

Programme Title:	Creating one-stop-shop for sustainable businesses
Country:	occupied Palestinian territory

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II. Programme summary

Programme title:

Creating one-stop-shop for sustainable businesses

Sectorial area of intervention and policy objectives

Inclusive economic growth for poverty eradication

Create opportunities for decent jobs and secure livelihoods.

Create better government policies and fair and accountable public institutions.

Promote inclusive and sustainable business practices.

Joint programme summary:

This joint programme (JP) envisions a new technical cooperation that builds and expands on what has already been achieved in the past by retaining the human capital trained earlier and further developing their capacities and products, in addition to new ones. It is within this context that discussions between UN Women, FAO and ITC took place, with a view to pool efforts in support the development of women owned/run Palestinian Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) including cooperatives. While all three agencies have projects targeting the enterprise and trade facilitation sectors, the agreement was on pooling efforts and building on previous and current programmes for all three organizations, plus the JPs of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Agriculture.

Improving the livelihood of the Palestinian women, through expanding women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives, preserving cultural and agricultural products, and turning them into marketable and exportable products along with the creation of a regulatory environment for the protection of local production and the establishment of incentives for women cooperatives are some of the main goals of this programme. In addition to encouraging other creative and innovative products and turning them into successful businesses that have marketing opportunities locally, regionally and internationally. This will be supported by enhancing one main one-stop-shop/business development hub, that would provide all the

technical, vocational and marketing services and by strengthening two business-shops in the North and South of the West Bank for assembling, testing, packaging and selling. Additionally, the JP will focus on creating of local, regional and international marketing channels for these businesses to become self-sufficient and able to sustain themselves and gain profit. The proposed JP also addresses the issues identified in the Palestinian National Export Strategy; it will contribute directly to institutionalizing, standardizing, and marketing food and non-food products produced by the women MSME's, including cooperatives, in Palestine. The JP is expected to contribute to increased Palestinian exports and local market shares, which will drive income and employment generation, improving in particular the livelihoods of women and their families, and will contribute to the overall socio-economic development of the country, in line with the MDGs.

Duration:

Thursday, January 1, 2015 to Saturday, December 31, 2016

UN Lead Agency:

UN Women (UN Women)

UN Participating Organizations:

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
International Trade Centre (ITC)

Local Partners:

Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA)
Palestinian Ministry of National Economy (MoNE)
TBD: Women Business Forum (BWF)/Palestinian Business Women Association (ASALA)/Palestine for Credit and Development (FATEN)
Palestinian Standards Institution (PSI)
Palestine Trade Center-PalTrade
Economic and Social Development Center of Palestine (ESDC)
Rozana Bussiness Women Group
Al Thimar Company

III. Programme budget

Total amount requested from the SDG-F:

1 500 000.00

Total contribution through matching funds:

1 500 000.00

Aggregate amount requested and broken down by Agency:

Name of Agency: UN Women (UN Women)	Amount: 726 600.00
Name of Agency: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Amount: 426 700.00
Name of Agency: International Trade Centre (ITC)	Amount: 346 700.00

Aggregate matching funds amounts and broken down by source:

Short explanation of strategy:

UN Women will be matching funds from the regional programme "Spring Forward for Women" funded by the EC, in addition to UN Women's core funds. FAO will be matching funds from "Market Oriented and Sustainable High Value Crops Sector Development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" funded by

Government of Netherlands and “Emergency backyard food production activities in vulnerable and marginalized areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip”, funded by Government of Canada (DFATD). ITC will be matching funds from the “Enhancing women SMEs Development in the State of Palestine” EWED funded by United Kingdom, Department of International Development (DFID).

Name of source: UN Women/EC	Amount: 700 000.00
Name of source: FAO/Govt. of Netherlands and Government of Canada (DFATD)	Amount: 450 000.00
Name of source: ITC/DFID, Australian Aid, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Amount: 350 000.00

Aggregate amount requested and broken down by UNDG Harmonized Budget Category

	SDG-F Budget	Matching Funds
Staff and other personnel costs	485 700.00	546 000.00
Supplies, Commodities, Materials		
Equipment, Vehicles and Furniture including Depreciation	9 900.00	45 000.00
Contractual services	123 238.00	30 000.00
Travel	13 000.00	
Transfers and Grants Counterparts	688 393.00	811 000.00
General Operating and Other Direct Costs	74 769.00	68 000.00
Total Programme Costs		
Indirect support costs (not to exceed 7%)	105 000.00	
Grand TOTAL	1 500 000.00	

IV. Programme description

Background and rationale:

Although the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) is categorized as a developing country, the persistence of the Israeli military occupation continues to largely define the Palestinian economy and poses significant challenges for development. During year 2013 Palestinian economy continued to lose ground. Economic growth declined from an average of 11 per cent in 2010 and 2011 to a mere 1.5 per cent in 2013 the lowest rate of growth since 2006, well below that of population growth. As a result, unemployment, poverty and food insecurity deepened, following the slowdown witnessed during year 2012. Latest statistics show that only one in four households in the oPt are classified as food secure. Additionally, the structural distortions of Palestinian economy and trade resulting from Israeli restrictions, have critically affected the development of agriculture and manufacturing sectors, which currently constitute a mere 4-5% of the GDP while the service sector accounts for two thirds of the GDP . The resulting economic

pattern critically affects sustainable economic growth in the oPt where a prospective for of an increase of trade is aversively limited due to the development of the non-tradable sector to the detriment of the production sector.

The oPt faces a significant gender challenge, reflected by enormous disparity in employment and asset ownership among women. In this context, despite the slight increase of women participation rates in the workforce, women's economic participation still remains one of the lowest in the world. In 2012, the percentage of female participation in the work force was 17.4 per cent, in comparison to 69.1 per cent for males in the same year⁴. Official statistics however, do not cover employment in the informal sector. It is estimated that six out of ten women workers are informally employed, which makes them more vulnerable to exploitation and unsafe working conditions and limits women's choices. Similarly, old social traditions and the reluctance to formally register business entities continue to understate asset ownership by women, even though the appropriate laws exist to recognize women's right to property and assets. The share of women's employment in the productive sectors continues to decline, while their share of employment in the services sector rose. In 1995, women's employment in agriculture and manufacturing reached 43% compared to 47% in the services sector. By 2011, the productive sectors had accounted for only 31% of women's employment, compared to 60% for the services sector (PCBS, 2000, 2012). This is due to the above-mentioned erosion of the productive capacity of the economy, resulting in lower contributions by the agriculture and manufacturing sectors to GDP over time. This situation is reflected in the low employment rates for women in these sectors, and their concentration in the services sector. The rising horizontal segregation is alarming, especially with the presence of economic sector structures that enable the future participation of a small number of women. Despite the low rate of female entrepreneurship in the oPt, the contribution of these activities to employment was impressive: female entrepreneurship employed 5.6% of the total Palestinian employed persons .

Palestinian female entrepreneurship in the oPt in 2012 fared amongst the worst countries in the world, ranking 58th out of 67 studied countries in early-stage entrepreneurial activity (i.e., which has been in operation for less than 42 months) and the second worst country in established-business female owners (i.e., which has been in operation for more than 42 months). In that year the average female early-stage entrepreneurial activity was 3.4% of all female adult population in the oPt, compared to 16% for all male adult population. In addition to the fact that females have a higher unemployment rate than males, in 2012, the unemployment rate among females was 25.3% in the West Bank compared to 20.4% for males . This situation reinforces the need to economically empower women and help them overcome existing barriers and constraints. In this spirit, the Palestinian Ministry of National Economy (MoNE) organized a series of dialogue sessions, institutionalized discussions, and forums to build a strategic vision of empowering women economically based on a consensus between the public and the private sectors. These efforts should be expanded and strengthened according to the findings of the Palestinian National Export Strategy (NES), which confirmed a need for specific interventions targeting women in different sectors while also recommending that gender concerns be mainstreamed within the work of Palestinian government. The strategy recommended developing programmes to enhance the managerial and business skills of the women and promote their involvement in export value chains.

The persistence of Israeli occupation largely defining Palestinian economy also manifests in the limited presence of MSME's, which account for less than 10 % of total registered establishments. The vast majority of Palestinian MSMEs are small, with only 9 % belonging to the medium-sized group. Yet, MSMEs stand out for their significant contribution to productive employment, income generation, and innovation. Around 63 % of women-owned MSMEs sell their products informally in local shops in the villages or towns where they live, while only 2.7 per cent export their products outside Palestine . In addition, women-owned cooperatives face structural weaknesses related to the prevailing patriarchal culture, keeping women at the lower end of the value chain. During periods of economic crises, Palestinian MSMEs constitute a buffer against sharp increases in unemployment and poverty rates and have repeatedly displayed a strong commitment to social responsibility. These enterprises also display true entrepreneurial qualities. They are quick to capitalize on emerging opportunities to expand their activities, even under adverse conditions.

Palestinian MSMEs have been the focus of numerous donor funded projects and initiatives. The bulk of them emphasize addressing the enterprises' immediate needs through partial compensation for occupation related damages, along with micro-credit schemes to address their liquidity crunch. Therefore, the need for a more balanced approach that allows for greater focus on developing the enterprises' competitiveness cannot be over-emphasized. While lifting Israeli movement restrictions is essential, it will alone not result in sustained enterprise and economic growth. Enhancing competitiveness of MSMEs requires the establishment of a regulatory environment to protect local production sectors. Israeli pricing policies resulting in illegal economic dumping of multiple goods and commodities and have had a devastating effect on local production in the oPt, where producers and traders have competed each other out of the market, as many goods and commodities have been cheaper to import from Israel. Therefore experience in enhancing competition in the oPt, where producers have to compete with each other and with subsidized Israeli goods, has led to bankruptcy of many local businesses.

Consequently, policies have to tackle the protection of local industries/commodities in order not to generate what has happened in other countries, which is 'competition over poverty'. This can be done by introducing protection measures by the Palestinian Authority (PA), such as allowing priority distribution for Palestinian products during certain seasons; blocking Israeli goods during such seasons; improving distribution and marketing networks; linking local suppliers of primary goods to producers in order to minimize the need for imports, Israeli and otherwise. However, Palestinians should be able to reciprocate and minimize the entry of Israeli goods when there is a high season for a certain good/commodity. Reciprocation is an internationally accepted measure in trade.

Also, the importance of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors cannot be underestimated as means to generate forms of employment that do not necessarily require high levels of education. This allows women with different levels of education to participate in the labor market in contrast with the services sector, where most of the jobs require relatively high levels of education.

Women-owned MSMEs and cooperatives in Palestine lack the knowledge, skills and confidence, to run their business efficiently and to be competitive. Women do not actively participate in trade and engage in a very limited share of the market. Four major constraints have been identified based on lessons learned from previous interventions and consultations conducted with women owners of MSME's and cooperatives: 1) lack of an enabling, supportive and inclusive business environment; 2) stringent market access conditions; 3) limited access to economic opportunities; and 3) limited access to trade support services. The JP will enhance the competitiveness of women owned and/run MSME's including cooperatives and female entrepreneurs focusing on food production and processing, and manufacturing of cultural and traditional products.

The JP will target 20 cooperatives that will benefit from agricultural service provision and 45 MSMEs that will benefit from cultural service provision. The direct beneficiaries of the JP will be 245 women with very diverse socio-economic backgrounds and age range (25 -65 years old) both from rural and urban areas and from multiple locations in the West Bank (Nablus, Jenin, Jerico, Hebron, Bethlehem and Ramallah, among others).

It is expected that the targeted women-owned MSMEs and cooperatives will benefit from higher incomes translating into increased resources to strengthen and grow their businesses and will ultimately translate into an increase of income per family and better livelihood for the community in general. It is expected that the JP will reach 1,225 indirect beneficiaries at the end of the second year of implementation.

