MID-TERM REVIEW

MID-TERM REVIEW/EVALUATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY – PARTNERSHIP FOR DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT

IMPLEMENTED BY NORWEGIAN PEOPLE'S AID

SUBMITTED BY STRATEGIC INNOVATION CONSULTING

December 31, 2018

FINAL REPORT

Contents

List of Acronyms

ARA	Access Restricted Areas
CSO	Civil society organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DWRC	Democracy and Workers' Rights Centre in Palestine
FGD	Focus group discussion
GUCC	General Union of Cultural Centers
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
KII	Key informant interview
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation, and learning
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
PCDCR	Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution
PNGO	Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations' Network
REFORM	Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development
SFI	Students Forum Institute
SYFS	Save Youth Future Society
TFS	Tawasol Forum Society
ToC	Theory of change
ToR	Terms of reference
UAWC	Union of Agricultural Work Committees
UPWC	Union of Palestinian Women's Committees
WBG	West Bank and Gaza
YC	Youth council

Executive Summary

The Civil Society – Partnership for Democratic Development program, funded by NORAD and implemented by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), seeks to strengthen the capacity of Palestinian civil society organizations – particularly in West Bank and Gaza (WBG)- to influence political decision making. The program has worked with 14 partner organizations - women's rights organizations, youth-based organizations, local rights advocacy organizations, and umbrella organizations - to build the capacity of these organizations to influence political decision making, specifically decisions on land and resource rights, and to strengthen the role of women and youth in such decisions. This mid-term review of the program, completed between September 2018 and January 2019, utilizes a mixed-methods design, with a primary emphasis on the qualitative data, collected in focus group discussions and interviews with staff members from the partner organizations, project participants, NPA staff and direct observation. The mid-term review also undertook a desk review of existing project documents, as well as some minimal additional collection of quantitative data from partners, such as cost data. The mid-term review is intended solely for program implementers, as they seek to identify ways to improve the program, with specific focus on NPA's added value, partners' capacity in organizing people, women's and youth participation in partners' structures and in the program's design and implementation, as well as the program's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

Given the context in which NPA works in Palestine, land and resource rights can be considered particularly threatened. In addition, in this context, women and youth are often marginalized, as enfranchising them and ensuring that their voices are heard is often considered a lower priority than these land and resource rights, as well as political rights, are. It is in this milieu that the program seeks to strengthen civil society organizations – including their women and youth members – to influence political decision making in Palestine. In addition, the program seeks to strengthen partners' capacity to influence change and to mobilize and organize people in their communities. It also works to ensure that NPA partners have effective democratic structures and good governance practices.

The data collected as a part of this mid-term review show several major trends among partners. The first set of findings is related to training. The majority of the participants found that the trainings were beneficial and offered them good knowledge and skills related to political participation. However, some of the participants indicated that the duration of some trainings was not sufficient to ensure meaningful behavior change related to such entrenched political and socio-cultural norms. Another concern raised by those participants was the theoretical nature of some of the trainings, such as political dialogue and leadership, which did not always give them practical opportunities to put what they learned in training into action.

The second set of findings dealt with communication and collaboration across NPA partners, and according to NPA objectives. While NPA routinely communicated with each partner, many partners noted that the partners themselves did not have opportunities to work together and NPA staff felt that partners weren't all working according to the same criteria, ranging from selection criteria to monitoring and evaluation.

Finally, NPA staff were concerned that NPA partnership might actually reduce partner sustainability and increase dependency, while most partners felt that NPA's long-term funding allowed them to focus more time on implementation of their core activities and increased their effectiveness. This report finds that both views are simultaneously true.

Several key recommendations arise from these findings:

- Allow more time for training intended to change political and socio-cultural norms;
- Implement activities – such as lobbying meetings and publication training - that support the institutionalization of NPA's objectives directly with partner organization staff;
- Support structural changes that move women and youth into decision-making positions within NPA partner organizations;
- Increase communication among NPA partners and design a communications strategy to structure the process of improving communication among them;
- Develop, in collaboration with NPA partners, eligibility criteria for participants, participate in the selection process, and ensure that program participants are not selected by more than one partner;
- Conduct organizational assessments covering areas such as governance, human resource management, and financial management, for all partner NGOs;
- Revise NPA strategic priority for the selection of partners, focusing on sustainability; and
- Revise and upgrade the NPA monitoring and evaluation system to ensure data quality among partners and add a learning component (MEL) to the existing M&E system.

For more detail, see the Recommendations section of this report.

Background

NPA is a Norwegian non-governmental organization working internationally with development and humanitarian programs in approximately 45 countries around the world, including the occupied Palestinian territory. In Palestine, the NPA's program goal is "**to enable the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and networks to influence political decision making in Palestine.**" NPA's approach in its civil society program is to strengthen partners' capacity to influence change, to mobilize and organize people in their communities and ensure partners have effective democratic structures and good governance practices.

Evaluation Purpose and Objectives

The backbone of the Development Program in Palestine is the four-year Cooperation Agreement with NORAD (2016-2019). This assignment will serve as a mid-term review of this agreement, but the scope of the exercise is to look at the NPA Palestine approach to civil society development and its longer-term impact – which also includes shorter-term projects/initiatives. The findings and recommendations from the evaluation will be used by NPA Palestine and the NPA Head Office to inform strategic development of the program and to pinpoint future priorities for NPA in Palestine.

The mid-term review covers the duration of the program from its start date in January 2016 to the beginning of the mid-term review in August 2018. It assesses program performance and progress against the review criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact with focus on:

- **Added value of NPA**
- **Partners' capacity in organizing people**
- **Women and youth participation in partners' structures and in the projects' design and implementation**

The nature of the mid-term review is a management tool to provide NPA Palestine with an account of results achieved at the time of reporting, and to guide for the remaining period of the cooperation agreement. The purpose of the review is to evaluate the Civil Society - Partnership for Democratic Development program to provide an overview and assessment on the achievement of the outcome "Civil society organizations influence political decision making."

The following are, in brief, the expected results of the program:

- People organizing around land and resource rights have been strengthened.
- The increase ratio of agricultural allocations in the state general budget by 2-3% has been adopted.
- Farmers' capacity to access, reclaim, rehabilitate, and cultivate land in the ARA has been enhanced.
- Coalitions of youth and women built by NPA Partners and young women leaders in political parties know how to explain and claim their rights to others outside the coalitions/networks, using the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as a basis.
- There are increased numbers of women active in political parties and in leadership positions in Palestinian political parties and on the boards of local CSOs.
- The capacities of youth members of coalitions/networks that share common political analysis across Gaza and the West Bank have been strengthened.

Evaluation Design and Methodology

Evaluation Framework

The mid-term review utilized a mixed-methods approach with a focus on qualitative methodologies, focusing primarily on the added value of NPA; the partners' capacity in organizing people; and women's and youth participation in partners' structures and in the projects' design and implementation, as indicated in the ToR. In addition, the mid-term review examined the five DAC criteria for quality evaluations: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The review incorporated a gender-sensitive and evidence-based approach throughout the process. Qualitative data collection was conducted via key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs), and direct observation. Quantitative data was, for the most part, not separately collected, but the evaluation team made use of existing quantitative data from the desk review, some of which was provided by partners at the qualitative data collection phase; this quantitative data included data related to specific indicators for the project,

membership data (for decision-making bodies as well as organization- and sector-wide populations), disaggregated by sex and age whenever possible, and budget data.

The evaluation employed a utilization-focused research approach. Based on Patton (2008), utilization-focused evaluation aims to conduct evaluations and present the findings from them in a way that ensures their use by the program key stakeholders, including the program's participants.

The evaluation was structured around a set of evaluation questions set out in the ToR and further developed by the evaluation team according to the DAC criteria for evaluation, listed below:

A. Added value of NPA
1. What has NPA contributed at the partner level in relation to their capacity to achieve the established partner NGO project goals?

B. Partners' capacity in organizing people
2. Do participants in the project take initiatives to reach concrete short-term goals in an organized manner?
3. Are there concrete examples of the above-mentioned initiatives undertaken based on partners' support to specific/target group/beneficiaries?

C. Women's and youth participation in partners' structures and in the projects' design and implementation
4. Are there women and youth included in the decision making in the partners structures? How?
5. Are women and youth included in the decision making in the design and implementation of the projects? How?
6. How has NPA contributed to increase partners' capacity to include youth and women in the different processes within the organization and at project level?

D. Relevance
7. To what extent does the partnership's work (including training) dovetail with existing strategic goals of the NPA partners? What is the community role (specifically, farmer and fisher associations) in formulating the initiatives supported by the project?
8. How were the beneficiaries selected by the partners? What were the criteria for selection?

E. Efficiency
9. Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? What explains differences in cost for similar activities among partners in the same location?

F. Effectiveness
10. To what extent are the partners' projects implemented as planned by the project documents? If not, why not?
11. Will the project achieve the expected results? What factors either enabled or hindered timely delivery and how have they impacted the results? Have effectiveness and quality increased over time?

G. Impact
12. To what extent has the project made the participants better engaged in political issues, more aware of their rights, and more involved in lobbying and networking? Has the project increased the number of the participants in activities to advocate for their rights?

13. What kinds of training have the partners participated in as a part of the project? Did the training enable the partners to better deliver the services that contributed to the achievement of the project objective?
14. What are the unintended outcomes of the partnerships thus far?

H. Sustainability

15. To what extent has the project established processes and mechanisms (including M&E plans) to promote the sustainability of the results? How will costs covered by the partnership be covered in the future, after the end of the partnership? Has the partners' financial dependency on NPA grants increased during the period? What are partners' exit strategies?

