Resilience of the Palestinian people, promoting a cohesive Palestinian identity, self-reliance, and ownership and leadership – in the face of occupation.