- 20 women associations/cooperatives in the agriculture sector, with more than 245 women working that will benefit directly from the JP. Some of these associations were previously supported through UN Women interventions such as the Women Run School Canteens and the Sabaya Programme, amongst others.
- 30 women MSMEs from textiles & clothing, and interior design sectors. The JP will increase the impact of ITC's "Enhancing women SMEs Development in the State of Palestine" project and will build on results achieved continue working with its beneficiaries.
- 15 women MSMEs from marginalized areas from the MDGs Cultural Programme and the Spring Forward for Women Programme. These women have been benefiting from some vocational services under these two

programmes, and have been given capacity building trainings on producing high quality modern and marketable products that incorporate Palestinian cultural aspects within their designs. The products types vary, the designs and prototypes included: home accessories, jewelry, small furniture items, fashion, herbal soaps, etc. The cultural aspects that were incorporated into those products included straw weaving, woodcarving, the traditional wool carpet weaving, olive oil and herbs soap making, etc.

The JP will strive to engage other women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives under the one stop shop umbrella as a fundamental part of its vision to increase competitiveness of these enterprises at national level.

Key sectors of intervention:

1. Agriculture and agro-business:

In 2011, agriculture accounted for 22.2% of women's employment compared to 60% of services (PCBS, 2012). These rates indicate that there is a significant horizontal segregation in the labour market and that women do not have equal access to all economic sectors. This means that the economy's structure hinders the participation of women in the labour market. Although this is a worldwide phenomenon, the Palestinian case tends to be extreme, indicating the importance of interventions on the demand side of the labour market.

2. Textiles & Clothing:

Under the National Export Strategy, the sector strategy for Textiles & Clothing provides a good overview and analysis of the sector as well as the current situation of women in the field, moreover, it outlines the required interventions. Historically, the textiles & clothing sector has had a high rate of female employment, however these tend to be lower-skilled and lower-paid jobs in cutting and sewing. As skill and pay levels rise through machine operation up to senior management positions, the proportion of women drops rapidly. Counteracting this trend would be an effective way of improving the economic standing of women in the State of Palestine. The Strategy suggests that by equipping women with extra sector-specific skills required for its advancement (e.g. design, quality management, and marketing), more women would be expected to enter the workforce with better positions, including in firms beyond family-owned and operated business models. Therefore, the knowledge, competencies and skills of women should be strengthened at different links in the value chain particularly design, quality management, and marketing. These services are particularly interesting for women because they create the opportunity to add value to the final product, which can also be outsourced to companies owned by the targeted women

3. Interior Design Sector:

The State of Palestine has a long tradition of producing high quality glass art, wall hangings and home interior decorations made of ceramics, marbles and other hard stones. These products are losing access to the traditional skill base in the absence of appropriate sector development initiatives and effective market linkage. However, as shown in several other countries, the application of modern processes and practices to traditional art forms such as heritage and legacy products can transform these areas into successful export industries.

The proposed Joint Programme (JP) is very much aligned with existing national planning and policy instruments, thus it addresses issues identified in the Palestinian National Export Strategy 2013-2016, which is geared towards lowering unemployment and reducing the trade deficit: it builds up the institutional capacity through creating a one-stop-shop for women's enterprise in Palestine, and raising the capacity of women employed in different private sector institutions and women owned MSMEs. In addition, the JP is in line with the Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs Cross Sectoral Gender National Strategy 2014-2016, in particular the first objective: to improve women's participation in the labour market, contributing to two of its three main policies: policy number 2 - providing women with job opportunities through educational and vocational capacity building, and providing women with the financial resources required to establish small businesses, and policy number 3 under- increasing women's products competitive advantage in local, regional and international markets. This initiative is also aligned with the strategic approach of the 1st sector policy of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: Economic empowerment, livelihoods, food security and decent work, which has four strategic objectives

which the JP tackles, but mostly objectives number 3 and 4 respectively: Competitiveness of the national product and Palestinian companies has improved, and Entrepreneurial and innovative initiatives among the youth and women in the economy sector have expanded, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Finally, the JP is also aligned with the Palestinian National Committee for Women's Employment's strategy 2013-2015, objectives number 1: Contributing to a conducive climate to increased opportunities for decent work for women and to provide skills and competencies required in the labor market, both in the field of employment or self-employment. As well as objective number 10: Supporting the production and developing Palestinian products in regional and international markets.

The JP is also in line with the objective number 3 of the Millennium Development Goal: Promoting Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, and contributes to objectives 1 and 7: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, and ensuring environmental sustainability; The JP has a long term approach focused on capacity development that will contribute to promoting gender equality and empowering women. The JP will also contribute to generating higher incomes while also diversifying from smaller, more volatile operations into better structured and more stable business activities. This will subsequently have a positive impact on poverty reduction and contribute to MDG1 (poverty reduction).

This JP is also aligned with UNDAF outcome 1: Palestinians in the oPt benefit from greater economic empowerment, improved livelihoods, access to decent work and food security. Focusing mainly on the following output under this outcome: The Palestinian productive sectors are able to improve quality, quantity and value goods and services with diversified access to markets. The proposed JP was developed part of the UN's initiative to contribute to the achievement of the UNDAF outcomes, and was one of the three projects selected by the Resident Coordinator to be developed for the SDG- F call for proposals. UN Women's related experience focuses largely on enhancing the cultural and creative industries in Palestine. Through UN Women's MDG Cultural Programme, as well as the Regional Spring Forward for Women Programme, UN Women works on improving access of targeted marginalized women to economic opportunities through support to self-employment and micro and small enterprise start-ups and development of existing businesses. Training, product development, as well as market linkages, packaging, and quality control are some of the activities that are being implemented under the Spring Forward Programme. In addition to UN Women's Grants Scheme Mechanism for start-ups and existing businesses. UN Women has a vast experience in creating linkages with the private sector, through UN Women's Gender Equity Seal, which is considered an added incentive for the private sector to allow women products/services to enter into their value chains.

Over the past 6 years FAO has supported more than 100 women's associations and cooperatives (2,000 women) from the West Bank and Gaza Strip by providing technical training and physical inputs and tools to enable them to produce a valuable quality, quantity, and diversity of food products required by the local market, and providing these associations with specific training on management and marketing chain (packaging, labelling, market demand, promotion, etc.). In addition to supporting these associations' marketing their products through participation in different food industries exhibitions.

ITC has designed and implemented various trade development and trade-related technical assistance (TRTA) projects in Palestine. It is currently working on a project targeting businesswomen from different sectors, focusing on building the capacity of trade support institutions to support businesswomen, and strengthening the competitiveness of women entrepreneurs, increasing exports and incomes of women in developing countries. Over the last two years, ITC has also worked in Palestine on two main projects: the "Export Development for Palestinian Businesses Project", and the "National Export Strategy Project", to increase export related opportunities for Palestinian firms, with special emphasis on women owned firms, in sectors with export and employment generating potential. Overall, the JP takes into consideration and complements ITC's, recent work in supporting trade support institutions and export development in Palestine. For instance, the JP will build on the unique experiences of ITC's previous projects in working with private and public stakeholders in the oPt. The JP will also benefit and build on results achieved under "Export Development for Palestinian Businesses Project", mainly from the gender strategy developed under this Project. And will complement activities that are planned to be undertaken under a recent

project, “Enhancing Women’s SME Development in the State of Palestine“, that aims at improving competitiveness of women-owned SMEs and at increasing their participation in export value chains. At governmental level, the JP will complement actions relevant Ministries are implementing and / or planning to implement as part of their operational plans and development agendas.

Ministry of National Economy:

The MoNE is currently developing a communications strategy to attract MSME’s to register and become part of the formal sector. A mechanism that facilitates registration of small businesses, with special focus on women owned MSME’s will be put in place aiming to swift economic activities from the informal to the formal sector. The JP will complement this initiative including this mechanism in the technical assistance provided to the beneficiaries through the service hub that will be established during the first months of implementation of the JP programme.

In partnership with the World Bank, the MoNE is going to establish a business development center and a business development system strategy. The project has recently started to be implemented and a training of trainers (ToT) is being conducted for the MoNE staff to assist women MSME’s in all operational and managerial aspects required for their development. These services will be provided in all governorates, the project also envisions the creation of a website that will provide online training. The JP will compliment this initiative in two levels. Firstly by providing capacity building (ToT) to the appointed MoNE’s staff that will be trained to offer such services in regards to all aspects related to deliverance of gender sensitive services. Secondly by sharing knowledge tools (manual, guidelines, toolkits, etc.) that will be produced within the scope of the JP to be included as supporting documentation for the online capacity building.

At policy level, the MoNE is planning to implement a project in partnership with the German International Cooperation (GIZ) to improve the the regulatory environment of MSME’s that will imply technical assistance in revision of the regulatory environment from a gender perspective and drafting of policies, laws, regulations that will reflect a more inclusive economic approach. Based on this recent development and in order not to duplicate efforts, the institutional development component of the JP has been revised through new consultations and needs assessments and a new intervention in regards to policy making has been designed within the original scope of work and objectives of the JP (please refer to first section of background and rationale).

Ministry of Women Affairs:

Most of UN Women’s Programmes are under the umbrella of the MoWA, as it is one of the main partners for UN Women in the oPt. Moreover, UN Women helped MoWA develop the pervious Cross Sectoral Gender Strategy (2011-2013), as well as the current one (2014-2016), which this JP is in line with.

MoWA is also implementing a similar project of women economic empowerment in Qalquilia and Nablus that will establish two main selling points in those areas. The JP will complement this action by establishing linkages between these selling points and the planned selling shops for assembling, testing, packaging and selling that will be strengthened in Jenin and Hebron.

The MoWA has established channels for promotion of Palestinian products in the Gulf Region through consulates and embassies. The JP will build on the Ministry’s promotional efforts at regional level by providing all relevant products and material produced and at local level by organizing joint events in regards raising awareness of consumers for the promotion of Palestinian products.

The National Committee for Women’s Employment NCWE:

The NCWE was created as an advisory body to the Ministry of Labour in partnership with representatives from government institutions, worker unions, employers, and civil society organizations. The NCWE was established to contribute to the elaboration and adoption of a conceptual policy framework to promote the

economic participation of women, to eliminate discrimination and inequality, to provide support and assistance to the Ministry of Labour, and to work effectively to influence national policies in order to increase job opportunities for women. One of the main roles and responsibilities of the NCWE is to develop policies that contribute to the strengthening and increasing of women's economic participation and protect and guarantee their rights.

UN Women also helped the NCWE develop its workplan and budget for the next three years (2015-2017), the policy level interventions in this JP are all in line with the NCWE's workplan and have been selected following consultations with the committees' members.

Ministry of Agriculture

All FAO's programmes are implemented under the umbrella of the MoA, they have a strategic partnership and part of activities that FAO will be implementing under this JP are in line with the MoA's strategy of agriculture : Resilience and Development 2014-2016. MoA will be part of the committee that will develop the needs assessment and marketing study that FAO will be developing.

Mainstreaming of gender and women's empowerment:

This JP builds on the three partner agencies' experience relevant to women's economic empowerment, it draws from UN Women's experience and expertise on gender equity and women's empowerment, especially in the oPt and the MENA region. The JP focuses on women economic empowerment for the promotion of inclusive economic growth in the oPt. It is built on the model of positive discrimination in favor of women as a mean to achieve economic equality. This is clearly manifested in the JP's approach, intervention logic, background, and targeted beneficiaries. This JP focuses entirely on women owned MSMEs including cooperatives, whether as start-up businesses or as existing businesses.

Gender equality has been mainstreamed in all phases of the project cycle. The design of the JP has been based on the application of a thorough gender analysis. At beneficiary level, changes in power dynamics between men and women as a consequence of increasing women's economic empowerment, have been addressed in order to mitigate a potential negative impact on women beneficiaries. At institutional level, women empowerment has been the focus of all planned interventions in regards to policy making and strengthening of institutional capacity to address gender equality and promotion of women's economic rights in service deliverance. Furthermore, the selection criteria of all local implementing partners have been based on capacity assessment to effectively address gender equality in the implementation of all activities and the application of gender sensitive interventions for the achievement of results.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are addressed in all of the JP's outcomes, outputs and activities. (For gender statistics, please refer to background and rationale section).

Regarding institutional development, the JP will support public and private sectors to enhance policies for inclusive socio-economic development of women owners of MSMEs and cooperatives.

