

- Sustainable Economic Development (Agriculture and Private Sector) – led by the EU and Spain

European donors are also investing in *promoting inclusive, sustainable and private sector led development and equitable access to natural resources*, paving the way to economic independence and improving the job and economic prospects particularly for Palestine's youth population. This means investing more in greater access to decent jobs through improving access and delivery of vocation education and training. New decent jobs and economic opportunities will also be created, including for women, through investing in the green economy in Palestine. Agricultural incomes are also to be increased through improving access to markets and value adding (e.g. in agro-processing) and in giving farmers greater access to affordable extension services.

This last pillar that focuses on economic development is especially important in mitigating economic barriers created by occupation related restrictions on access and movement of goods and persons, the non-contiguous control of land by Palestine and lack of access to Area C as well as embedded gender related impediments to women's participation. European donors will invest in improving competitiveness, skills development, sustainable job creation, developing the green economy, decent work and improving participation of women in the economy and building the path towards a green economy with particular attention will to Area C, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. Further, European donors will invest in equal and fair participation of small farmers in the competitive market-oriented agricultural and livestock system, while improving the capacity of the public sector and private businesses to produce and process agricultural products to international standards.

## One land

Equally European programming in Palestine is based on the understanding that achieving a two-state solution and the future sovereignty of Palestine requires continued attention to ensure the **cohesiveness of Palestinian territory**. This necessarily means the continued investment in Palestinian institutions and the services they deliver to populations throughout the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

## Support to refugees

European donors remain and will continue to provide extensive support to Palestine refugees throughout the Middle East through

earmarked financial allocations in support of UNRWA that feature prominently in the joint strategy.

## Cross cutting themes

Throughout all the pillars and as stand-alone political priorities, European donors are investing in promoting **gender equality, strengthening civil society, sustainable development and environmental protection**. The upholding and implementation of **international law** is paramount and is equally mainstreamed in all programming in line with the rights based approach.

## How will this work in practice?

Having a shared strategy and agreeing the same priorities timetable and rules are only the beginning. In the future when projects are designed or activities planned they will be done jointly both amongst European development partners and always with Palestinian institutions but also in encouraging other development partners to join up and work together.

European development partners are also committed to improving the **donor and PA accountability** for the effectiveness and impact of cooperation in Palestine. This means increased focus on the following overarching priorities both in the pillars and through an overarching perspective that will be reflected in political and policy dialogue:

1. Improving messaging on the **connection between political and policy priorities** and how programming is constrained or enabled by the political context (noting the absence of a path to a political solution to the occupation).
2. Improving the **viability of the two-state Solution** (EU's political objective in Palestine).
3. Supporting and calling for the upholding of **international legal obligations** to all Palestinians including refugees, populations in Area C, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip
4. Improving the **accountability of Palestinian institutions** by promoting evidence based policy dialogue and a rights-based approach (that continues the PA's good practice of including civil society, academia, the private sector and other stakeholders in policy making).
5. Strengthening the capacity of Palestinian institutions to **deliver, monitor and evaluate service delivery** (in line with the **Agenda 2030** and the **Sustainable Development Goals**) especially to the **most vulnerable populations inter alia women, young people and refugees**.



# EUROPEAN JOINT STRATEGY OF EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS IN SUPPORT OF PALESTINE<sup>1</sup> 2017-2020





## European development partners and Palestine

The work of European development partners in Palestine is driven by their long standing position to **protect the viability of the two-state solution** and takes place in the highly political and fragile context of the occupation. Within this context, European development partners and Palestine enjoy a **strong and dynamic partnership** fundamentally grounded in mutual commitments to social and economic development, democratic governance, Palestine's participation in the global economy and the implementation of the two-state solution. The partnership is based on a deep and meaningful dialogue on how best to support effective democratic structures that enable an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State living in peace and security with Israel. European donors are also **major financiers of social services throughout Palestine, to Palestinian refugees and in meeting other humanitarian and protection needs**. European partners recognise that sustainable development in Palestine hinges on "achieving a two-state solution based on parameters set out in the Council Conclusions of July 2014 that meets Israeli and Palestinian security needs and Palestinian aspirations for statehood and sovereignty, ends the occupation that began in 1967, and resolves all permanent status issues in order to end the conflict." European development partners acknowledge the challenges posed by the fragmentation of the territory, call for the end of the closure in the Gaza Strip as the main impediment to its social and economic development and reiterate the necessity of continued EU engagement in **Area C**, which is of crucial importance for the political and economic viability of a future Palestinian state. **Jerusalem** as the future capital of two states is a focus of attention with the aim to strengthen the resilience of Palestinian East Jerusalem residents and to preserve the Palestinian character of the city. **Collectively European donors have provided close to EUR 1.1 billion (NIS4.5 billion) annually for humanitarian and development support to Palestinians**. In 2016, Palestine's European donors have come together to develop a joint strategy to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their programming to Palestine. **Working to programme aid together is called joint programming**.

### Why Joint Programming now?

Development cooperation is more effective when development partners coordinate, communicate, agree a shared vision and strategy and play by the same rules. This year, Palestinians will approve the **National Policy Agenda (NPA)** that sets out a unified vision for social and economic development in Palestine from 2017 to 2022. European development partners acknowledge that in the development of the NPA, Palestine has gone to extraordinary lengths to consult civil society, the private sector, academia and development partners on its formulation. **This provides European development partners the opportunity to come together in one team to develop the first European Joint Strategy in support of Palestine's own planning**.