Cross-cutting Themes/ Women's and Youth Rights

The evaluation team addressed the program's impact and outcomes in relation to the overall influence of the project on its situational environment, especially regarding gender and youth rights. The evaluation team reviewed the indicators in the log-frame related to the cross-cutting themes and discussed these themes with NPA during the kick-off meeting. For example, according to the ToR, women and youth are among the targeted participants of the program and gender equality is the one of the highest priorities. During the desk review, the evaluation team checked the indicators related to women's and youth participation/ inclusion in the project activities, as well as the reasonability of the participation and the likelihood of the program meeting its end-of-program indicators. .
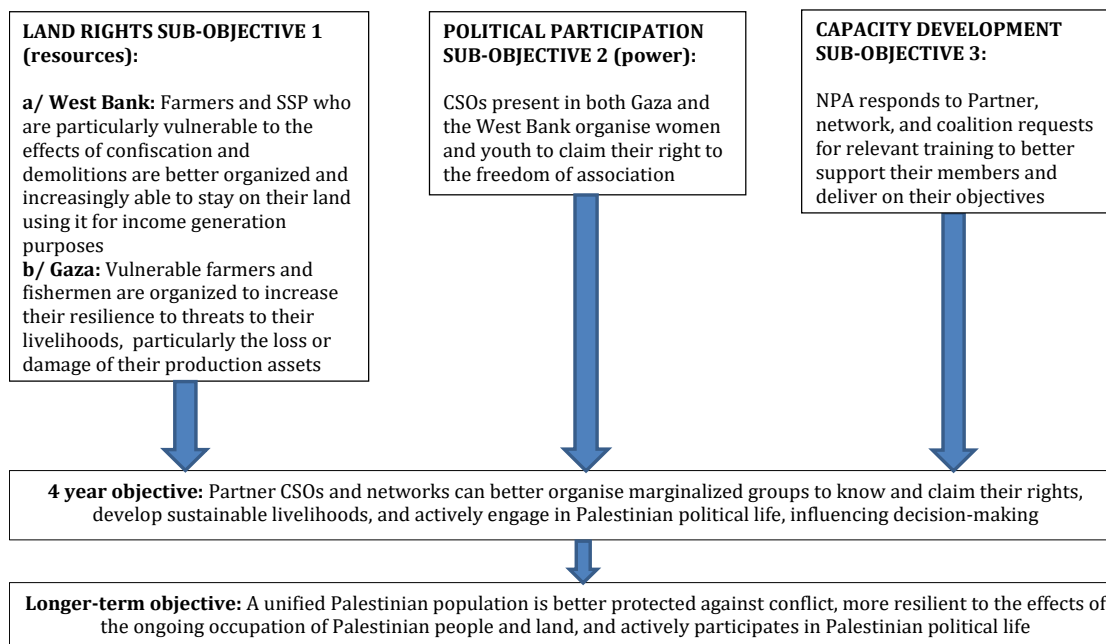
The review team disaggregated existing membership data by sex and age to address the project impact on women and youth. During the qualitative data collection, the review team ensured that the sampled participants reflected gender and age diversity insofar as was possible within the existing population. Observations also examined the number of women and youth present and engaged at the observed activities.

Evaluation Methodology

Phase 1: Inception Phase

The inception phase began with a briefing between NPA and the evaluation team. All of NPA's relevant documents required for the literature review were shared with the evaluation team at the time of this briefing; other background data was collected from partners during the data collection phase. As a part of the inception phase, the evaluation team examined the theory of change and indicators for the project, as well as quantitative data at baseline, along with all relevant documents (including proposals, results framework, strategic plans, and annual reports). The framework below presents an overview of the program's theory of change (TOC):

LAND RIGHTS SUB-OBJECTIVE 1 (resources):	POLITICAL PARTICIPATION SUB-OBJECTIVE 2 (power):	CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT SUB-OBJECTIVE 3:
a/ West Bank: Farmers and SSP who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of confiscation and demolitions are better organized and increasingly able to stay on their land using it for income generation purposes **b/ Gaza:** Vulnerable farmers and fishermen are organized to increase their resilience to threats to their livelihoods, particularly the loss or damage of their production assets	CSOs present in both Gaza and the West Bank organise women and youth to claim their right to the freedom of association	NPA responds to Partner, network, and coalition requests for relevant training to better support their members and deliver on their objectives

4 year objective: Partner CSOs and networks can better organise marginalized groups to know and claim their rights, develop sustainable livelihoods, and actively engage in Palestinian political life, influencing decision-making

Longer-term objective: A unified Palestinian population is better protected against conflict, more resilient to the effects of the ongoing occupation of Palestinian people and land, and actively participates in Palestinian political life

As a part of the inception phase, the review team developed qualitative tools to provide insight into the benefit of NPA partnerships, the capacity of the partner organizations, and the enfranchisement of women and youth in organizational decision-making. These tools were based on the evaluation questions listed in the ToR for use in the key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with staff from partner organizations. These instruments were reviewed and approved by NPA staff. In addition, after the inception phase, the review team determined that the evaluation questions required that some quantitative data needed to be collected and developed a few questions to be used for this purpose. This review also made use of existing quantitative data, including indicator data, to triangulate findings from the quantitative data collection. Questions on all instruments built on the available quantitative data made available by NPA. The triangulation was conducted using combined methods of data collection such as documents review, FGDs, interviews, and observations to minimize the data bias. The data also collected from different sources including the NPA partner managers and coordinators, beneficiaries, and NPA staff.

Phase 2: Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection

The methodology was designed to fulfill the mid-term review objectives and answer the evaluation questions listed in the ToR, as well additional evaluation questions developed by the review team and pertinent to the DAC five criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability), as requested in the ToR. The review utilized a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative processes for data collection and analysis.

For the quantitative data, the review team used, primarily, existing indicator data and cost data from partners, although some of this data did need to be collected during the data collection phase. The cost data was used to answer evaluation questions that related to efficiency. For the qualitative collection, the review team used a mixture of field visits (observations), semi-structured interviews, KIIs, and FGDs with limited groups of program participants and other stakeholders, who were selected purposefully to provide in-depth knowledge about the evaluation questions. Given the short timeline for the review, the evaluation team treated the first two interviews and focus groups as a small pilot of the interview and

focus group instruments, and the first observation as a pilot for the observation instrument. The data collection methodology is summarized below and then detailed in the sub-sections that follow:

- Desk studies and literature review (including existing quantitative data);
- Key informant interviews (KIIs);
- Focus group discussions (FGDs); and
- Observations.

Desk Studies and Literature Review

The evaluation team reviewed secondary data and the available program documents as provided by NPA and partners. These documents include NPA Palestine Country Strategy; program plan; program reports; NPA International Strategy 2016-2019 – Partnership for Democratization; NPA policies on Partnership, Organization and Participation, and Land and Natural Resources; previous evaluations and reviews; the original program document; results framework; partners' reports; and other relevant correspondence, in addition to the available disaggregated data related to indicators, targets, outputs, and outcomes through the M&E system of the project. NPA partners also provided data about costs and organizational membership and leadership. The document review provided the review team with a thorough understanding of the program components, rationale, results and the activities within each result, specific objectives, overall objectives, program evolution, a cross-check of the data or a standard of comparison; and a baseline for comparison after the intervention. Furthermore, the review facilitated the design of the evaluation by identifying the key issues and questions, the context of the program, the proposed target groups, and their relevance to the program objectives. The review lent insight into the timeliness of program activities and outputs according to NPA specifications.

Theory of Change (ToC)

The evaluation team used the program's theory of change. The Civil Society – Partnership for Democratic Development ToC is built on enabling marginalized groups to have access to and control over natural resources and social and political rights through organization and mobilization strategies. These strategies provide more formal mechanisms for citizen engagement, such as legal processes or formal complaint mechanisms, which are not always easily accessible. It also works to change the behavior of the officials or civil servants to be more accountable to citizens and their priorities.

Semi-structured Interviews

Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted with the program management and technical support including staff and management at NPA Palestine office, staff associated with the project's financial administration and procurement, with NPA partners in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and program participants and other stakeholders involved with this program. The list of interviewees from different groups of stakeholders was developed in cooperation and approved by NPA.

To ensure the participatory nature of the interviews, a brief guide was sent to interviewees detailing the topics that will be covered during the interview. Before the interview, the review team explained the purpose of the interview and what would be done with the information and then the participants confirmed whether they would like to take part. Interviewees were assured that participation was voluntary, with no repercussions should they refuse. The following table shows the number of interviewees and the number of the interviews and Annex I shows the names of interviewees.

Stakeholder group	Number of interviewees	Number of interviews
NPA staff	5	5

NPA partner staff	28	20
Total	**33**	**25**

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Qualitative data was obtained through a series of focus group discussions with the project participants as agreed with NPA during the inception phase. Sampling for focus groups and interviews made use of a purposive sample, designed to elicit the most in-depth data about the evaluation questions. The purpose of the focus groups was to get more in-depth information on perceptions, insights, attitudes, and experiences about the project's impact, design, and constraints. The questions focused on the evaluation questions, based on the evaluation criteria outlined in the ToR. The following table shows the total number of the focus group conducted and total number of the participants. Annex II shows the number of the participants for each of the sampled partners.

Stakeholder group	Number of focus groups	Total number of participants
Program participants	12	111

Direct Observation

The evaluation team conducted field visits the project locations where the activities were taking place to observe selected activities and locations. The observations made use of an observation guide designed to focus the observational data collection on the most relevant data for use in answering the evaluation questions listed above. The evaluation team planned to conduct one observation of activities for each of the sampled partners, but only managed to conduct one observation for SYFS and one observation for PCDCR, as there was no activities organized by other partners during the evaluation period.

Existing Quantitative Data (from the Desk Review)

Quantitative data for the mid-term review came from the desk review and NPA's existing quantitative data, such as indicator data. The existing data were triangulated with qualitative data collected during the mid-term review to produce a mixed-methods analysis of the partnerships program. Quantitative data was produced from the qualitative instruments, with agreement between NPA and the evaluation team finalized before the inception phase and instrument development process.

Sampling and Sample Size

The qualitative data collected used a purposive sample, with partners selected for inclusion based on several factors: sector of work; location; and timeline for the partnership (e.g., is it ongoing or has it been phased out?). Based on these criteria, the review team selected a sample of 10 CSOs per the following table:

#	Name of partner	Land Rights	Political participation / active	Youth	Women
1	Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC)	X	X		
2	Students Forum Institute (SFI)		X	X	

#	Name of partner	Land Rights	Political participation / active	Youth	Women
3	The Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network (PNGO)		X	X	X
4	The Democracy and Workers' Rights Centre in Palestine (DWRC)			X	
5	The Palestinian Center For Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR)		X	X	X
6	Union of Palestinian Women's Committees (UPWC)		X	X	X
7	General Union of Cultural Centers (GUCC)			X	
8	Tawasol Forum Society (TFS)			X	
9	The Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development (REFORM)		X	X	
10	Save Youth Future Society (SYFS)			X	

The evaluation team collected qualitative data from both partner staff (directors and program staff) and program participants from each of the partnership's sampled initiatives and organizations. Program participants were sampled with sensitivity to gender, age, and geographical location. Ten program participants were sampled for participation in FGDs for each organization included in the sample, for a total of 111 program participants who actually participated in the FGDs. During all data collection, the review team paid particular attention to the empowerment of women and youth, with specific questions, probes, and observation guidance dedicated to collecting data relevant to this question.

Data Analysis
Data analysis reflected the evaluation focus, questions, and evaluation matrix. The qualitative data from interviews and FGDs was reviewed and analyzed using a codebook based on the evaluation matrix. The results were triangulated with existing quantitative data where appropriate and used to respond to the evaluation questions according to the evaluation matrix.

Phase 3: Reporting
The evaluation team compiled data collected from all sources into a draft report for NPA review. Upon receiving NPA's written feedback on the draft report via Microsoft Word comments, the review team revised the report for submission for NPA approval. The review team recommends requiring a management response from NPA to help ensure the internalization and utilization of evaluation findings and recommendations.

In the draft and final reports, based on the data categorization and analysis, the evaluation team has outlined findings and made recommendations for the action of NPA based on the evaluation questions. These conclusions and recommendations included overall on implementation, the identification of possible improvements, key challenges and constraints, progress towards the achievement of the

purpose, and a set of recommendations based on the evaluation questions on NPA added value, partner capacity in organizing people, women's and youth participation, as well the additional evaluation questions based on the DAC criteria. These recommendations considered both ongoing and future activities through the project implementation and beyond.