The intended change will be measured by the number of targeted women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives who have an increase of 20% in employment by the end of year 2

In order to achieve this outcome, two gender sensitive policies will be drafted for protection of local production of cultural and agricultural products and the establishment of incentives for women cooperatives working in the agriculture sector. At the same time, capacity building will be provided to public institutions, especially to the Ministry of National Economy, to deliver gender sensitive services for women owned businesses and MSMEs. All these activities follow the same spirit of women's economic empowerment and will be undertaken to increase the capacity of Palestinian public institutions to be able

to develop and apply more equitable policies and technical services. Additionally, the JP will also tackle the achievement of gender equity in the workplace by supporting two private sector companies adopt gender sensitive HR policies. Targeted private companies will undertake all planned activities for the adoption of UN Women Gender Equity Seal.

These changes will be measured by indicators related to gender equality and women empowerment:

- Number of policies drafted for protection of local products and incentives for women cooperatives with a target of two policies by the end of year one.
- Level of satisfaction of women owned MSMEs and cooperatives with the MoNE's technical assistance for business development targeting 50% by the end of year one.
- Number of mechanisms in place for addressing sexual harassment in private companies with the target of two by the end of year 1.

Regarding socio-economic development, the JP will increase access and competitiveness of women run MSME's and cooperatives' products in local, regional and international markets.

- The intended change directly reflects women's economic empowerment and will be measured by the increase in sales of 20% by 2016 of targeted MSMEs and cooperatives.

In order to achieve this outcome the JP will 1) strengthen women owned/run MSME's and cooperatives capacity to improve their competitiveness and 2) increase their participation in trade. All activities implemented are geared towards women empowerment through supporting coordination efforts in favor of women business owners by building their capacities, developing their products and improving their quality, and creating channels for increasing market shares at local, regional and international levels. Additionally, the establishment of the one-stop-shop/business service hub and the two selling shops are exclusively based women economic empowerment. The main objective is to allow women to own, run and develop their own products/services.

These changes will be measured by quantitative and qualitative indicators addressing all the above mentioned initiatives to empower women:

- Level of satisfaction of women entrepreneurs benefiting from consultancy services targeting a high level of satisfaction of 70% of women by 2015.
- Number of women benefiting from capacity building services with a target of 215 by 2016
- Number of women cooperatives and women owned companies adopting PSI quality standards for food processing with a target of 20 by 2016
- Number of cooperatives benefiting from business shops (selling and marketing capacity building) with a target of 20 by 2016
- Increase in sales of targeted women owned MSMEs and/or cooperatives at regional/ international level with a target of 20% by 2016
- Number of transactions conducted by selected women-owned MSMEs and/or cooperatives (exporting or with potential to exports) with a target of at least 1 by 30% of the MSMEs/cooperatives by 2016

Finally, gender equity and women empowerment constitutes the main focus contemplated in the output that aims to promote Palestinian products produced by women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives at local, regional and international levels. To this end, an effective C&A strategy will be put in place during the inception phase of the JP and a documentary film will be produced to promote women Palestinian products at regional and international levels highlighting sustainable use of natural resources.

In regards to the involvement of male partners of beneficiaries in order to prevent violence and abuse against women from participating in this program, the design of the JP has been based on the application

of a thorough gender analysis at beneficiary level. Changes in power dynamics between men and women as a consequence of increasing women's economic empowerment, have been addressed in order to mitigate a potential negative impact on women beneficiaries. It is worth mentioning that the sustainability of this program constitutes in itself a mechanism to prevent violence and abuse against women. At the end of the project, targeted women will have profitable businesses that would generate income for the family and job opportunities for the family members. During consultations with beneficiaries the following main points were stressed:

- Poor communities with high unemployment rates with lack of economic opportunities for male members of the families.
- In most cases, families only generate income through the women's activities in the informal sector.
- Men tend to be encouraging and play supportive roles when there is a need to increase production.

Additionally, prevention measures will be put in place. Informative sessions will be carried out at community level to present the JP socio-economic component striving to raise awareness on its holistic benefits for the whole community and inviting male members of the families to attend the workshops and trainings. Furthermore, in the case where women victims of violence were identified amongst the beneficiaries, UN Women will refer them to its two shelters in the West Bank. Linkages with a UN Women programmes addressing directly GBV through provision of psychosocial support and shelters in Nablus and Bethlehem will be established.

To facilitate women's involvement in the JP child and elderly care services will be provided at the one stop shop facilities and if needed in the locations where specific trainings will be implemented. These positions will be advertised and caretakers will be recruited by UNW and FAO as part of their capacity building.

Sustainability:

The JP is subjected to vulnerability arising from climate change related to the foreseen water shortage that the region will experience in the upcoming years. Political tensions will increase for the control of water supplies leading to an escalation of instability and insecurity. The agriculture sector will be the most affected as farming capacity will experience a significant fall. The JP has mainstreamed environmental values in its design and implementation and it will promote awareness raising at local level for responsible use of natural resources with a special focus on water management. Capacity building will have a specific focus on water management and treatment processes and sustainable use of natural resources in the production process. Additionally the JP will ensure environmental values are systematically followed throughout the supply chain through providing assistance on identifying, assessing and monitoring supplier practices in the areas of the environmental protection.

Sustainability of results in the long term of the JP is expected to be achieved at five levels:

1. Policy level:

In order to enhance competitiveness of women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives, the JP will contribute to the creation of an enabling economic environment thus addressing the issues of protection of local production of cultural and agricultural products and the establishment of incentives for women cooperatives working in agriculture and synergy creation. This is particularly important due to the lack of such legal frameworks that will increase economic activity in the production sector as a means to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth in the oPt.

The sustainability of this specific result is based on the strong relations between the implementing UN agencies and all relevant national authorities, MoNE, MoWA and MoA that have been involved in the design phase of this JP and will play an essential role in the process of drafting the policies. Sustainability will also be achieved by the partnership established with the National Committee on Women's Employment (NCWE), a leading women's economic empowerment advisory body of around 30 different organizations (NGOs, Ministries, civil society organizations, unions, etc.) established by a decree from the Cabinet and headed by the Ministry of Labour, and which will provide technical expertise and ensure an inclusive process for policy development of all relevant actors, including national authorities, international

organizations and civil society organizations. This partnership will contribute to the achievement of some of its strategic goals by helping its operational plan transit into implementation.

1.1. National Committee on Women's Employment

The NCWE was created as an advisory body within the Ministry of Labour in partnership with representatives from government institutions, worker unions, employers, and civil society organizations. The NCWE was established to contribute to the elaboration and adoption of a conceptual policy framework to promote the economic participation of women, to eliminate discrimination and inequality, to provide support and assistance to the Ministry of Labour, and to work effectively to influence national policies in order to increase job opportunities for women. One of the main roles and responsibilities of the NCWE is to develop policies that contribute to the strengthening and increasing of women's economic participation and protect and guarantee their rights.

Among other members, the NCWE's General Assembly is constituted by representatives of all Ministries of the oPt, Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Agriculture, General Federation of Trade Unions of Palestine, International Labour Organization, the Cabinet, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Institute of Women's Studies at Birzeit University, Women's Research and Documentation Centre, Women's Studies Centre, Palestinian Initiative for Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy - Miftah, Development Studies Centre - Birzeit, Palestinian University, Federation of Industries, Business Women's Forum, the Union of Palestinian businessmen, Micro-Finance Network, the Palestinian Society for businesswomen - Asala, Palestinian Working Women and Development society, Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, the Centre for Democracy and Workers' Rights, the Palestinian NGO Network.

2. Community level:

The JP addresses the issues of the lack of the community's support to such enterprises products/services, which in relation affects their local marketability and financial sustainability. The JP is going to tackle this issue through enhancing these products/services quality, and by putting in place an effective Communications, Advocacy and Knowledge Management strategy (CAKM-s) that will target among others, external audiences at community level, using specific tools and conducting activities to maximize the impact of the JP. Additionally the JP will build on and contribute to the efforts made by the MoWA in regards to the promotion of Palestinian products both in local and regional markets.

3. Institutional level:

The JP will enhance a One-Stop-Shop or Business Development services Hub (BDSH) with an incubation space for women entrepreneurs, MSME's and cooperatives that will provide the technical support and product development services. The BDSH will ease the process of establishing a business, or strengthening an existing one, registering it, having the necessary skills to operate and run it, as well as the technical skills that will ensure the business success. It will institutionalize the process and provide the space for similar women run business in the present and the future. The JP will strengthen the services portfolio and management of the BDSH in order to be more effective in servicing its constituencies. It is expected that the One Stop Shop/BDSH will act as a multiplier institution by extending its services to more women in different sectors.

The establishment of the One Stop Shop/BDH will build on previous and current efforts conducted by the one of the counterparts that was evaluated to host the one stop shop. All services will be centralized in the center of the local partner, although based in the different needs of the beneficiaries, different components of the capacity building and access to new markets will be implemented in different locations and by different local partners based on their specific expertise, additionally, individual and tailored technical assistance will be delivered to specific MSME's and cooperatives in the field. Additionally, the JP will strengthen two business-shops for assembling, testing, packaging and selling in the North and South of the West Bank that will also be hosted by local counterparts with sound expertise in business marketing for agriculture and agro-business products.

Potential beneficiaries will be engaged through the local partners networks and by the dissemination of the one stop shop brochure among main stakeholders including outreach through media.

UN Women undertook a desk review of the following potential counterparts and has selected the strongest partner in terms of delivery of results, financial and administrative management and credibility. To ensure sustainability of the one-stop-shop, the JP will enhance the capacities and resources of the local counterpart to transit into a nationally recognized benchmark institution for women entrepreneurs, women owned/run MSME's and cooperatives that will act as a business development service hub with an incubation space business women.

Potential UN Women counterparts:

For the One Stop Shop/BDSH services in regards to provision of training and technical assistance on business and financial management, marketing skills, consultancy advice on design, packaging, labeling, trade and exports preparation, legal assistance and vocational training in regards to cultural products, the following organizations were evaluated:

- Business Women Forum (BWF)
- Palestine for Credit and Development – FATEN
- Palestinian Businesswomen Association – Asala

Please see attached annex for "Criteria for Selection of Implementing Partners and Responsible Parties Criteria Requirements".

Based on the the criteria, UN Women will be asking the three nominated NGOs to submit their proposals to implement the capacity building activities of the one stop shop regarding the cultural products. The three nominated NGOs have the necessary strong experience and one of them will be selected through the UN Women Programme Appraisal Committee PAC once the JP implementation starts.

The JP will also work on developing 2 exit strategies one for cultural products, and the other for agricultural products to ensure the sustainability of the institutional services provided by the JP.

ITC and FAO will build on their previous counterparts to implement the JP, strengthening their presence and influence in civil society:

3.2. Economic and Social Development Center of Palestine (ESDC)

The ESDC is a non profit organization with an extensive experience in developing Palestinian cooperative sector by building the capacity of cooperative members, developing respective institutional frameworks, providing support for rural production and marketing support of rural Palestinian products and water harvesting and wastewater treatment and re-use. It also acts as a think tank for policy formulation and planning. ESDC will be delivering the capacity building and materials for MSMEs and cooperatives specialized in agricultural and agro business products as well as producing local market studies per targeted product.

Additionally, the ESDC has a sound knowledge on sustainable use of natural resources and waste treatment processes. Environmental sustainability will be promoted and mainstreamed in all trainings deliverance and technical assistance provided to MSMEs and cooperatives.

3.3. Palestine Trade Center-PalTrade

PalTrade is non-profit, membership-based organization established in 1998, with a national mandate to lead the development of exports as a driving force for sustainable economic growth. PalTrade provides a

wide range of export support services in the areas of export development and market intelligence, export promotion, and export policy and advocacy. Paltrade has an extensive experience in network strengthening and market intelligence and will be providing technical assistance to women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives to access new markets at regional and international levels by establishing connections to peers, markets and opportunities and delivering studies on regional and local markets per selected product with exports potential and guidelines on best practices to access targeted markets.

3.5. Businesswomen Group - ROZANA

Rozana business women group was established in 2013 as part of the NHCCIA strategy to activate economic participation of Palestinian rural women in the South of the West Bank. The group comprises 50 women from various cooperatives in Hebron. NHCCIA aims through this group to trigger social and economic changes in the targeted area by supporting women through improving micro projects and by providing services as follows:

- Consultation and preparation of feasibility study for the projects.
- Networking with other related associations and improve national and international cooperation.
- Capacity building to develop the businesswomen capacities about projects management, accounting, marketing, packaging and pricing
- Seeking financial resources for women projects.