The European Joint Strategy will support implementation of the goals identified in the NPA, promoting the use of government

### WHAT IS JOINT PROGRAMMING?

Every Palestinian knows that a good dabke group does not happen by accident. It requires practice and hard work and commitment to working together as a team. Dancing together as a dabke group is about building a team that has a shared vision and goal. Each dancer comes with his or her own individual strengths and weaknesses. Some are tall, some are strong, some are left-handed and some are just having a bad day. Regardless their differences or whether or not they are having a bad day, however, to dance the dabke dancers must learn to dance together. Dancing together means agreeing who will lead, who will support, how best to take advantage of each other's strengths and compensate for each other's weaknesses. Most importantly, though, dabke means agreeing to all dance in the same direction, listening and responding to the music in the same way, pitching up on time and keeping to the rhythm.

Joint programming follows the same principles except the dancers are development partners and the dabke lasts for years. This is a dance in which a performance means a better life for all and efficient use of development funding. In Palestine, the group comprises twenty-two European development partners, essentially making a European team. The twenty-two European development partners are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the EU, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

reporting, monitoring and evaluation in contributing to shared benchmarks for success. This joint work includes a political dimension, as it aims at affirming and defending the shared vision of European actors in Palestine, as well as ensuring the convergence between the development work and the political objectives of the EU. Together with the NPA, both strategic documents are also solid foundation for a strong dialogue on fundamental human rights, environmental protection, democratic governance and gender equality.

### Why is the European Joint Programming for Palestine important?

Marked by close to 50 years of occupation and conflict, Palestine remains highly dependent on international development partners for public investment funds. When European development partners improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their contributions it improves the relevance and impact of programming that can be delivered with the same resources.

European development partners use a joint approach to improve their focus on delivering results as identified in the NPA. If current levels of support continue, European donors will collectively contribute almost €7 billion (NIS 27 billion) over the six years of the NPA on improving quality of life in Palestine. European joint programming concentrates on five Pillars, all of which are priorities for Palestine.



### What are the key elements of the first EU Joint Strategy for Palestine?

Joint programming is about agreeing a shared strategy<sup>2</sup>, and allocating resources. The European development partners are focusing their development financing and technical support on the following five core Pillars.

The first two pillars support building the capacity and credibility of state institutions for a viable Palestinian State, while the third and fourth pillars will improve protection and service delivery to citizens, particularly the most vulnerable and those most affected by the occupation. The final pillar will invest in sustainable economic development focusing on enabling job creation, business development and support to farmers and agro-businesses.

- **Governance Reform, Fiscal Consolidation and Policy** (Macroeconomic and Public Finance Management, Public Administration and Local Governance) – led by Denmark, the EU and the UK
- **Rule of Law, Justice, Citizen Safety and Human Rights** (Justice, Safety and Human Rights legislation) – led by the Netherlands and the UK
- **Sustainable Service Delivery** (Education, Health and Social Protection) – led by Belgium, the EU and Italy
- **Access to Self-Sufficient Water and Energy Services** (Infrastructure focus) – led by Germany and the EU
- **Sustainable Economic Development** (Agriculture and Private Sector) – led by the EU and Spain

- **Governance Reform, Fiscal Consolidation and Policy** (Macroeconomic and Public Finance Management, Public Administration and Local Governance) – led by Denmark, the EU and the UK

Palestine is a fragile state with high risks of internal and external conflict. *The capacity of state institutions will be strengthened through improving transparency, accountability and integrity of public financial management.* The intended result is that public finances, public financial management and financial oversight are improved to enable better service delivery. Service delivery will also be improved through unifying administrations in all of Palestine and

<sup>2</sup> Note: Joint Programming is at the strategy level; European Donor Funding still follows the same approach in regards to allocating resources through competitive and transparency processes.

in improving administrative efficiencies. Local government delivery will be strengthened through improving financial management and administration capacities.

- **Rule of Law, Justice, Citizen Safety and Human Rights** (Justice, Safety and Human Rights legislation) – led by the Netherlands and the UK

Justice and Security sectors in Palestine will be strengthened in line with the principle of rule of law and international human rights standards. *This will contribute to better access to transparent and equitable justice*, especially for vulnerable groups, through more efficient court systems and greater access to due process. Additionally, citizen safety will be improved through enabling security services to use a citizen, rights and community based approach that improves accountability to citizens and better protection of vulnerable groups.

- **Sustainable Service Delivery** (Education, Health and Social Protection) – led by Belgium, the EU and Italy

The joint programming will reinforce European support for *better service delivery with the goal of supporting equitable and inclusive access for all Palestinians to quality services in health, education and social assistance*. Programming will focus on improving pre-school and vocational training, including in the Gaza Strip and Area C and especially for girls through raising the Gross Enrolment Rate and improving the curriculum and teacher skills. Health services are to be improved through better primary health facilities, prevention, maternal and child health care and access for marginalised and vulnerable populations. Social services are to be made more accessible as well as improving the efficiency and effectiveness of social cash transfers.

- **Access to Self-Sufficient Water and Energy Services** (Infrastructure focus) – led by Germany and the EU

The provision of *self-sufficient, equitable, affordable and sustainable access to energy, safe water and sanitation services for all* will be supported with the explicit target of increasing access to water and waste water services increased particularly for vulnerable and marginalised populations. Additionally, access to electricity will be improved and expanded through increasing predictability and improving the increasing use of renewable electricity generation, thus also reducing the social and environmental costs of generating electricity.