Evaluation Governance and Ethics

This review utilized a participatory approach whenever possible. This approach was intended to ensure that the project participants, including women and youth, were engaged and that findings were derived from a collective contribution. All those engaged in designing, conducting, and managing evaluation activities aspired to conduct high-quality and ethical work guided by professional standards and ethical and moral principles. The consultancy followed the NPA Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis. The inception report identified potential ethical issues, as well as measures and methods adopted to mitigate against these issues. The review ensured adequate adherence to NPA's evaluation quality assurance criteria and processes and proper coverage of limitations.

Moreover, all interviewees were informed of the objectives of each interview and the intended use of the results; they were also informed that all statements and input would be kept confidential and/or anonymous. Consent to participate was taken from all participants, who were given the option to withdraw their consent and participation at any moment. Participants were also reassured that their choice to participate would not affect their position in the project or future projects with NPA and its partners.

All data collected was kept confidential and names of individuals deleted from the data and replaced by codes for any submission to NPA. Ownership of all data, information, and findings gathered through M&E activities lies with the contracting authority. The use of the data/information/findings for publication or any other presentation or sharing will only be made after agreement with the NPA.

The correspondences, information, outcomes, and deliverables of this Consultancy are to be treated with absolute confidentiality and are the sole property of the NPA. Issued reports will not be provided to external sources without the written approval of the NPA. Further, the review team has abided by the rules and principles of NPA regarding confidentiality and ethical issues.

Limitations

The evaluation team encountered some limitations during the mid-term review process. Most of these limitations occurred at the data collection phase.

The first limitation related to the timeline for the review. The tight timeline for the data collection, and the review overall, created too small a window for data collection, and two of the partners did not participate in data collection until after the first draft of the report was submitted, due to their own lack of availability during the data collection window. The timeline also necessitated data collection from one partner by a member of the review team who also trained some of their staff; under normal circumstances, this arrangement would not be ideal for data collection. Further compounding the access problem was the NPA delegation that visited partners during the data collection period and rendered them unable to meet with the data collection team.

Findings

Added value of Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

1. What has NPA contributed at the partner level in relation to their capacity to achieve the established partner NGO project goals?

The focus group and interview data showed that program participants and NPA partner staff viewed NPA contributions somewhat differently.

Among program participants, NPA's work was believed to add value to the existing landscape of their sectors in three key ways : a) it helped them strengthen skills they needed to be effective in their own work; b) it changed their perspectives on working with people from backgrounds different than their own; and c) it gave them access to spaces they had not, previously, been able to access.

NPA's work across all the sampled organizations included support for training programs. Some partner organizations' training programs worked specifically with women and/or youth, while others targeted training participants based on their sector, such as farmers and fishers. Several participants across all types of partners and training programs, however, mentioned that the skills covered in their training programs were both well-targeted to their own needs and difficult to learn elsewhere. UAWC's fishers admitted that before the NPA-supported training, they did not know how to organize themselves and so did not know how to make their voices heard, especially since their syndicate did not always help much. As a part of NPA's work, these fishers participated in training on advocacy and social movements, skills on which they had no prior knowledge, and they credited this training with improvements in their ability to organize themselves and demand improvements in their working conditions. The five local fisher committees that UAWC helped establish play effective roles in organizing fishers. Participants from PCDCR's training highlighted the scarcity of training for candidates for office and social activists – especially those that focus on women's participation - outside of activities specifically-affiliated with political parties. PCDCR's participants also mentioned civics content and noted that they came away from the training with better knowledge of not only citizens' rights, but also their duties. One participant from PNGO noted that policy dialogue training is unusual, and that M&E, while more common as a training topic, is very difficult, and needs lots of technical focus on it, and that NPA's support helped PNGO provide such necessary training. Furthermore, one participant indicated that the M&E manual developed by PNGO is now "a reference document for our work in our organization."

Participants from several different organizations mentioned that the trainings they attended taught them better communication skills, such as making presentations and debating with respect to all points of view, as well as simply expressing one's own perspective in a public setting. Several hinted that though training on some of these skills is not difficult to find, high-quality training on these skills relies on underlying principles, such as respect for demographic and ideological diversity, that must be explicitly taught as a part of such training, and that these principles are often missing from other, similar training courses. It is possible that NPA's explicitly-political focus has provided more freedom for trainers to address such principles more openly than is possible in training funded by other donors.

Participants across organizations also noted the importance of NPA-supported training in bringing them together with those who did not share their backgrounds, either demographically or ideologically. REFORM participants appreciated the inclusion of participants from different geographical areas, while GUCC participants cited "social tolerance" as a key skill they improved through the training.

Training participants reported that one of the most important benefits of NPA's support to its partners was the access this support gave them, as program participants, to decision-makers and to powerful spaces they had previously been unable to access consistently. REFORM held coordination meetings to bring youth together with decision-makers. Several PCDCR participants reported successful entry to neighbourhood committees and the Palestinian reconciliation talks, and SYFS credited NPA's support with "the only chance to work with elected youth councils" to train the councils' members and plan and implement volunteer projects with them. UAWC indicated that NPA support allowed the union to work regionally by establishing the farmers movements. PNGO also indicated that NPA support allowed PNGO to establish the different sector networks within PNGO, such as the agricultural sector, the women's sector, and the disabilities sector.

NPA's NGO partners highlighted a different aspect of NPA's work that stood out to them: long-term partnership. For NGO partners, long-term partnership added value over the more typical donor-recipient relationship because the long-term nature of the agreements with NPA allowed the development of truly collaborative partnerships. Over time, organizations were able to work together with NPA in two key ways to improve their work: a) building their own staff's capacity, both through their work on NPA-funded projects and through direct training funded by NPA; and b) forging long-term, trusting and flexible partnerships that, by nature of their length, led to improvements in process.

Most sampled staff at NPA's NGO partners felt that NPA-provided training had improved their organizations' capacity. REFORM credited NPA with improvements in staff capacity on a large range of topics, including social and political issues; networking; policy formation; facilitation; analysis; and conflict transformation. DWRC reported technical assistance in such diverse areas as financial management, first aid, and digital security, while GUCC reported useful training in financial management and procurement. SYFS appreciated NPA's dedicated budget line item for the building of organizational capacity; the implication, of course, is that such a line item is not common among donors, and credited NPA support with improvements in their M&E, financial, and procurement management. Furthermore, the UAWC project manager indicated that "I started with UAWC as a volunteer in 2008. Then I became a project coordinator for the NPA project and now I am the project manager of NPA and the manager of the advocacy unit of the UAWC. All what I currently know is from NPA through my daily interaction with the NPA staff: managing project, monitoring progress, report writing, and even my English has improved. Before, I did not know much about advocacy. Now, I am leading the advocacy effort of the UAWC." PNGO also highlighted improvements in M&E as a result of NPA training (the training was conducted by PNGO in 2017 for its partners and its staff as well). PCDCR staff reported improved capacity, as a result of different trainings, in debate, social accountability, gender equality, political participation, change theory, and advocacy campaigns.

The most important value of NPA's work, however, for most of the NGO partners, came from the long-term aspect of the partnership itself. The partners felt that NPA was a true partner, who would support their work through multiple initiatives, and with whom they had cultivated some trust. SFI said that this trust "gives [us] the chance to implement [our] goals and make [our] vision real," and noted that NPA partnership continues through the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases of each of their projects. REFORM reported satisfaction with the level of coordination inherent in its NPA partnership, which provided opportunities the reflect and exchange both experience and data that would not be possible in more tradition support mechanisms. PCDCR staff noted that because of the long-term nature of their partnership with NPA, projects were cumulative, building upon each other and resulting in "comprehensive interventions." GUCC also noted that long-term change requires long-term partnership: "If the partnership [aims] to strengthen a rights-based Palestinian network - which is now to some extent responsive to the needs of [its] members - and also influence political life and decision-making," the

long-term nature of NPA's support has been particularly effective.

The partners attributed the effectiveness of NPA's intervention to its long-term nature and the trust that resulted from both the length of the partnership and the shared values involved in it. PNGO, UAWC, and PCDCR noted that NPA's main office location in Gaza is unusual – the only donor to headquarter their office in Gaza: "This helps a lot. We feel that we are very close to NPA." DWRC emphasized NPA's connections to the trade union movement in Norway and its focus on social change, including over the long-term in Palestine, in explaining why their partnership works: shared values and strategies cultivated over the long-term. PCDCR characterized its relationship with NPA as one in which "mutual respect" exists. UAWC, SYFS, and GUCC all reported alignment of NPA values with their own; according to GUCC, "Norwegian [People's] Aid is the only donor whose strategic objectives intersect with national goals. NPA support in funding projects is always implemented with flexibility and supports the identity and ownership of its partners." According to PNGO, "We do not feel that NPA is a donor. We feel it is more a true partner."

Partners' capacity in organizing people

2. Do participants in the project take initiatives to reach concrete short-term goals in an organized manner?

3. Are there concrete examples of the above-mentioned initiatives undertaken based on partners' support to specific/target group/beneficiaries?

As already illustrated above, NPA partners and their program participants found NPA-supported training, aimed at building their capacity in various fields, useful. As reported in Section A, both NPA's partner NGOs and the NGO's program participants reported ways in which NPA-supported training has improved their administrative skills in areas such as finance, procurement, and M&E,-, as well as process skills such as facilitation and communication. SFI reported that since its work with NPA in these areas began in 2016, the organization has developed its administrative law and procedures, as well as both the information and accounting systems. At PNGO, one M&E training participant cited the following example of the training's usefulness: "Now I am the reference person for the log-frame and indicators at our organization. All the project coordinators come to me to assist them in developing their log-frames. Furthermore, I participated in developing the project proposal for our organization by developing the log-frame for the intended project." Other PNGO staff reported that the M&E training gave them the confidence to request a modification to the log-frame and the indicators by another funder, and the funder approved the request.

Many program participants and NGO partners reported initiatives taken by program participants themselves, at least partially as a result of NPA's work. DWRC reported that the establishment of the National Youth Council in Gaza partially resulted from NPA's support and noted that several youth participants also developed action plans to submit their demands on employment policies in Gaza to decision-makers. The same organization also reported that their legal consultations and advice, supported by NPA, empowered almost 30% of their participants who are young workers to take some form of action to demand their rights at work. SYFS reported that the youth council members with whom it works are now essentially planning and implementing open days entirely by themselves, without much continued intervention from SYFS. Several PCDCR participants were successfully elected or nominated for positions on neighborhood committees and as a part of political reconciliation talks, positions in which they would not previously have felt comfortable expressing interest.   Indeed, PCDCR reported that "NPA helped to change PCDCR's way of working from providing services to work on women issues

and political participation," indicating the whole NGO's shift in focus to active political participation instead of more passive expectations of program participants. In another example of political initiative, UAWC's participating fishers participated in demonstration to pressure Israeli forces to allow them free access to the sea, and in a sit-in against Israeli plans to evacuate Khan al-Ahmar in Jerusalem. The fishers also initiated a petition to force the fishers' syndicate to conduct elections. More than 1,000 fishers signed this petition and due to such pressure, the syndicate conducted an election. Furthermore, UAWC with the newly established Palestinian Peasants Movement, that UAWC had helped establish, organized a large demonstration in which thousands of people, including women, farmers, fishers, and members of the Palestinian Peasants Movement cheered against internal division and against the Israeli siege imposed on Gaza for more than 11 years. In fact, UAWC established more than 90 farmer and fisher local committees, which are spread all over the West Bank and Gaza. The committees' members are active in determining needs, nominating beneficiaries, and monitoring the implementation of UAWC activities on the ground. In addition, they participate heavily in UAWC advocacy activities, such as this large demonstration.