The JP will strengthen two selling shops for assembling, testing, packaging and selling in the North and South of the West Bank. Based on previous experiences, Rozana will be hosting the selling shop that will be established in the South (Hebron).

3.6. Al Thimar Company

The company was funded by two young women entrepreneurs from rural areas in Jenin with the objective of contributing to the socio economic development of the area by providing women channels to market their products. There are currently 58 women working. Al Thimar buys directly selected products based on market demand without delays in payments and places them into the local market through their agents. They provide products to shops and supermarkets in Ramallah, Bethlehem, Tulkarem and Hebron. The prices are agreed in a transparent manner between the company and the women associations and or cooperatives by calculating the costs on both sides. The company works with associations and cooperatives that show consistent work and willingness to improve. Al Thimar has sound experience in providing marketing services and capacity building in business and management, quality control, and promotion strategies.

Al Thimar will be hosting one of the selling shops for assembling, testing, packaging and selling that will be located in Jenin. It is estimated that after the first year of implementation of the JP, the selling shop will be able to sustain itself and cover all costs.

3.7. Palestinian Standards Institution:

The PSI was established in 1996 with a view to being recognized by the business community and consumers, both locally and internationally, as the focal point for Palestinian participation in the global system of harmonized standards. The PSI's mission is to facilitate trade and investment in Palestine by meeting the metrology, standards, testing and quality related needs of the business community while ensuring consumer and environmental safety. The PSI is a member of AIDMO (Arab Regional Standards Body) and became a subscriber member of ISO in 2001 and a correspondent member in 2004. A number of MOUs have been signed with similar National Standards Bodies in the region.

The Palestine Standards Institute (PSI) is the sole body in Palestine entrusted with developing and issuing

Palestinian standards. Standards are developed by standardization committees, made up of representative specialists from the private and public sectors, academic institutions, industrial associations and consumer protection organizations.

The most active technical committees include those working on food, the environment, chemicals, plastics, petroleum products, construction and cosmetics. On average, the PSI adopts about 80 standards each year. Most standards adopted by PSI are internationally harmonized

The PSI Quality Mark:

The PSI quality mark is the seal of confidence that local consumers look for on products available in The Palestinian market. The PSI quality mark is granted for products that meet these requirements:

- The product complies with all requirements of applicable Palestinian standards.
- The quality management system of the producer meets the requirements of the PS/ISO 9001.
- The manufacturing facility meets requirements of local codes on environment, health and safety.

4. Enterprise level:

Selected women owned MSMEs and cooperatives will gain the necessary skills and knowledge that will enable them to generate income and become sustainable and independent. They will also move from the informal sector into the formal sector by receiving the necessary technical and legal support needed to officially register their enterprises

The commitment of selected enterprises and the positive results will ensure that the new techniques will be well integrated in the MSMEs and cooperatives business processes through:

- a. Standardization and promotion of the accreditation of the ISO 14000 for Palestinian businesses' green technology,
- b. Knowledge of the importance of environmental management for cost and quality control,
- c. Improvement of production, consumption and waste treatment processes.

It is expected that women who benefited from the JP will be able to train future groups of women involved in similar value chains. These newly acquired skills and product/services development will remain relevant to these businesses even after the JP is finalized.

Protection of labor rights will be addressed both by capacity building and promotion of the adoption of the UN Women equity seal by private companies in the oPt.

5. Environmental level:

This JP circumvents the correlation between economic growth and environmental degradation through its promotion and adoption of recycling and use of natural materials. The JP will work on two dimensions: Out-house and In-house: the out-house dimension focuses on environmental and ecological issues by educating targeted women on the environmental impact of food processing activities and agricultural production; while the in-house dimension focuses on business practices that safeguard the health and safety of employees, business partners and clients. This will also be done through creating modern marketable products that are created from recycling Palestinian traditional raw natural materials; The application of standardization will require mandatory regulations aiming to ensure environmental and health protection that will include the improvement of production, consumption and waste treatment processes. The JP will also tackle the issue of environmental sustainability where cultural Palestinian products will be preserved, recycled and recreated into new modern marketable products.

JP Output 2.1 Women owned/run MSME's and cooperatives strengthen their capacity to improve their competitiveness in a sustainable and environmentally responsible way, directly addresses the in-house dimension of environmental degradation. To this end, all capacity building programs and materials both in agriculture and cultural products will address environmental issues. Furthermore, business manuals, guidelines and toolkits for the production of environmentally sustainable cultural and agricultural products will be developed, published and disseminated, and will be used as materials for knowledge management. Finally, the awareness-raising component of this JP will directly address at community level, the promotion of sustainable use of natural resources, conservation of water resources and adaptation to climate change. A documentary film will be produced highlighting the sustainable use of natural resources in the

production of Palestinian products by women owned/run MSMEs/cooperatives.

Exit Strategy:

Formulating an exit strategy for the entire joint program at this point seems premature given the multiple variables affecting its implementation, some of which are beyond the direct control of UN Women, FAO and ITC, while others are not possible to foresee in detail with two years of implementation of activities still ahead. For this reason and in order to formulate 2 efficient exit strategies to ensure sustainability at the institutional level, one for cultural products, and the other for agricultural products based on realities on the ground. The formulation of the exit strategy will be based on a participatory process where local and governmental counterparts, beneficiaries and main stakeholders will be consulted. Therefore the design of those two specific exit strategies is contemplated in the results framework matrix taking into account the different characteristic and sectors of production.

Public-private partnerships:

The JP will build strong relations between all relevant authorities in the State of Palestine, such as: MoNE, MoA and MoWA, and the targeted MSMEs from the private sector. At the policy making level, the establishment of two reference groups consisting on the MoWA, NCWE, Ministry of Labour, MoNE, MoA and representatives of relevant civil society organizations and women owned MSMEs and cooperatives will ensure that all voices and concerns are heard when drafting policies. Furthermore, this will imply public authorities to be more aware of the constraints and challenges that women owned MSMEs and cooperatives are facing. Additionally, the JP will increase the quality of technical assistance for business development provided by public institutions to women owned MSMEs and cooperatives, ensuring that these services mainstream gender, taking into account the gender differential needs in service provision.

The private sector is the main driving force for development and it is the largest employer compared to the other employment sectors, yet the Palestinian female participation in the labor force is still at a lower level (17.4%), that's in addition, to the status of working females in terms of equal opportunities to promotion, equal pay, work rights including maternity leave, and women involvement in the decision making bodies of the private sector firms. This entails serious efforts to improve the women's situation and engagement in the private sector and ensure GE is applied in the private sector at general in an attempt to achieve parity and social justice and protect women's rights.

Gender mainstreaming is relatively a new trend in oPt, yet, substantial efforts are needed to ensure that GE is taken into consideration across all aspects of life. In a society governed by a patriarchal mentality coupled with a set of complicated socio-cultural trends in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment (GE/WE), UN Women has started its keen efforts towards gender mainstreaming at the nation level, particularly with the government institutions as well as with the Civil Society. Simultaneously, there is an in dire need to bring the Palestinian private sector as third party in development on board and engage it with the ongoing efforts, utilizing the existence of the PA political will and the existing enabling environment that prevails in regards to acknowledgement of GE/WE at the national level.

UN Women will continue its partnership with the private sector institutions in relation to GE/WE and mainstreaming gender particularly in the social and economic aspects to ensure that women have access and control over available economic and finance resources. The JP will ensure the private sector's involvement in the JP's implementation and broaden the partnership base with the private sector institutions such as trade unions, private sector coordination council, big commercial firms and micro finance institutions to promote the private sector commitment towards gender mainstreaming issue and ensure that the JP is sustained with efforts of all concerned parties including the private sector. The involvement of the private sector will also aim at strengthening and fostering the partnership between the private sector and the PA national institutions/ministries regarding policy formulation and planning for GE to ensure that the private sector is part of the national planning and policy formulation process.

Social responsibility and corporate accountability will be promoted under this JP by increasing targeted private companies' engagement and social responsibility towards inclusion of gender sensitive policies in

the private sector. The JP will identify where differences on the basis of gender exist within the private sector system that impede women's economic participation and access to economic opportunities, and will make recommendations to mainstream gender in institutional building, administration, operations and service provision in private sector, by ensuring equal participation and treatment of women and men at all levels, and ensuring that work environments are tailored to equally meet the needs of both sexes.

Civil society participation:

The JP realizes the need to engage the civil society representatives in the JP's implementation and monitoring cycles. The involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the JP activities including the civil society, particularly women organizations and feminist advocates is a key factor towards the success of the JP's objectives based on the fact that a vibrant civil society is a key element in achieving democracy and development. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and women networks are important actors as they articulate the needs and interests of citizens, work to hold governments accountable, lobby for change, carry out research, develop and mobilize constituencies and even in common provide direct services to different social groups in different locations. They are much closer to the field and can sensitize the public awareness and in most cases shape and influence public opinions towards certain issues. Civil society should mobilize efforts and serve as a catalyst to develop the gender equality awareness within the community through adopting GE principles and influence the public opinion and decision makers to pay more attention to GE issues especially in policy formulation and legislation.

UN Women has expanded its partnership with civil society representatives, and mainly women organizations and feminist groups through its supported programmes and initiatives. The partnership methods with civil society have been formulated under different approaches and mechanisms. Advisory groups, reference groups and national teams under different programmes have been set up to ensure the involvement of the civil society in the in the decision making processes and in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the different programmes and initiatives. This approach proved to be effective in leveraging the commitment of concerned stakeholders in contributing to the success of the initiatives and has proven to be an effective approach to foster national ownership and commitment towards the realization of anticipated results and also to establish grounds for mutual responsibility and accountability at the national level. Some civil society organizations have been operating in the oPt long before the advent of the PA, thus, the civil society experience in oPt tends to be relatively new and somewhat fragile, mainly on Gender Equality issues which necessitates continuous support to existing women organizations and in mobilizing and creating alliances within the civil society towards GE/WE issues.

The involvement of civil society is essential to ensuring that efforts towards gender equality and gender mainstreaming looking through a wider lens and efforts are unified at the national level while introducing gender mainstreaming at the different levels. Realizing the fact that the women organizations are struggling to build their base, increase their capacity, establish their own infrastructures and define their roles, UN Women will continue its support to these organizations; ensuring their participation in decision making processes, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the different programmes and initiatives.

Justification of the Joint Programme modality:

The JP, as elaborated by the three UN Agencies, is designed to implement activities in close cooperation, believing that joining the various comparative advantages of each entity will produce a larger impact and result in added value for the benefit of the targeted groups and institutions. The three UN agencies will work jointly in the oPt with effective partners from civil society, the private sector and governmental institutions. It will follow a rights- based approach and work on four strategic levels: the community's level, the government, the institutional level as well as the enterprise level. This would be done by forging links between key partners, working at the four strategic levels and replicating and expanding successful approaches.

The JP will build on the expertise and knowledge of UN Women, FAO, and ITC in relation to building

capacity of MSMEs, especially women owned MSMEs. The three partners will join efforts to implement a one-stop-shop/ business development service hub. UN Women will provide all capacity building related to increase of competitiveness of cultural products produced by women owned MSMEs and cooperatives, technical and vocational trainings, product development, financial and managerial management. FAO will provide the necessary capacity development and infrastructure for women's MSME's in the agriculture sector, with emphasis on enhancing production and marketing competitiveness. ITC will act as the technical expert on trade promotion, providing women owned MSMEs with channels to increase their presence in regional and international markets. This will be done hand in hand and in full cooperation between the JP partners, as only those products/services that are fully developed and that can be produced in mass will be selected to be linked with international marketing channels. The whole modality of the JP is based on working in full coherence and coordination amongst the JP partners as each of the outputs and activities build on each other and cannot be done as stand-alone activities. Finally UN Women will employ its knowledge in the field through generating the criteria upon which the beneficiaries for the capacity building and product development will be selected, as well as on the policy level to ensure that MSME's have a framework and environment that helps them succeed.

This JP builds on each of the agencies previous experiences as well as current projects, for example, UN Women participated in three Joint Programmes in the oPt, the MDG-F Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, the MDG-F Culture and Development (also with FAO), and the Human Security Trust fund. In addition, this JP is strongly linked with and complementary to the regional Spring Forward for Women Programme that UN Women is currently implementing for improving the access of targeted marginalized women to economic opportunities through support to self-employment, micro and small enterprise start-ups. Training, product development, as well as market linkages, packaging, and quality control are some of the activities being implemented. In addition to UN Women's regional experience in creating linkages with the private sector, through UN Women's Gender Equity Seal, that is considered an added incentive for the private sector to enhance the working conditions for women employees in the private sector.

Over the past 6 years FAO has supported more than 100 women's associations and cooperatives (2,000 women) from the West Bank and Gaza Strip by providing technical training and physical inputs and tools to enable them to produce a valuable quality, quantity, and diversity of food products required by the local market, and providing these associations with specific training on management and marketing chain (packaging, labeling, market demand, promotion, etc.). In addition to supporting these associations' marketing their products through participation in different food industries exhibitions.

ITC has designed and implemented various trade development and trade-related technical assistance (TRTA) projects in Palestine. It is currently working on a project targeting businesswomen from different sectors, focusing on building the capacity of trade support institutions to support businesswomen, & strengthening the competitiveness of women entrepreneurs, increasing exports and incomes of women in developing countries. Over the last two years, ITC has also worked in Palestine on two main projects: the "Export Development for Palestinian Businesses Project", and the "National Export Strategy Project", to increase export related opportunities for Palestinian firms, with special emphasis on women owned firms, in sectors with export & employment generating potential.

Of note is that UNCTAD's EMPERETEC model that was included in the JP concept note has been removed, due to the fact that following consultations with the different stakeholders during the formulation phase of this proposal and after carefully reviewing the nature of the required services by all targeted beneficiaries, there was a consensus among the partners that the technical services provided through this model do not meet the specific needs of the different JP targeted beneficiaries, as they are more tailored to advanced entrepreneurs. Therefore, and to make the services more suitable and tangible to all beneficiaries' needs and requirements, it was opted that the EMPERETEC model be removed from this JP document. On the other hand, customized services that better meet the level of the beneficiaries will be provided by UN Women using its strong experience in developing cultural products, as well as providing services to Palestinian women entrepreneurs and businesses. Furthermore, the agricultural services that FAO will be providing to the agricultural targeted cooperatives will also be customized to better fit their needs and to

allow them to really benefit from those services and reach the required goals.

Regions of intervention:

The JP will target in particular the West Bank area of the oPt, including a focus on Area C. Since most individually or family run MSME's enterprises, operate in Hebron (21%), Nablus (18%) and Jenin (15%) , these three governorates will be specifically targeted. Activities under this JP would be therefore carried out in the North and South (Jenin and Hebron) with a centralized location (Ramallah).

According to a recent study (AlBotmeh, 2013) the Israeli occupation of the West Bank directly impacts the livelihoods of Palestinian women, especially in Area C. Constraints on women's access and opportunities to work are amplified by the control of movement and perceived/actual travel risks and dangers imposed by the Israeli Separation Wall, checkpoints and border crossings. The overarching political context and the prolonged duration of Israeli Occupation have forced women to generate coping mechanisms and support their households through entrepreneurial initiatives and informal economic activities, rather than the formal labor market. The informal labor market lacks security, social protection and entitlements, such as health insurance, a pension scheme, paid maternity leave, paid sick leave, unemployment benefits; it is also entails long hours and unsafe working conditions. Additionally, Israeli goods compete with women-owned small poultry farms and agricultural products undermining women's enterprises.

The JP partners are providing resources for the efficient implementation of the JP. FAO and UN Women have offices in both Jerusalem and Ramallah and ITC has a team of local consultants working in the oPt. As per human resources devoted to the JP, they are as follows:

UN WOMEN

- Economic Security and Rights (ESR Programmes) - Spring Forward for Women Project Coordinator (100%)
- Economic Security and Rights (ESR Programmes) - Spring Forward for Women Project Coordinator (100%)
- National Programme Coordinator (10%)
- SDG-F Admin Clerk (100% first year)
- Operations Manager (20%)
- Finance Associate (20%)
- HR Assistant (20%)
- Logistics Assistant (20%)
- Driver (50%)

FAO

- SDG-F Programme Associate -Community mobilization, Gender and M&E- (50%)
- SDG-F Programme support Assistant (50%)
- SDG-F Programme Officer (70%)

ITC

- SDG-F Programme Officer (70%)
- EWED-F Enterprises Competitiveness expert (50%).

Targeted groups:

The JP will target 20 cooperatives that will benefit from agricultural (products) service provision and and 15 MSMEs that will benefit from cultural capacity building services , and the 65 will benefit from export promotion services. The direct beneficiaries of the JP will be 245 women with very diverse socio-economic backgrounds and age range (25 -65 years old) both from rural and urban areas and from multiple locations in the West Bank (Nablus, Jenin, Jerico, Hebron, Bethlehem and Ramallah, among others).

It is expected that the targeted women-owned MSMEs and cooperatives will benefit from higher incomes translating into increased resources to strengthen and grow their businesses and will ultimately translate into an increase of income per family and better livelihood for the community in general. It is expected that the JP will reach 1,225 indirect beneficiaries at the end of the second year of implementation. The institutions will be instrumental in ensuring a multiplier effect and extending the experience to a larger

group of women that are active in different sectors in Palestine.

It is estimated that least 200 women would have received capacity building in agriculture and 15 women MSMEs will receive capacity building in the culture sector to increase competitiveness of their MSMEs and or cooperatives by the end of year 2. However, it is expected to increase this number as a result of the JP's efforts to engage more women owners of MSMEs and cooperatives, and women entrepreneurs under the one stop shop umbrella.

The proposed JP entirely focuses on women's economic empowerment, the partner agencies in this JP agreed that the JP would carry out a positive discrimination approach in favor of women as the most excluded sector of the population.

TARGETED GROUPS:

The JP will enhance the competitiveness of women owned and/run MSME's including cooperatives (20 cooperatives) and female entrepreneurs focusing on food production and processing, and Targeted groups of this JP include

The JP will target 20 women cooperatives and/or associations on food production and processing and 45 women run/owned MSMEs manufacturing of cultural and traditional products.

Main characteristics of targeted MSMEs and cooperatives through an initial assessment done through the formulation period:

- Cooperatives have an average of 10 women working and 50 members. The number of women working increase based on production demands depending on orders.
- Most of the MSMEs are micro enterprises that have 1 to 5 employees. The majority of them have temporary workers that are called on mission. These women-owned enterprises are family-owned, and are manufacturers and retailers.
- They have issues in their strategy cycle and specifically in the business definition, strategy design and strategic planning. They also have issues in transaction cycle (getting orders), issues in the marketing cycle promotion; in responding to sales enquiries, preparing specifications and negotiating, in pricing, quoting, and in the allocation of human resources.
- The majority is not utilizing their production capacity. Insufficient domestic demand and insufficient regional demand are the most important reasons for the under-utilization of capacity. They have a lack of trade contacts and they are not promoting their products properly to create the needed out-reach.
- They have poor marketing strategies which explains the lack of market information, lack of trade contact and lack of market demand
- There is no proper guidance and support for exports matters for women owned MSMEs and cooperatives.
- They have issues with the business strategies, especially in the strategy design and specifically in the segmentation and positioning. Also they have issues in the marketing and transaction activities.
- When asked about power dynamics in their communities related to their work and the potential increase of their economic activities, most women consulted coincided on the following:
 - Poor communities with high unemployment rates with lack of economic opportunities for male members of the families.
 - In many cases, the income generation constitutes a main source for sustaining the household
 - Men play supportive roles when there is a need to increase production.
 - Men see women associations and cooperatives as safe places for women to go to.

Design, mutisectorial strategy, results and implementation plan:

The JP is in line with the different sectoral strategies, including the National Export Strategy 2013-2016, geared towards lowering unemployment and reducing the trade deficit: it will build up the institutional capacity a one- stop-shop/BDSH for women's enterprise in Palestine, while raising the capacity of the women employed in different private sectors and women owned SMEs. The Palestinian Ministry of Women's Affairs Cross Sectoral Gender National Strategy 2014-2016 Objective number one: to improve

women's participation in the labour market, contributing to two of its three main policies: policy number 2. Providing women with job opportunities through educational and vocational capacity building, and providing women with the financial resources required to establish small businesses. Policy number 3 under this objective: increasing women's products competitive advantage in local, regional and international markets. This initiative is also aligned with the strategic approach of the 1st sector policy of the Palestinian National Development Plan 2014-2016: Economic empowerment, livelihoods, food security and decent work, which has four strategic objectives which the project tackles, but mostly objectives number 3 and 4 respectively: Competitiveness of the national product and Palestinian companies has improved, and Entrepreneurial and innovative initiatives among the youth and women in the economy sector have expanded, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Based on lessons learned from the MDG-F, a multi-sectoral approach will be adopted by the JP focusing on the economic empowerment of women as well as other interventions including the creation of the MSME sector, the access to local, regional and international markets, the preservation of the local culture and agro-biodiversity, traditional knowledge and cultural identity, environmental sustainability and the media and public awareness. The multi-sectoral collaboration will ensure the involvement of all stakeholders able to effect change on different levels, the JP will involve, in addition to the UN agencies UN Women, FAO, and ITC, the different sectors of the Palestinian government, such as the MoWA, MoNE, PSI, MoA, NCWE and, civil society organizations, such as Palestine Trade Centre, as well as the private sector, and grassroots, in the form of women's cooperatives, centres and rural communities.

Theory of Change

The share of women's employment in the productive sectors continues to decline, while their share of employment in the services sector rose. In 1995, women's employment in agriculture and manufacturing reached 43% compared to 47% in the services sector. By 2011, the productive sectors had accounted for only 31% of women's employment, compared to 60% for the services sector (PCBS, 2000, 2012). This is due to the above-mentioned erosion of the productive capacity of the economy, resulting in lower contributions by the agriculture and manufacturing sectors to GDP over time. This situation is reflected in the low employment rates for women in these sectors, and their concentration in the services sector. The rising horizontal segregation is alarming, especially with the presence of economic sector structures that enable the future participation of a small number of women. Despite the low rate of female entrepreneurship in the oPt, the contribution of these activities to employment was impressive: female entrepreneurship employed 5.6% of the total Palestinian employed persons .

Palestinian female entrepreneurship in the oPt in 2012 fared amongst the worst countries in the world, ranking 58th out of 67 studied countries in early-stage entrepreneurial activity (i.e., which has been in operation for less than 42 months) and the second worst country in established-business female owners (i.e., which has been in operation for more than 42 months). In that year the average female early-stage entrepreneurial activity was 3.4% of all female adult population in the oPt, compared to 16% for all male adult population. In addition to the fact that females have a higher unemployment rate than males, in 2012, the unemployment rate among females was 25.3% in the West Bank compared to 20.4% for males . The existing unregistered MSMEs in the oPt comprise a major block of the informal sector and stand out for their significant contribution to productive employment, income generation, and innovation. During periods of economic crises, Palestinian MSMEs constitute a buffer against sharp increases in unemployment and poverty rates and have repeatedly displayed a strong commitment to social

This JP aims to increase access to economic opportunities for women run/owned MSMEs and cooperatives through enabling the Palestinian productive sectors and promoting the informal sector to become an integral component of the Palestinian economy. At the institutional level, this is achieved through contributing to the development of a legal environment that will increase competitiveness of Palestinian local products, by putting in place policies for the protection of local production of cultural, agro-business and agricultural products and establishment of incentives for women cooperatives working in agriculture and by providing more equitable service deliverance for business development by public institutions and promoting the inclusion of gender sensitive policies in the private sector. At the enterprise level, this is

achieved by providing women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives with the necessary services and skills needed to successfully and independently operate their businesses. Contributing to an enabling environment will support the integration of the informal MSMEs into the formal sector and allow access to benefices from governmental services and incentives. The policies that will be drafted through the JP will provide a basis for the development of the Palestinian productive sector where these MSMEs require to be competitive. Furthermore, the formalization of the MSMEs business, with increase security and access to benefit, will encourage potential women entrepreneurs to start up new businesses and/or to formalize existing informal businesses as a way to improve livelihoods. In addition the JP will work on increasing the institutional and organizational capacity of existing and new start up MSMEs. Capacity development will include the standardization of operating MSMEs together with the needed technical and vocational trainings and product development. The marketing linkages and promotion of export services for MSMEs will guarantee sales, revenue and profit allowing these MSMEs to become financially independent. The legal framework and the capacity development components will together contribute to reflect the real economic contribution of MSMEs and women entrepreneurs to the Palestinian Economy and GDP. This will provide a tangible indicator for policy makers to acknowledge MSMEs as a major part of the Palestinian Economy, to foster support and incentives that will allow MSMEs to grow, further thus enabling the Palestinian productive sector.