Still, however, NGO partners and their participants could, in some ways, improve both initiative and organization. While the data collected offered strong evidence that NGO partners and their participants felt that their training was useful, and good self-reported evidence that the training did lead to increased capacity, it provided less evidence that NGO partners took more initiative. Self-reported data also makes it somewhat difficult to determine, in more quantifiable terms, the degree of capacity development; in other words, most participants felt that their capacity increased, but could not necessarily measure how much. The self-reported data makes it clear that organization probably did improve in the areas of finance, procurement, and M&E, as well as in facilitation, communication, and social tolerance, but it may be useful, in the future, to further study the degree to which capacity develops under each organization's training.

Other factors, some external and some under the control of NPA, also affected the extent to which NGO partner staff and their program participants could demonstrate their newly-acquired skills. Most of the NGO partners, as well as the program participants, indicated that the implementation timeline for the program has not yet allowed enough time for impact of the training to be demonstrated. Many respondents said that they needed more time to apply what they learned as a part of the NPA-supported training and hoped that they would have such time in the second part of the project.

In addition to such internal factors as timeline, several organizations also pointed to ongoing access challenges to the speedy implementation of skills and principles learned in training. As one GUCC participant noted, "Our work is with young people, but it's hard to institutionalize/organize without the support of more powerful actors, legal cover, and institutionalization within schools."

Women's and youth participation in partners' structures and in the projects' design and implementation

4. Are there women and youth included in the decision making in the partners structures? How?

5. Are women and youth included in the decision making in the design and implementation of the projects? How?

6. How has NPA contributed to increase partners' capacity to include youth and women in the different processes within the organization and at project level?

NPA's NGO partners exhibit a range of practices regarding the inclusion of women and youth in the decision-making structures and processes of their organizations. Some organizations are specifically-focused on women and youth, while others focus on political participation generally, and the composition of the organizations' staff and governing bodies closely reflect the organizations' fields of interest and priorities.

At REFORM, all departments participate in the design phase of project planning, under the supervision of the general manager. The organization's staff itself is 50% female, and 80% of the staff is under the age of 35 (100% under 40). The board of trustees for the organization is 56% female, and 100% under 40.

DWRC has a board of directors that consists of nine persons (five women and four men). Two women are under 35.. Currently, DWRC's General Assembly has 22 members, including nine women (41%). Both the organization's programs' coordinator and finance and administrative manager are female, while the general director is male.

The PNGO board consists of 18 members: 11 in the West Bank and seven in Gaza. On the board, there is a coordination committee for the West Bank, consisting of eight members, and another for Gaza that consists of five members. The coordination committee will be activated at the start of 2019. There are only three women out of 11 members on the West Bank board and there is only one woman in Gaza out of seven members of the board. Only one member is younger than 35 years old. The average age is approximately 50 years old.

The UAWC board consists of 13 members: seven – two women - in the West Bank and six – two women - in Gaza. Two board members are less than 35 years old.

Al-Tawasol Forum Society (TFS) board consists of seven members, including four men and three women. The general assembly consists of 35 members, including 19 men and 16 women. The BOD chair deputy is female. The two male TFS staff members participating in the data collection reported that the women are active in the BOD, and participate in the decision-making and strategic planning, as well as developing projects during the design phase.

SFI has a general assembly, the governing body responsible for electing SFI's board members, of whom 21 are women and 37 are youth under 35. The three-member administrative commission includes two women and one youth under 35. The administrative commission is responsible for overseeing the management of the organization. The staff includes four women and four youth under 35. The general assembly, which, consists of 58 members is responsible for electing the board of directors of the association.

SYFS is governed by its general assembly of 58 members (28 women and 30 men) and the board of directors of four women and three men. There are two youth (less than 35 years old) members of the board, and the board is elected. SYFS has adopted RBM and a decentralized management system; decision-making is placed in the hands of focal points for each project, together with the executive management.

The GUCC board of directors consists of nine members, including three women, two of whom are under the age of 40, and three male youth (younger than 35). The two male GUCC staff members reported the organization values the number of women that is active in leadership positions on its board, and that is was NPA's work that helped GUCC achieve 56% youth and 30% women among the board.

The PCDCR board consists of seven members (four male, three female), with two youth members. The board chair is a woman. Board members are elected.

Most of the projects and initiatives were developed based on the needs and priority of the youth and women; this design enhanced their ownership and ensured their long-term commitment to the project and initiative activities and results. For SYFS, the idea of creating a youth council came from youth themselves as a result of their search for an organized way of meaningfully responding to the needs of their communities that are apparent to youth. The project ideas came from youth themselves and all activities were youth-led, starting from the design, through implementation and evaluation. For UAWC, most of its work is based on the involvement of local committees that are spread all over Palestine. They identify community needs through their continuous work with farmers and fishers, participate in monitoring the implementation of our projects in the ground, and nominate project beneficiaries. For PNGO, the needs are identified through sector meetings in which the NGOs identify their needs and priorities.

NGO partners have sometimes done a better job of training on gender equality than on demonstrating it within their structures, such as through membership on their boards and administrative structures.

GUCC reported that through the youth committees initiative, both male and female youth provided training and workshops at community organizations and centers, in contrast to many other trainings, which only utilize male presenters. In general, GUCC made efforts to strengthen youth roles in public life and decision-making as a part of this project, which allowed youth to engage in political life by supporting societal reconciliation through awareness workshops and a one-day conference held in Gaza. . The youth coalition with which GUCC works, specifically, played a critical role in increasing youth participation in political life. Among SYFS participants, respondents emphasized that youth are involved in all steps of the event-planning and implementation process, including the design of the materials. There was active political, voluntary and social participation of youth in their community. However, these groups are both specifically youth-focused organizations; other organizations did not report the same extent of youth involvement.

Almost all organizations reported demoralized youth and female populations vis-à-vis political participation. According to one GUCC participant, "Many youths no longer feel that it is worthwhile to even attempt engagement in the formal political sphere, because their voices or opinions will not be heard. This is particularly true for young women, who lack many female role models in the political arena." However, organizations and their participants could not always agree about whether this demoralization was increasing or decreasing. SYFS noted that 40% of its participants - high, but not the majority – reported that youth are still marginalized in the political sphere. PCDCR also worked, during this period, to form four youth councils in Gaza, but one requirement for the council was completion of a secondary certificate (tawjihi), a factor which could marginalize some youth who may otherwise be suited to the work of the council.

The SYFS FGD participants (3 men, 1 woman) reported "no discrimination" between men and women in the program. The SYFS participants did note that female participants had the chance for the first time to participate in the initiative's sport days, though women and girls traditionally don't go to football pitches in Gaza, but because of the sport initiative, they were able to be there and practice sport. SYFS participants admitted that they did not expect the project to empower female members, but it did, though they believed that women are still especially marginalized, and attributed that marginalization to tradition and

religion. They also noted that some geographical areas, such as Rafah, Khan Younis, and the eastern areas, are more traditional than others like Gaza City, and that geography affects women's opportunities. .

PCDCR reported good progress on the involvement of women in local political institutions and spaces, such as increased representation on neighborhood committees and as a part of the political reconciliation talks. At the municipality level, the organization reported, women had become decision-makers. They also joined the Wiffaq Committee on social tolerance, a partnership between the PCDCR trainees and MIFTAH. Finally, PCDCR participants drafted gender equality pledges that 20 municipalities in Gaza agreed to sign (four of which have already signed). Much like with the youth organizations, PCDCR enjoyed more empowerment of women because the organization is specifically-focused on the empowerment of women; other organizations did not necessarily demonstrate the same success in their programming.

Even though several organizations demonstrate reasonable involvement of women and youth, there are still many areas for improvement regarding representation of women and youth at NPA partner organizations and in such programming. Two issues represent particular concern. First, organizations that are not specifically-focused on women's or youth issues tend to have less representation of women and youth within their staff and governing structures. Second, within considerations of women's and youth empowerment, one group or the other tends to take precedence. In this way, individuals who are both – women and youth – may be doubly-marginalized. For example, youth representation requirements in organizations focusing on political participation may be met largely with young men, fulfilling the "youth" requirement for representation, and women's representation requirements may be met similarly with women over the age of 40, effectively excluding women under the age of 40 from both groups. It is critical to examine at combinations of factors that may doubly-marginalize individual members of society, and to draw attention to such issues with NGO partners as a part of training and other forms of cooperation.

Some organizations also learned some logistical lessons about working with youth – namely, that timing matters and so does advertising. Youth are often university students, and as such, operate on strict calendars and time schedules according to the academic year. There are peak times at which they are unlikely to be available, such as during mid-terms and final exams, and other times, such as during university breaks, in which it is critical to take advantage of their free time. Therefore, organizations seeking greater youth engagement should be familiar with university schedules. In addition, organizations that initially may not have many youths involved in their work may not immediately know well how to target youth for recruitment; their mechanisms for advertising may be generationally-less-relevant to younger people. Engaging youth staff or outsourcing advertising and recruitment using media platforms most relevant to the target age group may help organizations overcome this hurdle.

Similar challenges may exist in increasing representation of women. PCDCR reported that the quota system in municipal elections can often backfire in the cause of representation of women, as its existence can shape public perception of women as unqualified for political office and elected solely for the sake of representation. Women also may need to be actively-recruited via nomination or through different channels than men; it may not be enough to ask women to step forward to nominate themselves for roles within an organization, as women may not be able to see themselves in such roles if few women have held those positions before them. Nominations from other women or trusted men within such organizations may assist organizations in increasing the representation of women on their boards and staffs.

Relevance

7. To what extent does the partnership's work (including training) dovetail with existing strategic goals of the NPA partners? What is the community role (specifically, farmer and fisher associations) in formulating the initiatives supported by the project?
8. How were the beneficiaries selected by the partners? What were the criteria for selection?

The NPA program was formulated based on NPA's long-term experience working in Gaza and on the success and lessons learned of 2012-2015 period. The program was also designed in cooperation with partner NGOs that had similar strategic objectives for change. The programmatic objective aligned with and was informed by the overall goal of the NPA Country Strategy for 2016-2019. NPA's program also in line with the National Youth Strategy 2017-2022, "Youth Are Our Future," to promote youth civic engagement.