Coordination and governance arrangements:

Resident Coordinator (RC):

The UNSCO Resident Coordinator will act as a facilitator to ensure efficient collaboration between UN partners. The RC will execute a leadership role in the supervision of the overall program design and programmatic implementation.

The National Steering Committee (NSC):

It will be formed of the Spanish Cooperation (on behalf of the donor), UNSCO/Resident Coordinator (on behalf of UN agencies) and Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (on behalf of the governmental organizations). The three partners will be asked to attend the meeting as observers and to respond to technical input. The NSC will meet twice a year and will be responsible for:

- Oversight and strategic leadership of JP at the national level.
- Approval of strategic direction for JP's implementation.
- Revision and approval of annual work plan and budgets
- Revision of annual reports and provision of strategic recommendations.
- Recruitment of JP managers.
- Provision of support and recommendations for the implementation of the JP.

The Programme Management Committee (PMC):

The PMC will be formed of senior representatives of UN agencies and high level governmental personnel of the JP partners, as well as representatives of implementing partners at local level. The PMC will meet quarterly. Responsibilities of PMS will include:

- Technical and operational oversight/ management and coordination of the JP
- Review and approval of programme reports and actions plans, ensuring budgets and technical inputs, including production of knowledge products are in line with allocated resources and programme objective,
- Review communication strategies and information plans.
- Provision of recommendations to the NSC.
- Addressing of management and implementation problems.

The Programme Management Team (PMT):

The PMT will be formed of the managers/focal points for the SDG-F JP, and will be responsible for the day to day management and coordination of the implementation of the JP on behalf of all the partners. Each focal point will coordinate activities with the Program coordinator and provide support and guidance to the local

counterparts. The PMT will meet monthly to discuss and consolidate work plans, budgets and reports, ensure working together for real joint implementation, to provide recommendations and advise the PMC, follow up on PMC and NSC decisions, establish coordination and synergies, ensure monitoring and evaluation, and forge links with other initiatives. The main JP team will include the following:

Programme Secretariat:

- SDG-F Programme Manager (UNW)
- SDG-F Monitoring and Evaluation (UNW-50%)

UN WOMEN

- ESR Unit Programme Coordinator (100%)
- SDG-F Programme Officer (100%)
- SDG-F Admin Clerk (100% first year)
- National Programme Coordinator (10%)
- Operations Manager (20%)
- Finance Associate (20%)
- HR Assistant (20%)
- Logistics Assistant (20%)
- Driver (50%)

FAO

- SDG-F Programme Associate -Community mobilization, Gender and M&E- (50%)
- SDG-F Programme support Assistant (50%)
- SDG-F Programme Officer (70%)

ITC

- SDG-F Programme Officer (70%)
- EWED-F Enterprises Competitiveness expert (50%).

Identification of partners: Roles and responsibilities

1. UN Women:

At governance and coordination level, UN Women will serve as the lead agency and will be responsible for the technical coordination of the JP, and act as a supporting partner for all M&E activities and reporting. At implementation level, UN Women roles and responsibilities include the following:

1.1. Coordinate efforts for policy development between relevant Ministries, national counterparts and main stakeholders.

1.1.1. National Committee on Women's Employment (NCWE)

The NCWE is the national counterpart who will be part of the committee and will work with UN Women to draft two policy proposals in coordination with other relevant Ministries.

The NCWE was created as an advisory body of the Ministry of Labour in partnership with representatives from government institutions, worker unions, employers, and civil society organizations. The NCWE was established to contribute to the elaboration and adoption of a conceptual policy framework to promote the economic participation of women, to eliminate discrimination and inequality, to provide support and assistance to the Ministry of Labour, and to work effectively to influence national policies in order to increase job opportunities for women. One of the main roles and responsibilities of the NCWE is to develop policies that contribute to the strengthening and increasing of women's economic participation and protect and guarantee their rights.

1.1.2. Ministry on National Economy:

The MoNE will be part of the committee for the development of a policy for the protection of local production of cultural, agro-business and agricultural products and will be responsible for policy

mainstreaming.

1.1.3. Ministry of Agriculture:

The MoA will be part of the committee for the development of a policy for the establishment of incentives for women MSMEs.

1.1.4 Ministry of Women's Affairs

The MoWA will be part of the committee for the development of a policy for the establishment of incentives for women MSMEs.

1.2. Enhance MoNE capacity to provide gender sensitive business development services to MSMEs and cooperatives in all governorates.

1.2.1. UN Women will be responsible for the provision of a training of trainers (ToT) to appointed MoNE's staff.

1.2.2. MoNE will facilitate the groups and venue.

1.3. Increase engagement and social responsibility of companies for the inclusion of gender sensitive policies in the private sector

1.3.1. UN women will implement all required procedures for the adoption of the UN Women Gender Equity Seal by 2 targeted private companies.

1.4. Coordinate the enhancement of the one-stop-shop/BDSH with an incubation space for women entrepreneurs, MSME's and cooperatives with local counterparts.

The local counterpart will be enhanced and supported to transit into a nationally recognized reference institution for women owned MSME's, cooperatives and entrepreneurs.

2. FAO:

Over the past 6 years FAO has supported more than 100 women's associations and cooperatives (2,000 women) from the West Bank and Gaza Strip by providing technical training and physical inputs and tools to enable them to produce a valuable quality, quantity, and diversity of food products required by the local market, and providing these associations with specific training on management and marketing chain (packaging, labeling, market demand, promotion, etc.). In addition to supporting these associations' marketing their products through participation in different food industries exhibitions. Through this JP FAO will build on previous efforts and results accomplished in two projects: "Market Oriented and Sustainable High Value Crops Sector Development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" and "Emergency backyard food production activities in vulnerable and marginalized areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip". Roles and responsibilities include:

2.1. Coordination of provision of capacity building to women owned MSME's, cooperatives and entrepreneurs in the agriculture sector and development of local markets studies per targeted product.

2.1.1. Economic and Social Development Center of Palestine (ESDC)

Under the one stop shop umbrella, the ESDS will be responsible for the provision of capacity building and development of local markets studies.

The ESDS is a non profit organization with an extensive experience in developing Palestinian cooperative sector by building the capacity of cooperative members, developing respective institutional frameworks, providing support for rural production and marketing support of rural Palestinian products and water harvesting and wastewater treatment and re-use. It also acts as a think tank for policy formulation and planning. ESDC will be delivering the capacity building and materials for MSMEs and cooperatives specialized in agricultural and agro business products as well as producing local market studies per targeted product.

2.2. Strengthen two business shops for assembling, testing, packaging and selling in the North and South of the West Bank.

2.2.1. Businesswomen Group – ROZANA

Rozana will be counterpart to be hosting the selling shop located in Hebron.

Rozana business women group was established in 2013 as part of the North Hebron Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture (NHCCIA) strategy to activate economic participation of Palestinian rural women in the South of the West Bank. The group comprises 50 women from various cooperatives in Hebron.

2.2.2. Al Thimar Company

Al Thimar will be the local counterpart hosting the selling shops located in Jenin.

Al Thimar company was created with the objective of contributing to the socio economic development of the area by providing women channels to market their products; they have sound experience in providing marketing services and capacity building in business and management, quality control, and promotion strategies.

2.3. Enable targeted food producing MSME's and cooperatives to utilize and adopt national quality standards in alignment with international quality standards developed by the PSI with support from FAO

PSI is the Palestinian institute which is setting out responsible on The standards related to food product, since most of our beneficiaries are women cooperatives working on producing food products, the project intends to link the those cooperative with PSI to ensure the compliance of their products with the applied local standers

2. ITC:

ITC has designed and implemented various trade development and trade-related technical assistance (TRTA) projects in Palestine. It is currently working on a project targeting businesswomen from different sectors, focusing on building the capacity of trade support institutions to support businesswomen, and strengthening the competitiveness of women entrepreneurs, increasing exports and incomes of women in developing countries. Over the last two years, ITC has also worked in Palestine on two main projects: the "Export Development for Palestinian Businesses Project", and the "National Export Strategy Project", to increase export related opportunities for Palestinian firms, with special emphasis on women owned firms, in sectors with export and employment generating potential. Overall, the JP takes into consideration and complements ITC's recent work in supporting trade support institutions and export development in Palestine. For instance, the JP will build on the unique experiences of ITC's previous projects in working with private and public stakeholders in the oPt. The JP will also benefit and build on results achieved under "Export Development for Palestinian Businesses Project", mainly from the gender strategy developed

under this Project. And will compliment activities that are planned to be undertaken under a recent project, “Enhancing Women’s SME Development in the State of Palestine”, that aims at improving competitiveness of women-owned SMEs and at increasing their participation in export value chains.

Under the “Enhancing Women’s SME Development in the State of Palestine” project, ITC expects to increase the capacities of the selected SMEs to sell to local market. In this context, the capacities of the targeted SMEs will be strengthened in export marketing techniques, product design, quality management, packaging, labeling, branding and in ensuring that their products are in conformity with local and regional markets’ requirements.

The project started in March 2014 and will end in March 2016. ITC, as planned, progressed in the implementation of the designed activities. It undertook a supply-side analysis for the selected 30 SMEs, identified the specific training needs, and delivered the first training on strategy design; as a result of ITC’s intervention, more than 20 women owned SMEs designed their own strategy under ITC’s guidance. Different workshops on priority areas, identified based on the outcome of the supply side analysis, will take place within the life cycle of the project. In addition to that, direct assistance and advisory services will be provided to a smaller group of 15 SMEMs, to assist them to sell in the local market.

A supply-side assessment, conducted by the ITC in July 2014, confirmed that one of the major challenges women owned SMEs are facing is the Lack of knowledge about trading through formal Channels. In this regard, women will also need to improve their marketing and promotion skills assisting them in networking and finding new potential markets.

Consequently, the JP programme is designed to respond to these needs, and will build on results achieved in the above mentioned project: ITC’s role will be a “one step further” of the above. ITC will continue working with the women owned/run MSMEs and (exporting or with potential to export), and will assist them to sell to local, regional or international markets; By Linking women-owned MSMEs with targeted buyers through business matchmaking meetings.

2.1. Palestine Trade Center-PalTrade

PalTrade will assist in identifying markets when required. More advanced women-owned MSMEs will access to more sophisticated services provided by PalTrade, such as: market analysis, participation in exhibitions, B2B meetings, trade information etc.)

PalTrade is non-profit, membership-based organization established in 1998. PalTrade provides a wide range of export support services in the areas of export development and market intelligence, export promotion, and export policy and advocacy. Paltrade has an extensive experience in network strengthening and market intelligence and will be providing technical assistance to women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives to access new markets at regional and international levels by establishing connections to peers, markets and opportunities and delivering studies on regional and local markets per selected product with exports potential and guidelines on best practices to access targeted markets.

2.2. The Business Women Forum (BWF)

BWF will be involved in each step of the implementation, and will assist in linking women-owned MSMEs with regional/international buyers. They will facilitate ITC work by: participating in the selection of the women MSMEs, facilitating ITC work with the women owned MSMEs, accompanying women owned MSMEs to events (when required), providing space/conference rooms for meetings (when required). The BWF will also be actively involved during the implementation of the project.

BWF is a national non-profit association established in 2006, to help strengthen the role of businesswomen

as leaders in the Palestinian economy through advocacy, networking, and the provision of business services.

Risk analysis:

UN Women, FAO and ITC strongly believe that this partnership for the JP will contribute to the (pre-emptive) mitigation of many (potential) risks by the manner in which they work with all counterparts at all levels throughout the JP cycle. Among the pillars upon which successful implementation of previous programming was built were crucial concepts of national ownership, broad-based consultations, participation, empowerment, consensus-building, facilitation and dialogue, non-discrimination and the active promotion of gender equality and human rights, as well as a strong focus on support for the most vulnerable groups in Palestinian society - striking a proper balance between institutional capacity building, civil society capacity development and addressing pressing needs of the most vulnerable groups in Palestinian society. With this approach, it is foreseen that the JP interventions will not contribute to the creation, prolongation or aggravation of risks.

It is difficult to apply the concept of sustainability to the current development context in the oPt. The context is not sustainable from almost every perspective, whether political, financial, or territorial. However, there are several ways in which the JP can contribute to the sustainability of its objectives through the various capacity development interventions by focusing on developing the capacities of individuals, systems as well as institutions (and how these all interact) in a manner that empowers the targeted counterparts with increased professional skills, legal frameworks and strategies, improved and standardized work processes, and a service-oriented approach. No matter how the situation in the oPt develops, the JP will contribute to improving Palestinian capacities to deal with the challenges of the future

Contextual Risks:

The Israeli occupation remains the key factor that is severely impeding international trade, particularly with export restrictions and strict border policies, involving time-consuming inspections and Israeli customs. There are also the added burdens of the Palestinian certificate of origin which is required for export to certain countries, especially Arab countries, in order to authenticate its Arab origin as to production - to discriminate against products from settlements, and the added burden to importing fees of the clearing tax which is collected by Israel.

The non-functioning of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) affects most JP activities. In addition to the increasing lack of Palestinian Authority (PA) legitimacy, the non-functioning of the PLC creates a perturbing gap in democratic oversight and lengthy modifications to laws and policies, if any. Also, structural distortions of Palestinian economy and trade resulting from Israeli restrictions could deepen, halting economic activity in production sector. Already, UN Women, FAO, and ITC attempt to empower civil society actors to contribute to a watchdog role and influence policy-making. Simultaneously, it encourages the PA to ensure, to the extent possible, inclusive and participatory law and policy making processes. The JP will continue to focus on increasing the capacities of national organizations to be more effective in the use of laws and policies. Additionally, partners will pool efforts to encourage awareness raising initiatives among main stakeholders and civil society audiences on the need to protect and promote Palestinian local products as a mean for development and economic growth

Internal Risks:

The fact that some of the relationships between JP partners and counterparts are strained, or lack the required trust could, if not properly addressed, hamper the implementation of some of the JP activities. UN Women, FAO and ITC have a good understanding of the different relationships between JP partners and counterparts and are generally considered reliable partners. As such, it is expected that the JP will be able to build bridges and enable improved cooperation by encouraging partners to recognize the synergies between them and to work constructively on concrete issues to help each other.

A risk to the JP could be that since three partners are involved in the execution of the JP in addition to

different partners could interfere in keeping up with the required pace of implementation. This risk can be mitigated by proper planning, both internally and with the counterparts. Where feasible, activities across the different outcomes should be planned in such a manner that bottlenecks are avoided as much as possible. Identified well in advance, unavoidable coincidence of support requirements will be solved with appropriate measures, such as overtime, assignments and temporary recruitments. If necessary, the JP will appeal to its senior management to ensure that service units are responsive to the JP implementation needs.

Although good progress has been made in recent years, the lack of reliable consistently collected and analyzed data poses a considerable risk to the JP, as it renders making informed decisions about JP implementation extremely difficult. The JP will mitigate this risk through its efforts to create baselines and fill data gaps. The activities and interventions will also focus on the building of systems and capacities for monitoring and evaluation will ensure a dedicated focus on collecting reliable data and ensuring a programme-wide, results-based approach to monitoring, evaluating and reporting.

*For risks and mitigation strategies at output level, please refer to Risk Matrix annex

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E):

Monitoring and Evaluation is an integral part of the JP and will be designed to monitor progress towards intended results and to evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and the impact the JP has on the direct beneficiaries and the Palestinian population in general. In addition, the Results Framework provides a starting point for the design of the JP's Monitoring and Evaluation system. Two levels of monitoring are to be included. The first level – implementation monitoring – for short-term progress reporting (biannual monitoring reports) will focus on the continuous tracking of activities, outputs and the use of resources. The second level, will be carried out once a year (annual review) and will focus on outcomes and impact orientation. Finally, a final evaluation will be conducted at the end of the JP to measure the effect of the JP.

A part time M&E Officer will be recruited as part of the JP Secretariat to lead on all these tasks related to monitoring and evaluation of the JP, including performing ongoing monitoring activities and drafting monitoring reports to ensure programme activities are executed in a high quality and timely manner according to the approved proposal, work plan and budget. The M&E Officer will lead the development of M&E activities, which will be developed in a participatory manner with the implementing partners and key stakeholders incorporating a tracking system to monitor the progress with regard to the expected results with focus on the outputs. The tracking system will comprise SMART indicators and specific targets set and agreed on by the implementing partners and key stakeholders. The tracking system will include baseline data, source of verification, methods for collecting data, and risk associated with reaching targets. The tracking system is included in Annex III in. The M&E Framework will also include a reporting component, both internal and external, to ensure the effective application of corrective measures, when required, transferring lessons learnt into the design of future programmes and projects, and to contribute in influencing decision makers at the policy level. In addition to the tracking system, the JP will focus on monitoring activities and processes. Beneficiaries will be monitored to identify changes in their behavior and the capacity development they gain. Story of changes of direct beneficiaries and organizational changes of MSME's will be identified through field visits, interviews, focus groups, direct observations and other methods necessary to capture the JP and its component. Human change stories, success stories, and case studies will be produced as Knowledge Products and disseminated through communication channels established for the JP to implementing partners, key stakeholders, beneficiaries and the general public to highlight the success of the JP.

Moreover, pre and post-assessment surveys will be developed as part of this JP. The pre assessment will take the form of a baseline survey to set the baseline indicators for the programme implementation, and the post-assessment will be incorporated within the final evaluation of the programme. Monitoring and Evaluation of the JP will adopt a participatory approach through the establishment of a Core Reference

Group responsible for reviewing and developing the M&E Framework. The Core Reference Group will be managed by an M&E expert and will comprise representatives from the three UN Agencies managing the JP, implementing partners (governmental, civil society, experts, etc.), and representatives from the targeted beneficiaries. The Core Reference Group will be responsible for disseminating progress reports, evaluations, and other Knowledge Products produced through the JP. Estimated resources for M&E \$115,000.

Communication and advocacy (C&A):

The communication and advocacy strategy of the JP will enhance effective and strategic contributions to appropriate national and local women's economic rights advocacy initiatives and streamline awareness-raising and mobilization efforts for fostering greater public support to Palestinian women's economic empowerment in general, and women's entrepreneurship in particular. Success of the JP will depend on the capacity of stakeholders to undertake successful advocacy and mobilization at the community and national level in support to policies and change of perceptions of public opinion and mass media towards local production of MSMEs and its potential contribution to economic growth and inclusive development. Documentation and promotion of the JP through raising profiles of beneficiaries will support the progress and results of the JP as well as overall advocacy on women's economic rights and promotion of the SDGs. The implementation of the JP's communication and advocacy activities will be grounded on the continued broad-based consultations with JP's stakeholders, with direct engagement of stakeholders in the production and delivery of activities.

The development of a communication and advocacy plan is essential for the JP to ensure sharing of information, proper coordination, enhanced networking and ownership of communication and advocacy activities among key implementing agencies and stakeholders. Regular documentation of the JP's progress and results, as well as the monitoring on the impact of communication and advocacy activities will not only ensure proper adjustment of the communication, but will also capture the good practices and lessons learned that will emanate from the JP execution.

In order to increase the impact and outreach of the JP, a communications strategy will be developed by the JP communications team during the inception phase. The JP communications team will be composed of the communications specialist from UN Women, and communication focal points of FAO and ITC. Focal points from national counterparts will be invited to join the team.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN, ADVOCACY AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Strategic communications, Advocacy and Knowledge Management (CAKM) are vital to helping achieve the "Creation of one stop shop for sustainable businesses" JP. Devising and implementing an effective CAKM strategy and action plan will support this program in achieving its main goals and objectives at the local, regional and international levels. Building on previous achievements, the current plan focuses on strategic CAKM actions that support the core values and mission of the program. However, it is important to note this CAKM plan is intended to be a living document, evolving along with the needs and requirements of CAKM'S internal and external stakeholders and audiences.

1. Context:

All of CAKM initiatives must take into account the larger context in which the program operates. What follows are key internal and external factors and target audiences driving the KMC activities outlined in this plan.

1.1. External Factors:

Although the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) is categorized as a developing country, yet the persistence of the Israeli military occupation continues to largely define the Palestinian economy. During year 2013 Palestinian economy continued to lose ground. Economic growth declined from an average of 11 per cent in 2010 and 2011 to a mere 1.5 per cent in 2013, the lowest rate of growth since 2006, well below that of population growth . As a result, unemployment, poverty and food insecurity deepened

- Structural distortions of Palestinian economy and trade resulting from Israeli restrictions, have critically affected the development of agriculture and manufacturing sectors, which currently constitute a mere 4-5% of the GDP while the service sector accounts for two thirds of the GDP . The resulting economic pattern critically affects sustainable economic growth in the oPt where perspectives of an increase of trade are aversively limited due to the development of the non-tradable sector to the detriment of the production sector.

- The oPt faces a significant gender challenge, reflected by enormous disparity in employment and asset ownership among women. The share of women's employment in the productive sectors continues to decline, while their share of employment in the services sector rose. Palestinian female entrepreneurship in the oPt in 2012 fared amongst the worst countries in the world, ranking 58th out of 67 studied countries in early-stage entrepreneurial activity and the second worst country in established-business female owners

- The persistence of Israeli occupation largely defining Palestinian economy also manifests in the limited presence of MSME's, which account for less than 10 per cent of total registered establishments.

- Enhancing competitiveness of MSMEs requires the establishment of a regulatory environment to protect local production sectors.

- Women-owned MSMEs and cooperatives in Palestine lack the knowledge, skills and confidence, to run their business efficiently and to be competitive. Women do not actively participate in trade and engage in a very limited share of the market. Four major constraints have been identified based on lessons learned from previous interventions and consultations conducted with women owners of MSME's and cooperatives: 1) lack of an enabling, supportive and inclusive business environment; 2) stringent market access conditions; 3) limited access to economic opportunities; and 4) limited access to trade support services.

1.2. Internal Factors:

UN-Women, FAO and ITC, are creating One Stop Shop for Sustainable Businesses (JP) with a view to pool efforts in support of the development of women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives. While all three agencies have projects targeting the enterprise and trade facilitation sectors, the agreement was on pooling efforts and building on previous and current programmes to increase the impact of all three organizations' interventions in the oPt.

Given their decentralized network, the constant exchange and flow of information and knowledge between these agencies is essential. Additionally, the JP communication team needs to coordinate successful initiatives based on best practices, and keep the various internal stakeholders abreast of new programme developments and key project successes.

Scaling up communications and knowledge sharing activities between its different stakeholders and developing new, user-friendly tools to collaborate and disseminate information are an integral part of this CAKM plan in support of JP's strategic objectives.

1.2. Internal Audiences:

- JP's Team
- UN-Women
- FAO
- ITC
- Spanish Cooperation

- UNSCO/Resident Coordinator
- Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development

JP can increase the effectiveness of its mission by strengthening CAKM efforts for internal audiences. Knowledge exchange, learning and training programs help build the capacity of internal teams; short knowledge notes can be used to share best practices and lessons learned across the country; project briefs can be used to communicate success and impact stories to key stakeholders, etc.

1.4. External Audiences:

External audiences can be grouped into the following segments, each individually targeted using specific CAKM tools and activities:

- Decision and policy makers
- Private sector representatives
- Public sector representatives of national and local governments, particularly MoNE, MoA, MoWA
- NGOs specializing in topics relevant to the support of women entrepreneurs, women owned/run MSMEs and cooperatives
- Women owners of MSMEs and cooperatives
- Multilateral organizations and international and regional associations that work in relevant areas, international development agencies.
- Civil society and community leaders
- Media / Press

2. JP CAKM's Plan:

1. Capacity building in visual storytelling, communications, including use of social media and website, advocacy, marketing and promoting MSMEs for beneficiaries
2. Development of communication strategy and plan by JP communications team and implementation of a promotional campaign.
3. Build and maintain media mobilization
4. Communicate, share and learn from the women business owners and team members experiences
5. Cultivate strategic partnerships to facilitate the implementation of key initiatives.