The program promotes the youth, women, farmers, and fishers as particularly marginalized groups to participate in Palestinian political life to claim their rights to freedom of association and to engage in the civic activities. The program has well-defined long-term objective that seeks to create a unified Palestinian society that is better protected against conflict, more resilient to the effects of the on-going occupation of Palestinian land, and that actively participates in Palestinian political life. The program's three main components are relevant to the Palestinian context, including land rights, political participation, and capacity development at the level of the partner NGOs and the program participants.

Based on document review and interviews with the NGOs' key personnel, the NPA program's objectives align with partner NGOs' strategic objectives and most of the sampled of NGOs have relevant experience in the field of the NPA program. All NGO staff and program participants interviewed held that the projects and initiatives NPA supported were relevant to the NGOs' strategic objectives. GUCC stressed that the projects NPA supports are "urgent national projects," while SYFS said that NPA's values, goals, and policies are to some extent in line with our values and strategic goals." UAWC noted that "NPA wants to organize people to increase their access to their lands and protect their lands and this is the same thing that we want to achieve." DWRC reported that the project NPA supported at the organization was based on a DWRC needs assessment conducted to identify needs among the community, especially women and youth.

As indicated by the NPA team, one reason for the NGOs new initiatives was to pilot new NGOs in the implementation of small grants. According to their performance, NPA would then select them for the four-year program. However, the evaluation team found that NPA selected two NGOs - GUCC and PNGO - for initiatives even though NPA has a long-term relationship with those two NGOs. NPA's other priorities, such as ensuring its partner organizations' ability to respond to rapidly-changing contexts and supporting new and useful initiatives, also play a role in the selection of partners, so the concern about testing new NGOs with small grants is not the only consideration in partner selection. If NPA wishes to prioritize testing in the future, NPA may wish to clarify whether it prioritizes continuing long-term partnerships or identifying new partners in situations such as these.

The projects/initiatives were developed by situational analysis of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and are designed to build the capacities of the women and youths selected from all the governorates in the West Bank and Gaza and to ensure their active participation in the coming election, volunteerism activities, and persistent political dialogue on key issues. The projects/initiatives were found to encourage women's

participation in the political activities to eliminate the gender inequalities resulting from the traditional norms and stereotypes against women that are prevalent in Palestine . Gender equality was one of the basic components of the projects and accordingly the projects and initiatives were selected partially on the grounds of their potential to encourage women's participation. Based on project records, the percentage of the women's participation in the project/initiative activities is satisfactory. For example, Tawasol's project included 30 participants: 18 men and 12 women, while GUCC's initiative included 59 youth: 39 women and 20 men. The total number of participants in PCDCR's project is 202: 72 men and 130 women. These numbers suggest improvement in gender equality at the level of participation.

As for the selection of participants, most of the partner NGOs adopted well-defined processes for selecting the participants. DWRC selected participants from a larger group of participants in initial awareness and coordination meetings. REFORM advertised the training through their networks in the West Bank and via social media. Participants were required to apply online and then go through an interview process with REFORM staff. SFI also required participants to complete an application. SYFS targeted the existing youth council members and advertised publicly using social media platforms such as Facebook for new members, posting clear criteria for the selection of participants. TFS advertised for the project on social media and at law colleges of Palestinian universities and has clear eligibility criteria and systematic process for participant selection. In addition, PCDCR targets marginalized groups, particularly women and youth, to take up their roles in the democratic process by empowering women and promoting rights and gender equality on the one hand, and supporting youth political participation toward good governance on the other hand. For example, PCDCR implemented a training for three groups of 25- in Gaza, Nablus, and Hebron - female parliamentary candidates relevant to project outcome 3, "Increasing the participation of women in local decision-making by increasing their representation on neighborhood committees by adopting an advocacy approach."

GUCC has a network that consists of more than 50 members (cultural centers) in Gaza. GUCC asked 30 of those members to nominate two representative participants and accordingly, GUCC sent a participation invitation letter to those member centers in order to name their representatives in the EYC coalition. The initiative coordinator justified this process by noting that the timelinefor preparing the initiative was very short.

Efficiency

9. Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? What explains differences in cost for similar activities among partners in the same location?

Considering the broad scope of the program – in terms of different partners, as well as in diversity of target groups and number of activities and program participants – one of the program's key successes was in the efficiency of its implementation at the level of its different partners in WBG. Based on the interviews with the NGO partners and NPA staff, the projects and initiatives make good use of resources allocated to the main outputs.

First, NPA's NGO partners, as a practice, seek more cost-effectiveness when necessary and possible. For example, the program has adopted a well-defined process of procurement. The process for procurement is based on fair competition and qualifications; the process is checked and approved by the NPA staff for

additional verification. The procurement of the partner NGO projects goods and the selection of the trainers were selected based on the responsive bids with the lowest costs. In the case that the lowest responsive offer exceeded the allocated budget, NGO partners negotiated the price with the bidder to reduce it to the allocated budget. NPA and partners have positive and mutually-supportive working relationships, which helped to ensure cooperation in the achievement of deliverables.

The document review for the sampled NGOs indicated that the budgets are reasonable according to the market and reasonably distributed and allocated over different items. The administrative costs are reasonable compared to the operational costs. For example, the usual administration cost among NGO partners was approximately 7.5% of the total operations budget, which is considered reasonable with the current practice in the NGO sector. According to the interviews, NPA monitored the actual expenses, including the administrative costs, and no change was made without prior approval from NPA. However, the NPA staff informed NGO partners that NPA would be flexible in making modification to the budget line items when it was deemed necessary and served effective and efficient achievement of the project and initiative objectives. For example, TFS successfully made savings in some of budgeted activity items and used the savings to increase the number of awareness sessions about the right of peaceful assembly from 60 sessions targeting 1,500 university students to 84 sessions targeting 2,248 students. The review of the projects and initiatives sampled indicated that there were no major changes in the budget of the majority of the projects/ initiatives and that there was high commitment to the original budgets.

The document review for the NGO partners sampled indicated that the projects and initiatives provided intensive trainings to strengthen youth and women's leadership skills, participation in decision-making, and lobbying and advocacy, among other topics. Training represented a key activity under the projects and initiatives conducted during the implementation. On average, the cost of the training per hour ranged from $25 to $30, which is reasonable according to the market. The variation in the training cost across the NGO partners in the West Bank and Gaza was observed to be minimal. For example, TFS provided nine training courses, eight of which cost $25/hour, while the remaining course, enhancing youth rights to peaceful assembly, cost $45/hour. DWRC provided 13 training courses at $30/hour, while PCDCR provided 11 training courses over the last two years in both the West Bank and Gaza at $30 per hour. PNGO provided two training courses at $30/hour. Overall, the costs are similar across the NGO partners sampled. SYFS offers a different model: the partner organization implemented its initiative activities, including open days and campaigns using its in-house human resource of youth councils/ volunteers, which in turn allowed a more cost-effective allocation of the budget. The training was completely carried out with using SYFS' own resources, without additional cost to NPA.

The salaries of the project/initiative staff are determined according to the salary scale of each NGO. The document review showed that the salaries allocated are reasonable. In this respect, the NPA financial manager indicated that in some cases, the salaries are lower than the market, an issue that increases staff turnover and affects project efficiency because project staff leave the NGOs to work in higher-paid positions in other institutions. He suggested that the NGO partners conduct market surveys for the salaries and adjust their salary scales accordingly.

In addition, completing the projects and initiatives on time avoided unnecessary indirect costs. Meanwhile, in case of justified delay, NPA provided NGO partners with extensions of time associated with cost compensation and when the delay is unjustified, NPA provided time extensions without additional cost compensation. For example, the GUCC coordinator indicated that during the holy month of Ramadan,

work progress slowed down, causing a one-month delay in the contract timeline. NPA extended the project duration for one month without cost compensation, and GUCC had to cover the costs of the delayed month from its own budget.

Additional efficiency features of the program include the use of existing NGO premises to implement initiative training activities to minimize the cost of renting and equipping new premises. For example, PCDCR and UAWC both have their own training rooms that were used to hold projects/initiatives' trainings.

Effectiveness

10. To what extent are the partners' projects implemented as planned by the project documents? If not, why not?
11. Will the project achieve the expected results? What factors either enabled or hindered timely delivery and how have they impacted the results? Have effectiveness and quality increased over time?

Based on interviews with the NGOs, the projects and initiatives are progressing well and according to the action plans and expected to be completed within the timeframe of the contracts. Most of the projects will achieve their expected outputs and outcomes by the end of year 2019 and thus the program outcome "Civil Society Organizations influence political decision making" and program outputs Output 1: "Partners have capacity to challenge authorities," Output 2: "Representative member base in partner organizations increased," and Output 3: "Partners have democratic structures in their organizations," and Output 4: "Partners have more knowledge in management, lobbying and advocacy" are expected to be achieved. .

However, some of the outputs of the UAWC will be difficult to achieve since they are outside the control of the NGO. Examples of such outputs and intermediate outcomes are "Increase ratio of agricultural allocation from an average of 0.60% in year 2017 and 2018 to reach 2% in year 2019 through advocacy activities" considering the allocated budget for the base year 2015 is 0.76%. The allocated budget for 2017 was 0.6% and 0.65% for 2018. Yet, the actual disbursement for 2017 was 0.56% and 1.1% for 2018. Other examples include "Farmers benefited from the Palestinian Disaster Risk Reduction and Insurance Fund," and "Farmers and fishers benefit from tax exemptions." In addition, the GUCC initiative goal and two outcomes may not be achieved since the intervention activities, such as posters, invitations for participation, and photos and videos, to a great extent, are irrelevant to those goals and outcomes. . The indicators were also poorly designed and formulated to be used for measuring the progress toward achievement of the set outcomes and goal.