2.1. Tactics:

- Organize, invite relevant stakeholders and Media to launching of policies.
- Dissemination of policies through online platforms: C&A and KM
- Develop press statements, JP' key messages, stories and lessons learned
- Lessons learned: C&A and KM
- Development of manual on best practices to mainstream gender in governmental institution.
- Manual: C&A and KM
- Design and disseminate brochures for the one-stop shop
- Prepare succinct messages to gain political and public support for key MSME policy initiatives.
- Design website and relevant social media for the one-stop shop
- Materials uploaded in the website (manuals, guidelines, toolkits): C&A and KM
- Produce and disseminate documentary film for promotional purposes
- Documentary film:
 - Develop business manuals, guidelines and toolkits for cultural and agricultural products: C&A and KM
 - Communication and advocacy training for women entrepreneurs including use of social media and website
 - Visual story telling training for women's entrepreneurs to promote products and enhance marketing skills
- Videos: KM

- Organize regular conference calls and meetings to maintain constant dialogue between partners and counterparts.
- Maintain ongoing dialogue and collaboration with stakeholders and relevant MSMEs' experts, partners and organizations.
- Promote JP and its initiatives through strategic messaging, media outreach/communications campaigns, marketing collateral, publications, online tools, public disclosure and stakeholder relations.
- Scale up JP's presence in relevant public events, forums and online platforms.
- Build and grow JP's online presence through active maintenance of its website.

2.2. M&E Indicators for the communications plan:

- Number of participants attending JP events
- Participant ratings of JP events
- Number of media outlets published
- Number of unique visitors to JP web
- Number of media appearances / news coverage

Knowledge management (KM):

During its lifetime the JP is expected to provide knowledge management products that will enhance good practices and lessons learned, notably in building successful MSMEs' models which others can benefit from. Therefore, knowledge products developed under the JP will target both specialists and generalists with a view of developing clear sets of products documenting the establishment of MSMEs. Additionally, the JP will ensure that its efforts also gear towards documenting these experiences, both positive and negative. This is intended to help the main actors in Palestine to build on good practices, avoid repeating mistakes, and continue improving and delivering on commitments to address women's economic rights. It is also envisioned that experiences in Palestine can be contextualized and replicated elsewhere, both regionally and internationally at policy and enterprise levels to respond appropriately to women's economic empowerment needs and challenges on a larger scale.

The use of the final evaluation report will support the development and design of a clear knowledge product on the overall process establishment of the MSMEs, including increasing awareness on environmental sustainability and environmental quality management.

The JP Communications team will be responsible for disseminating progress reports, evaluations, and other Knowledge Products produced among the different target audiences (external and internal) of this JP. All activities related to the gathering, compilation, preparation and diffusion of knowledge that results from the implementation of the JP are intrinsically related to the C&A communications plan.

*Please refer to the above mentioned CAKM plan included in the C&A section for further details.

Contribution to the post 2015 development Agenda:

The JP builds on the results of the UN joint MDGs programmes on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and on Culture and Development respectively, implemented in oPt from 2009 to 2012. While the JPs showcased a number of success and progress and galvanized unprecedented support and efforts from numerous stakeholders, including government and civil society, achievements still need to be sustained and efforts strengthened.

The oPt is still characterized by differentiated rights and unequal access to opportunities for women and girls, which hold back oPt from full development potential. The JP, building on the results of the previous programmes, will gear towards accelerating the progress towards achieving the MDGs, thus the Sustainable Development Goals, and more specifically will directly address the dimensions of sustainable development: Economic Growth and Social Justice. By promoting and working towards the reduction of inequalities, a more inclusive growth, decent employment and social protection, as well as developing essential services and ensuring the access for all, the JP falls directly within the transition process from MDGs to the SDGs.

The JP objective goes beyond poverty reduction, and it aims to achieve economic growth that could result in enhancing the human security and having adequate standards of living and improved social conditions

for women in Palestine. This will happen through addressing female economic empowerment issues, and providing women with equal access to business opportunities in order to reach the benefits of trade and achieve sustainable incomes and development. The JP has a long-term approach, focused on capacity development and on enhancing the skills of the targeted women that will contribute to empower women and promote gender equality.

V. SDG-F - Joint Programme Management Arrangement

Coordination and Oversight Mechanisms

The Fund will rely on UN Resident Coordinators (RC) to facilitate collaboration between Participating UN Organizations to ensure that the programme is on track and that promised results are being delivered. The Resident Coordinator will exercise his/her authority over the programme by being entrusted with leadership of the overall programme design, ongoing programmatic oversight of the Fund's activities by co-chairing the National Steering Committee meetings.

To ensure proper checks and balances of programme activities the RC is called upon to establish committees at two levels:

- A National Steering Committee (NSC), and
- Programme Management Committee(s) (PMC).

The NSC consists of the Resident Coordinator, a representative of the national Government in the role of Co-Chair and a representative of the AECID or in its absence from the Embassy of Spain and/or other sponsoring partner entity, according to the SDGF ToR.

The responsibilities of the PMC will include:

1. ensuring operational coordination
2. appointing a Programme Manager or equivalent thereof;
3. managing programme resources to achieve the outcomes and output defined in the programme;
4. establishing adequate reporting mechanisms in the programme;
5. integrating work plans, budgets, reports and other programme related documents; and ensures that budget overlaps or gaps are addressed;
6. providing technical and substantive leadership regarding the activities envisaged in the Annual Work Plan;
7. agreeing on re-allocations and budget revisions and make recommendations to the NSC as appropriate;
8. addressing management and implementation problems;
9. identifying emerging lessons learned; and
10. Establishing communication and public information plans.

Fund Management Arrangements

The Joint Programme will be using a pass-through fund management modality where UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office will act as the Administrative Agent (AA) under which the funds will be channeled for the Joint Programme through the AA. Each Participating UN Organization receiving funds through the pass-through has signed a standard Memorandum of Understanding with the AA.

The Administrative Agent will:

- Establish a separate ledger account under its financial regulations and rules for the receipt and administration of the funds received from the donor(s) pursuant the Administrative Arrangement.

This Joint Programme Account will be administered by the Administrative Agent in accordance with the regulations, rules, directives and procedures applicable to it, including those relating to interest;

- Make disbursements to Participating UN Organizations from the Joint Programme Account based on instructions from the Steering Committee, in line with the budget set forth in the Joint Programme Document.

The Participating UN Organizations will:

- Assume full programmatic and financial responsibility and accountability for the funds disbursed by the AA.
- Establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent.
- Each UN organization is entitled to deduct their indirect costs on contributions received according to their own regulation and rules, taking into account the size and complexity of the programme. Each UN organization will deduct 7% as overhead costs of the total allocation received for the agency.

The Joint Programme team will consolidate narrative reports provided by the Participating United Nations Organizations and provide them to the AA no later than 31 March per the MOU Participating UN Organizations will submit financial reports no later than one year after the completion of operational activities

The MPTF Office will:

- Prepare consolidated narrative and financial progress reports, based on the narrative consolidated report prepared by the Joint Programme Team and the financial statements/ reports submitted by each of the Participating UN Organizations in accordance with the timetable established in the MoU;
- Provide those consolidated reports to each donor that has contributed to the SDGF, as well as the Steering Committee, in accordance with the timetable established in the Administrative Arrangement.
- Provide the donors, Steering Committee and Participating Organizations with:
 - Certified annual financial statement (“Source and Use of Funds” as defined by UNDG guidelines) to be provided no later than five months (31 May) after the end of the calendar year;
 - Certified final financial statement (“Source and Use of Funds”) to be provided no later than seven months (31 July) of the year following the financial closing of the Joint Programme.

Consolidated information will be available on the MPTF Office GATEWAY

(<http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/SDG00>)

BudgetPreparation - The Programme Coordinator will prepare an aggregated/consolidated budget, showing the budget components of each participating UN organization.

Fund Transfer - The initial transfer will be made based on the approved and signed Joint Programme document. The subsequent instalment will be released in accordance with Annual Work Plans approved by the NSC and always based on the SDGF ToRs and Guidance for JP Formulation. The release of funds is subject to meeting a minimum expenditure threshold of 50% of the previous fund release to the Participating UN Organizations combined. If the 50% threshold is not met for the programme as a whole, funds will not be released to any organization, regardless of the individual organization’s performance. On the other hand, the following year’s advance can be requested at any point after the combined disbursement against the current advance has exceeded 50% and the work plan requirements have been met. If the overall expenditure of the programme reaches 50 before the end of the twelve-month period, the participating UN Organizations may upon endorsement by the NSC request the MPTF Office to release the next instalment ahead of schedule. The RC will make the request to the MPTF Office on NSC’s behalf. Any fund transfer is subject to submission of an approved Annual Work Plan and Budget to the MDTF

Office.

Interest on funds - Interest will be administered in accordance with the financial regulations and rules of each UN organization and as documented in the Standard Administrative Arrangement signed with the donor.

Balance of Funds - The disposition of any balance of funds remaining at the end of programme implementation will be in accordance with the agreements between the Participating UN Organizations and the implementing partners as well as donors where applicable.

Accountability, Monitoring, Mid-Term Review and Evaluation

Joint programmes are required to provide narrative reports on results achieved, lessons learned and the contributions made by the Joint Programme. Monitoring reports are prepared and presented to the JP SC twice a year and include updated work and monitoring plans.

JPs will produce annual monitoring reports plus a final evaluation report. Evaluations quality will be according with UNEG and OECD-DAC rules. Ongoing monitoring and results management will take place in line with UN standards and SDGF ToRs and Guidance for JPs Formulation.

All communication materials developed as part of a JP should acknowledge its several partners. The SDGF and Spanish Cooperation's logos should always be used jointly in all JP's communications.

Audit - The Administrative Agent and Participating UN Organizations will be audited in accordance with their own Financial Regulations and Rules and, in case of MDTFs, in accordance with the Framework for auditing multi-donor trust funds which has been agreed to by the Internal Audit Services of participating UN organizations and endorsed by the UNDG in September 2007.

Legal Context or Basis of Relationship

The following governing cooperation or assistance agreements between the Government of Palestine

and the UN participating organisations will be the legal basis for the relationships for conducting activities: For each UN Agency please indicate the title and date of the agreement between the Agency and the National Government:

Agency name	Standard Basic Assistance Agreement	Date agreement was signed
UN Women	Ministry of Women's Affairs	17 October 2014
FAO	Ministry of Agriculture and the Palestinian Standards Institution	17 October 2014
ITC	Ministry of National Economy	17 October 2014

VI. Annexes

Letter signed by Resident Coordinator:

 [RC Letter_SDG_F.pdf](#)

CN Endorsement of National Steering Committee:

 [SupportLetterSteeringCommittee16062014_SIGNED.pdf](#)

Commitment of matching funds:

 [Letter of Commitment for Matching Funds_All Agencies.pdf](#)

Results Framework:

 [FINAL_Results Framework Matrix-SDGF_UNW_FAO_ITC.docx](#)

Budget break-down per outcomes, outputs and activities:

 [FINAL SDGF BUDGET.xls](#)

Budget break-down per UN Agency *:

 [FINAL SDGF BUDGET.xls](#)

Submission letter signed by JP partners *:

 [SDG-F Joint Letter of Submission.pdf](#)

Joint programme monitoring plan *:

 [FINAL Joint Programme Monitoring Plan.docx](#)

Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Research Framework *:

 [Integrated Monitoring Evaluation and Research Framework.docx](#)

Performance Monitoring Framework *:

 [FINAL Performance Monitoring Framework.docx](#)

Minutes of formulation meetings and events *:

 [JP MEETINGS MINUTES.docx](#)

Participants list of consultation meetings and events *:

 [Participants List of Consultation Meetings and Events.docx](#)

Risk analysis *:

 [Risk Analysis Matrix SDG-F.docx](#)

Additional documentation:

 [Annex. SDG-F Criteria for Partners.docx](#)