The review of the log-frames for projects and initiatives sampled indicated that for all the NGO partners, the outcomes are achieved by conducting trainings and raising awareness sessions, which are considered the primary activities of the projects and initiatives. During the focus group discussions, all the participants emphasized that the projects and initiatives provided a variety of valuable and beneficial trainings on skills required for participation in political and democratic life, such as civic engagement, volunteerism, debate, advocacy, lobbying, campaigning, policy dialogue, the right to peaceful assembly, and social tolerance. The document review showed there is significant number of the youth and women that participated in the different trainings. For example, the GUCC initiative targeted 59 youth (39 women, 20 men) by training aimed at enabling them to play active roles in achieving societal reconciliation and internal unity. Generally, participants felt that the material content of the training was suitable, and the performance of the trainers were satisfactory. The number of women participating in the training courses was

satisfactory. For example, in project year 2017, PCDCR targeted a total of eight youth groups (three groups in Gaza, three groups in Nablus, two groups in Hebron). Each group consisted of about 25 youth, for a total of 202 (72 men, 130 women) engaged in training courses extended over five days with a total of 25 training hours for each group. The targeted youth groups are members and activists in groups inside or outside their university, with some extent of interest in political and social issues, and volunteers in community institutions. The training addressed a variety of subjects: freedom of association and freedom of expression, social accountability, advocacy campaign, social participation, and gender equality and debates. Due to increasing youth participation in activism around rights to freedom of expression and freedom of association, advocacy campaigns, and debates, these training courses have aimed to give youth the skills and practical experience to be able to form youth coalitions. In addition, in order to improve participation, integrity, and gender equality in local governance, five groups of high-ranking and executive staff from municipalities in Gaza, 82 employees (51 men, 31 women) participated in three-day training courses, for a total of 15 training hours for each group. The course focused on gender equality and political participation with the aim to raise awareness for local governance staff on these issues. Through the document review for PCDCR project documents referring to the evaluation of the training courses, the review team found that the average satisfaction with the different themes discussed in the training courses was 87.9%, and the average satisfaction with trainers' performance varied between 90% - 93%, while the average satisfaction with training themes and relevance to project objectives was 93%. The TFS project targeted 30 university students (18 men and 12 women) from the law and media colleges. The participants attended 48 hours of training addressing different topics including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, executive regulations of public meeting law article 12 of 1998, Palestinian basic law, political participation and accountability, political analysis skills, designing lobbying and advocacy campaigns, social media communication tools, and preparation of accountability report skills. The training aimed at building the capacities of the participants in political participation, improving their skills in organizing, lobbying, and advocacy for their issues and political priorities. The FGD participants found that the training courses were beneficial and that they had not had access to such courses during their academic study at the university. One of the participants reported that "I am in the fourth year of the law college and I have not studied such topics. I learned about the right to peaceful assembly and legal procedures that should be taken for peaceful assembly to avoid legal accountability; I learned how to do advocacy, not only for political issues, but for all aspects of life, to make change for the better." Also, the participants agreed that the topics addressed were relevant for their studies and to the community needs as well. One concern raised by the majority of FGD participants was that the training's duration was not sufficient to provide details and make them fully acquainted with the topics covered.

One key implementation factor also affected nearly all of the NGO partners' projects: NPA's timeline. Nearly all of the NGO partner staff and program participants indicated that the training was useful, covering critical skills for work to enfranchise marginalized groups in Palestinian political life, but that there had, as of yet, been insufficient time for participants to really apply what they learned during training to their political lives. In some cases, the timeline did not align well with scheduled elections or academic calendars; in other cases, unexpected events, such as the cancellation of elections, occurred. In either case, both NGO partner staff and participants recommended further review of the program at its end, and beyond. However, the skills that the participants had gained such as advocacy, communication, and presentation skills enhanced their abilities to lead initiatives within their own communities. In 2017, PCDCR signed a code of conduct to enhance participation, integrity and gender equality inside 20 municipalities. In addition, PCDCR signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Al-Zahra'a

municipality in order to form a national youth council based on the decision of the municipal council. It is focused on coordination for the formation of youth councils in 3 municipalities in Gaza (Al-Zahra'a, Al-Mughazi, Al-Nusierat). This MOU resulted from the high uptake of the idea of youth political participation and enhancing the rights to freedom of expression and freedom of association.

Another factor that impeded implementation was the isolation that partner organizations often felt from each other. Despite the fact that the projects and initiatives are very relevant to the NPA program, they were often developed and implemented in complete isolation from each other. The outcomes and outputs of these projects and initiatives are not properly integrated with each other within the NPA monitoring plan. Each partner's outcomes and outputs do not necessarily align together with the outcomes and outputs in the NPA plan, so that it is difficult to produce standardized indicators at the NPA level. The NPA program could have achieved greater effectiveness had it developed a coherent and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan that consolidated all the projects' and initiatives' outputs and outcomes in proper way. Such an approach would also provide the NPA with more assistance to monitor the program implementation. Furthermore, partners reported no communication among the partner NGOs for sharing of information and dissemination of lessons learned, both of which affects the project's effectiveness. NPA did gather the partners based on their locations twice per year in order to increase communication between them. NPA held meetings and general training with partners in February and October 2016 and April and December 2017. There were also two roundtables for partners – one in Gaza and one in the West Bank – in February and March 2018. However, partners did not appear to connect these activities to the idea of communication between partners, and may have viewed them as primarily oriented around different goals.

The effective implementation of project and initiative activities depends substantially on the human resources allocated by the NGOs. While the review of the log-frames for projects and initiatives sampled indicated that in general they are logical and consistent, and the indicators are generally well-designed for monitoring and tracking progress, most of the NGO partner staff interviewed agreed that a monitoring and evaluation officer would be needed for proper implementation. However, they frequently noted that there was no budget for a monitoring and evaluation officer, which is necessary for day to day monitoring. The partners' staff interviewed indicated that the project coordinators undertake the monitoring and evaluation work. To illustrate, the evaluation team found that most of the NGOs sampled do not have proper and efficient systems to track and to follow up on project and initiative outcomes.

At the level of the NPA, there are also shortcomings on the monitoring and evaluation process that may reduce the project's effectiveness. The NPA monitoring and evaluation plan is too simple and does not allow for proper monitoring of the project and initiatives.

Impact
12. To what extent has the project made the participants better engaged in political issues, more aware of their rights, and more involved in lobbying and networking? Has the project increased the number of the participants in activities to advocate for their rights?

13. What kinds of training have the partners participated in as a part of the project? Did the training enable the partners to better deliver the services that contributed to the achievement of the project objective?
14. What are the unintended outcomes of the partnerships thus far?

Overall, the project has increased the number of participants in activities to advocate for their rights using lobbying, networking, campaigning, and public awareness. Although some NGO partners worked with existing groups of people who were already politically active, many partners worked with newcomers to the political landscape and/or expanded the arenas in which existing groups worked. SYFS increased volunteerism and expanded youth work into neighborhood committees. PCDCR trained new women candidates for election into local bodies such as municipalities, neighborhood committees, and the Wiffaq Committee. SFI formed youth groups in partnership with local municipalities, recruiting entirely new youth to serve in these activities. DWRC's programming mobilized and organized youth advocacy, and UAWC mobilized fishers to demand their rights from both their syndicate and the Israeli government. The fishers' activities included demonstrations, writing and signing petitions, and documentation of Israeli aggressions on the fishers in the sea.

Much of the training participants attended covered issues such as rights, civics, lobbying, and advocacy, so almost all participants reported better civic knowledge, but as noted in previous sections, application of their newfound knowledge may take a longer period of time as they seek opportunities to put their new skills into practice.   Some participants have, however, already demonstrated such skills. DWRC reported that youth in Gaza felt that they have a right to be heard by national decision-makers and have made their voices heard to them. After the project ended, they organized a sit-in at the Ministry of Labor in Gaza, where they besieged the Ministry until the Minister came down from his office to speak to them. As stated previously, under the the section "Partners' capacity in organizing people," fishers who participated in the UAWC training later organized a petition to force the fisher syndicate to conduct elections. More, than 1,000 fishers signed this petition and due to the pressure, the syndicate conducted the election.

As stated previously, under the section "Partners' capacity in organizing people," both NGO partner staff and program participants identified several factors that impeded the program's effectiveness. Some of these factors are internal factors under the control of NPA or the partner NGOs, while others are external factors that NPA and the partner NGOs do not completely control. However, even with regard to these external factors, NPA and the partners could adopt tactics to make some changes in the external factors that would make conditions more favorable for effective program implementation. Externally, the most important factors affecting program impact were lack of institutionalization, existing political affiliations, and social traditions. As GUCC reported, "We work with youth, and it is difficult to make change without institutionalization in schools and curriculum." PCDCR also agreed that without governmental adoption of some of the project's priorities, little significant change could be anticipated. Participants also reported that existing political affiliations, at times, impeded their work, as individuals from different parties sometimes refused to work together: "During the training, some of participants left because of their political party affiliation and lack of acceptance of each other." Finally, several partners reported that in some cases, social traditions around the role of women and deference to existing authority made it difficult for a short-term training to make lasting change in the face of such powerful institutions. Along with a general and increasing discontent with existing political institutions, GUCC cited "lack of legal cover

and legitimacy for the work and role of young people," while PCDCR cited, "breaking the traditional notion of women's participation and election" as a challenge. PNGO noted that "Policy dialogue is not a topic that you can go directly and implement in your organization like other topics such as RBM and M&E." As PCDCR concluded, "Unfortunately, this can't be solved and dealt with easily and quickly." These latter comments reflect the nature of policy dialogue, which requires NGOs to be *in dialogue* with external actors over which the NGO partners have no control. They cannot return from a training and immediately implement the skills they've learned; they must wait for situations in which they are in contact with these external actors. In general, the comments in this paragraph illustrate some of the remaining challenges NPA and its partner organizations face in pursuing their goals, and some potential areas of focus for future programs, which could attempt to tackle some of these issues.

Partner training has been extensively covered in the first section of the Findings of this report, so it is recommended to review that section and consider it a companion to this section. Much of the partner training involved process and technical skills, such as the M&E training undertaken by PNGO staff, that could be immediately put into practice, and these types of training, partner staff reported, did immediately make a difference in project implementation. Other types of training, focusing on civic engagement, were more mixed in their immediate effectiveness, but not because the training was incomplete or ineffective. Rather, use of political skills covered in training often depended on schedules of elections or other factors outside of the partners' control; application had to take place on an external schedule. In other cases, political skills could be immediately applied, but that change based on these new skills moved at a slower pace due to the surrounding social, economic, and political conditions. In these cases, change requires lots of effort over time, and partners argued that it may be too early to see lasting political change as a result of the training in these areas. GUCC, for example, reported that it needed more time for "widespread awareness, engagement with political actors, and institutionalization [of the project's concepts] in schools." Several program participants, including from GUCC, SYFS, and PCDCR, noted that the training had enabled them to improve at public speaking in ways that projected confidence and prepared them for increased political participation, whether it be through campaigning or lobbying. More information about training can be found in the first section of Findings of this report.

Most program participants and NGO partners listed additional outcomes of the project beyond the ones that were originally planned or that they themselves had anticipated. GUCC participants credited the NPA program with creating opportunities for young women to facilitate workshops and dialogue, as well as youth in general to interact with people different from them in background and opinion, as a part of their work with the youth council. TFS participants were able overcome the fear of speak to public by holding 84 awareness sessions about the right of peaceful assembly to their colleagues at Palestinian universities. They learned new skills and knowledge about the international laws, how to make political analysis and how to write political reports which will enable them to participate and be active in political life. SYFS participants did not expect to be exposed to so many new perspectives, or witness so many opportunities for young women, either, as a part of their training and volunteerism. They also learned skills that they said would make them more employable, such as better communication and facilitation. GUCC staff found that the NPA project presented unexpected opportunities for cementing relationships with other youth groups in Gaza, while SYFS welcomed the strengthened capacity of the youth with whom it worked on other projects, as well as increased youth volunteerism, including on initiatives outside the NPA program. Though most organizations mentioned the slow nature of the work of behavior change, particularly with regard to cultural, social, and political tradition, PCDCR was pleasantly surprised by the

number of arenas into which women were able to expand their political participation, even though that expansion had served as a target of the program, because PCDCR did not expect the process to go so quickly. This expansion does not mean that women have achieved more power vertically - they may not have risen to more powerful positions – but that they are more represented horizontally. In other words, there are more of them participating, and they are able to cover more topics. However, not all unexpected events and outcomes were positive. Both PNGO and UAWC reported that the decrease in NGO funding for Gaza and the resulting, worsening economic situation affected their programs negatively in ways for which their planning could not account.

Sustainability

15. To what extent has the project established processes and mechanisms (including M&E plans) to promote the sustainability of the results? How will costs covered by the partnership be covered in the future, after the end of the partnership? Has the partners' financial dependency on NPA grants increased during the period? What are partners' exit strategies?

The evaluation found that the projects and initiatives have elements of sustainability but there may be some challenges over the longer term. The project will achieve sustainability in several outputs and outcomes. For example, setting up successful youth council coalitions located in all the five governorates of Gaza that are expected to continue functioning even after the program has ended represents one sustainable success. Furthermore, YCs are to be used to drive a variety of other youth needs and interests in addition to promoting tolerance because their structure is adaptable to many thematic areas. Some of the youth coalitions, local youth councils, and local neighborhood committees are well-structured and have clear roles and responsibilities and most probably will continue after the NPA intervention. Similarly, the 90 local committees that were established by the UAWC are expected to continue to function as well. In fact, the UAWC started establishing these committees in 2006 with the support of NPA. At first, there were only a few committees, but they started to grow, and eventually totaled more than 90 committees. Currently, these committees have clear membership criteria, periodic elections for leadership, and clear forms for minutes of meetings and communications.

The projects and initiatives raise the awareness of the targeted participants including women, youth and farmers and fishers and build their capacities in lobbying, advocacy, civic engagement, and policy dialogue. Youth volunteers will continue working in their locations and are expected to continue to apply their knowledge and skills in various settings and environments. The NGO staff received training in variety of areas including, for example, social media training, safety and security, and financial management. The knowledge and skills invested in the NGO staff and program participants will serve as a foundation for any future interventions.

The projects and initiatives were developed based on the needs and priority of the youth and women; this design enhanced their ownership and ensured their long-term commitment to the project and initiative activities and results. For SYFS, the idea of creating YCs came from youth themselves as a result of their search for an organized way of meaningfully getting involved in responding to the needs of their communities that are apparent to youth. The project ideas came from youth themselves and all activities were youth-led, from the design through implementation and evaluation. For UAWC, most of its work was based on the involvement of local committees from all over Palestine. They identified needs through their continuous work with the farmers and fishers, participate in monitoring the implementation

of projects on the ground, and nominate the project participants. For PNGO, the needs were identified through the sector meetings in which the NGOs identify their needs and priorities. The NPA program addresses problems very relevant to the Palestinian context and the NPA partners have become well-experienced on social issues. It is therefore expected that those partners are now in stronger positions to manage international funding that can provide support in the future.

NPA partner organizations cited key factors that could support and hinder sustainability moving forward. Most partners and program participants agreed that the biggest factor supporting sustainability resulted from heavy NPA investment in human resources and capacity building. At organizations like DWRC and PNGO, training in skills like M&E, finance, and procurement strengthened their ability to run organized projects and initiatives, while organizations like SFI, SYFS, and GUCC highlighted investment in youth skill-building as inherently sustainable.

The most important factor hindering sustainability, all partners sampled agreed, was the lack of official/ governmental commitment to the work NPA partners pursue. This lack of commitment is evidenced, variously, by school curriculum that does not address civic issues and political participation in depth; lack of priority placed on women's and youth representation in official political bodies, and less important roles delegated to these groups even within those bodies; and syndicates that do not always take the concerns of their members seriously, among other ways. NPA can support further sustainability by directly-funding activities that target official institutionalization of its partners' work, because in the context of Palestine, generating funding from local resources such as income generation activities and membership fees is difficult due to the extremely precarious economic situation in Palestine in general and in Gaza in particular. Income generation activities need high initial investment and their chance of success are limited in the Palestinian context due to the economic situation and severe competition from the private sector.

The document review examine the sources and size of funds received by the NGOs sampled through the period from 2008 to 2018. The review found that some of the NGOs have funding from many donors and there is a good possibility that they will continue their programs after NPA phases out, but some of the partners depend primarily on NPA as major source of funding and their continuity relies substantially on NPA support. The following list presents the amount of funding for each NGO sampled and the NPA contribution:

- TFS has had a partnership agreement with NPA since 2009. TFS total funding of $2,239,054 includes $1,049,923 (47%) from NPA in the period from 2008 to 2018. The NGO has depended significantly on the NPA fund and accordingly there is a medium risk that the project will end after NPA phases out support.
- UPWC has had a partnership agreement with NPA since 2012. UPWC's total fund of $1,063,509 includes $528,583 (50%) from NPA. UPWC depends significantly on the NPA fund and accordingly there is a medium risk that the project will end after NPA phases out support.
- PNGO has long-term partnership agreement with NPA. PNGO's total fund is $2,847,805.69, including $1,016,085 (36%) from NPA. PNGO is not very dependent on the NPA fund and accordingly there is a low risk that the project will end after NPA phases out the support.
- SYFS has received around $12,000,000 during the period 2008-2012. SYFS received $35,500 from NPA during year 2018. The NGO has a variety of sources of income from different donors, so there

is high possibility that the initiative could scale up using other donor funding even if NPA decided not to continue working with the NGO.

- REFORM has received around $2,183,393 during the period 2012-2018. REFORM received $40,550 from NPA during year 2018. The NGO depends mainly on the GIZ in funding its activities, so there is high possibility that the initiative could scale up using other donor funding even if NPA decided not to continue working with the NGO.

- GUCC has a long-term partnership agreement with NPA. The organization has received $4,793,506 in donor funding from 2008 to 2018, including $824,903 (17.20%) from NPA. The GUCC was phased out from NPA support in 2017 and received NPA initiative funding amounting to $33,950 in 2018. However, one of the major donors of the GUCC was UNRWA; GUCC received $2,032,032 (42.40%) from the period 2008 to 2012 from UNRWA and it appears that GUCC was phased out from UNRWA support then. GUCC also depends significantly on UNICEF for supporting its activities, as GUCC received $737,000 (15%) from the period 2015 to 2018 from UNICEF. It seems that GUCC now depends highly on NPA, after the end of UNRWA support, and there is highly possibility that the current initiative will end with the end of NPA support.

- PCDCR has a long-term partnership agreement with NPA. PCDCR received $1,897,970 from NPA from 2008 to 2018. PCDCR also receives huge amounts of funding from different donors. PCDCR works in both Gaza and the West Bank; the human rights program forms a major part of the PCDCR work and there is high possibility that the project will continue after NPA phases out support.

- UAWC has a long-term partnership agreement with NPA, receiving $2,572,327 from NPA from 2008 to 2018. UAWC has also received huge amounts of funding from different donors. UAWC works in both Gaza and the West Bank. Promoting farmers' and fishers' rights is major part of the UAWC work and there is high possibility that these projects will continue after NPA phases out support.

- SFI has had a partnership agreement with NPA since 2008. SFI total funding of $1,296,818 includes $720,539 (56%) from NPA in the period from 2008 to 2018. The NGO depends significantly on the NPA fund and accordingly there is a medium risk that the project will end after NPA phases out support.

Recommendations

Given the findings of the review focused on application of the skills learned in the NPA-supported training, the first recommendation emerging from this review suggests lengthening the timeframe for implementation around training-specific initiatives, especially when the training aims to change deeply-entrenched political and socio-cultural norms. In addition, participants felt that increasing the practicality of the training may be beneficial; the addition of more simulations, role plays, and other such activities may strengthen parts of some partners' training, and support in crafting training plans and materials with such a practical component could represent an additional valuable contribution by NPA.

Part of increasing the effectiveness and impact of such training also requires direct program activities that encourage institutionalization of NPA partner work, through direct interaction with policymakers and other powerful actors through lobbying undertaken as a part of the supported projects, as well as the publication of awareness materials to be widely disseminated. Examples of such direct program activities

could include lobbying days, during which NPA could work with partner organizations to schedule face-to-face meetings with relevant decision-makers to discuss their concerns and the publication of NPA-produced materials such as FAQs and step-by-step how-to guides intended to support partner organizations and their program participants through processes frequently used in their work.

NPA staff also indicated concern about becoming the only donor for some partners, but partners see secure funding and long-term partnership as a key enabling factor for their work. NPA should cultivate direct interventions that support partners in diversifying funding sources or establishing other mechanisms of support. In this way, NPA could balance between its desire to avoid cultivating dependency and also acknowledging NPA partner organizations' concerns that ongoing fundraising and proposal writing can detract from their primary objectives of promoting political participation among women, youth, and other marginalized populations.

In addition, NPA should explicitly support structural changes within organizations that move women and youth into decision-making positions *within the partner organizations themselves*. It is all too easy for partners to focus on the effectiveness of their training and other programs with external participants without dedicating the same scrutiny to their own practices. NPA could fund similar organizational capacity building programs and support proposals from partners themselves about how to diversify their staffs and amplify marginalized voices within their own organizations. Partners will not be able to undertake such actions without explicit support from funders, so NPA should prioritize such initiatives in tandem with funding for partners' external program participants.

The review found that there is not enough communication among the partner NGOs though they work under the same program. The review therefore recommends that NPA develop a communication strategy for sharing information and experiences among the partner NGOs and support a regular meeting to follow up on implementation. Improving communication will minimize work duplication and increase effectiveness. It is also recommended that NPA encourage its partners to establish structured, open channels with local authorities in order to establish a common understanding of the needs of the youth, women, and farmers and fishers. NPA could organize a joint yearly meeting to plan for the coming year's activities to avoid duplication and to identify areas of common interest so that the partners integrate their work and hence maximize effectiveness. In addition, smaller, more regular meetings are recommended to share experiences and share information. It is recommended that NPA propose rotating – instead of centralized, NPA-driven - leadership of such meetings to NPA partners, both to develop their capacity to organize such information sharing events and to uphold the NPA ideal of partnership, in which the donor does not micromanage its partners.

It has been observed that some of the partner NGOs do not have specific selection criteria for selecting beneficiaries for their project activities participation. This lack of selection criteria can minimize the effectiveness of the partners' projects and initiatives. It is recommended that NPA inform its partners to develop clear eligibility criteria for selecting the project participants. In addition, NPA should assist in monitoring such a selection process. It is recommended that program participant lists be shared among NPA partners to avoid recruiting the same participants for two programs at one time, reducing impact.

NPA has conducted organizational assessments of three NGOs (PNGO-2012, UAWC-2013 and UPWC-2017), resulting in improvement in their performance. Accordingly, the review team recommends that NPA conducts organizational reviews of other partner NGOs in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and to craft three-year development plans to strengthen the capacity of these NGOs.

Given the recent changes in NPA's situation with respect to partners phasing out, it is very important that NPA redefine its strategic priority for selecting partners to maximize sustainability. Some of the NGOs are found to have funding from many donors and thus there is a good possibility that they are able to continue their projects after NPA would phase out. Other partners depend primarily on NPA for funding and their projects may close if NPA discontinues funding. Nevertheless, the work that some partners do seems to be highly effective in achieving the overall goals of NPA and should be considered for continuation of funding.

Sound monitoring and evaluation systems should be developed and used throughout project and initiative implementation to capture results, manage unintended consequences, and better track progress regarding the project objectives. It is recommended that NPA allocate a reasonable percentage of 3-5% of the total budget to the project's M&E. NPA is also recommended to further support the strengthening of monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems (MEL) for its partners, including providing advanced-level training on MEL and providing other resources for partners to strengthen their MEL systems. While creating a standardized MEL system across all NPA partners does not align with NPA's strength in partnership, which allows partners to drive their own agendas and make their own decisions, providing resources that could be customized, along with additional, advanced training could balance between NPA's interest in identifying its most effective partner programs and its partner-driven approach to programming.

Moreover, to the review team recommends investing in a learning component as part of the M&E system. Reporting on output and outcome indicators is one thing, but there also needs to be some attention paid to understanding the context and how it influences program implementation and how to address emerging issues, including exploring common problems revealed through implementation and how the program can respond to these issues, including improving the identification and mitigation of .

Related to the above recommendation, the review team was unable to check the quality of the data collected by the NGO partners with respect to the well-known data quality standards: validity, reliability, precision, integrity, and timeliness. It is recommended that data quality assurance systems be developed and that NPA provides additional training to the NGO staff on how to collect quality data.

ANNEX I: List of the Interviewees

Organization	Name	Title
Norwegian People's Aid - NPA	Silvia Östberg Morales	Country Director
	Mahmoud Hamada	Program Manager
	Wedad Naser	Senior Program Officer
	Ismail Abdel Al	Finance Manager
	Yousef Al Nabahin	West Bank Coordinator
Union of Agricultural Work Committees – UAWC	Mohammed Albakri	Gaza Strip Director
	Saad Ziada	Project Manager
	Houssam Abuabdou	Project Coordinator
Palestinian NGOs Network- PNGO	Amjad Shawa	PNGO Director – Gaza
	Rola Jouda	Project Coordinator
	Taghrid Juma	Director

The Union of Palestinian Women Committees	Niven Al Kafarnah	Project Coordinator
Save Youth Future Society -SYFS	Ibrahim Ashour	SYFS Projects coordinator
	Heba Zaqout	Project Coordinator
General Union of Cultural Centers – GUCC	Fadi Abu Shammala	Executive Director
	Yousri Darweesh	GUCC Chairman
The Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution- PCDCR	Abdel Mon'am Al Tahrawi	Program Manager
	Ramez Jaber	MEAL officer
Al-Twasol Forum Society (TFS)	Ramy Swan Maher Al-Ttala	Program Manager BOD Member
Democracy and Worker Rights Center (DWRC)	Carnie Metz Abu Hmeid	Programs coordinator
	Mr.Omar Alqutoz	Field Coordinator
	Ms. Sana' Asbah	Financial Officer
Student Forum Institute (SFI)	Mr. Hisham Hindi	Project Manager
	Ms. Hanin Khalil	Project Coordinator
	Ms. Sajidah Derieh	Accountant
	Ms. Hiam Isbeih	Administrative Assistant
	Dr. Ramzi Odeh	Consultant / youth advisor
REFORM	Mr.Uday Abu Karash	Director General
	Mr. Nadim Qandil	Project Officer
	Mr. Amir Jabarin	Project Coordinator
	Ms. Lamis Khalad	Communication Officer
	Mr. Rizq Atwan	Project Coordinator

ANNEX II: Number of the Participants in each FGD

Organization	Type of Participants	Date	Number of Participants
Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC)	Fishermen	21/11/2018	12
	Farmers	21/11/2018	14
Palestinian NGOs Network (PNGO)	Participants from 3 different training programs	2/12/2018	8
Save Youth Future Society (SYFS)	Youth Councils members	18/11/2018	12

	Youth participant in open days	18/11/2018	9
The Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR)	women joined training to develop women capacities in order to participate in the election of neighborhood committees.	02/12/2018	8
General Union of Cultural Centers (GUCC)	Youth elected council members	25/11/2018	12
Democracy and Worker Rights Center (DWRC)	Male and Female youths participated in the trainings, workshops and video conference meeting with Gaza youths	22/11/2018	9
Student Forum Institute (SFI)	Male and Female youths participated in the training and workshops.	20/11/2018	13
The Palestinian Association for Empowerment and local Development (REFORM)	Male and female youths participated in the advocacy training	24/11/2018	5
Al-Tawasol Forum Society (TFS)	Students from Media and Law colleges	22/12/2018	9

ANNEX III: Data Collection Instruments
Focus group discussion (FGD) guide
Program participants

Hi, my name is [first name]. I'm an independent researcher hired by Strategic Innovation Consulting on behalf of Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), and I'm here to ask you some questions about your participation in [sampled organization]'s activities. Our research team is talking to people that participate in these activities to help [sampled organization] and Norwegian People's Aid, who works with [sampled organization] learn about changes in [sector/field] over the last two years. This research will also help NPA and [sampled organization] design future programs with your needs in mind. You are free to withdraw your participation in this focus group at any point in time should you wish. Do I have everyone's permission to proceed?

1. *[Note to researcher: These two sentences should be read as one question, not two.]* Tell me about your work (eg, land, political participation, women, youth). What are the top three challenges or needs you face in your work?
2. What groups of people, formal or informal – not specific people's names - are powerful in [this field/sector]? Who makes decisions? Whose voices are marginalized/not heard?
3. Tell me about your participation in [the sampled organization]'s activities. What does the program/initiative do? What do you do as a part of these activities?
4. Why did you want to participate in this program/initiative?
5. What have you learned as a part of this program/initiative? What knowledge, skills and/or or new ways of thinking have you acquired?
6. Can you give some examples of how you've used new knowledge, skills, or ways of thinking you've acquired through this program?
7. Has anything unexpected happened as a result of your participation in activities with [sampled organization]? If so, explain.
8. What changes have taken place in [this field] since 2016? How have they affected your participation in the activities with [sampled organization]? (Probe: Are any of the changes connected to/caused by [sampled organization's] work? Is that work connected to NPA partnership?)
9. Will there be other opportunities for you to continue to participate in [sampled organization]'s activities in the future? In what ways, and for how long? Are you planning to continue participating in these activities? Why/why not? If yes, in what ways and for how long?
10. Are there any challenges you've faced in trying to use what you've learned from the [sampled organization] activities? What have you learned about how to best use what you've learned from these activities?
11. What are the three things you've accomplished as a part of your participation in [sampled organization]'s activities that you're most proud of?

Thank you!

Interview guide
NPA partners

Hi, my name is [first name]. I'm an independent researcher hired by Strategic Innovation Consulting on behalf of Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), and I'm here to ask you some questions about the work of your organization and your experience in the Civil Society – Partnership for Democratic Development program. Our research team is talking to representatives of organizations that participated in the program; this report will help NPA learn about changes in your organization over the last two years and will also help NPA design future programs with your needs in mind. You are free to withdraw your participation in this focus group at any point in time should you wish. Do I have everyone's permission to proceed?

1. Tell me about your organization. What is its overall mission, and what are its strategic goals for the current period (eg, 4-year plan, etc.)?
2. Tell me about the population with which your organization works. What are their top three needs?
3. Tell me about your partnership with NPA. What support is included in the partnership?
4. Why did your organization want to work with NPA? What did the organization believe NPA could add to your work?
5. How does the partnership with NPA work? How did you find them (or how did they find you)? How do you work together on a daily basis?
6. What opportunities do individual staff members have to develop their skills? Has NPA provided opportunities for them to do so? If so, what?
7. Can you give some examples of how your staff has put new knowledge or skills they've acquired through the NPA partnership into practice?
8. Who makes decisions in your organization? (Probe: How many of these people are women? Youth under 35?) What are the steps in your organizational decision-making process? (Probe: At the design phase? At the implementation phase?)
9. Have there been any changes in your organizational structure as a result of your work with NPA? If so, what?
10. How do you involve the relevant local population in the work of your organization? How do you choose participants for your projects/programs?
11. What changes have taken place in the sector in which you work since 2016? How does your work with NPA relate to those changes?
12. Has anything unexpected happened as a result of your partnership with NPA? If so, explain.
13. What parts of this project – either specific activities or systems and processes – will continue after the end of the NPA partnership?
14. Are there any other challenges or lessons you've learned about how to better implement this project?
15. What are the three things this project has accomplished that you're most proud of?

Thank you!

Interview guide
NPA staff

Hi, my name is [first name]. I'm an independent researcher hired by Strategic Innovation Consulting on behalf of NPA, and I'm here to ask you some questions about the work of your organization and your experience with the Civil Society – Partnership for Democratic Development program. Our research team is talking to some NPA staff, as well as staff of partner organizations and program participants; this report will help NPA learn about changes related to this program over the last two years and will also help NPA design future civil society and democratic development programs. A report based on the findings of this research will be published and NPA will share it with you when it is finalized, if you are interested in reading it. You are free to withdraw your participation in this interview at any time. Do I have your permission to proceed?

1. Tell me about the Civil Society – Partnership for Democratic Development program. What does it do?
2. Tell me about the organizations with which NPA works. What are their top three needs, by organization type (land rights, political participation, women, youth)?
3. How do the partnerships with your partners work? How did you find them (or how did they find you)? How do you work together on a daily basis?
4. How do you involve the relevant local population in the work of your organization? How do you choose participants for your projects/programs?
5. Can you give some examples of how you've seen partner organizations put new knowledge or skills they've acquired through the NPA partnership into practice?
6. What is your perception of how the partner organizations make decisions? Can you give examples of partners that appear very inclusive to you? Examples of those who are less inclusive? Why do you think these decision-making structures operate in the ways they do? In what ways has NPA supported partners to develop their decision-making processes? (Probe: Democratic decision-making, inclusiveness)
7. What changes have taken place in the sectors in which the partner organizations work since 2016? How has NPA responded to those changes?
8. Has anything unexpected happened as a result of your partnerships? If so, explain.
9. What parts of this project – either specific activities or systems and processes – will continue after the end of the NPA partnership?
10. In what ways does NPA help partner organizations cultivate sustainability after the end of NPA support? Give concrete examples.
11. Are there any other challenges or lessons you've learned about how to better implement this project?
12. What are the three things this project has accomplished that you're most proud of?

Thank you!

Direct Observation Guide

1. Name of activity:	2. Date:
3. Name of partner organization:	4. Location:
5. Number of participants: a. Male: b. Female:	6. Number of participants aged 35 and under:
7. Summary of activity observed (Note particularly the following: • Examples of good practices in political participation (eg, is decision-making top-down or participatory?) • Examples of engagement by women/youth under 35):	

8. Stories/anecdotes related by program participants/partner staff:
(Make sure you attribute stories and seek permission to quote)

Name of observer: