

Palestinian - Belgian
Bilateral Co-operation

Indicative Development Co-operation Programme
2002-2006

Palestine- Belgium Bilateral Co-operation

Indicative

Development Co-operation Programme 2002-2006

The Indicative Co-operation Programme is an outline of the joint Palestinian - Belgian international co-operation policy.

1. GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE INDICATIVE DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION PROGRAMME (IDCP)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The signing of the Interim-agreement (Oslo II - 1995) and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA) was the start for Palestinian administration and development policy. Elections took place and created a basis for democratic development. A relatively strong civil society also bode well for the development of the region and democracy.

However these positive events and evolution remain fragile. The relationship between the partners of the Oslo agreements deteriorated and resulted in September 2000, in Intifada 2 and a strict closure policy which led to severe revenue loses for the PA. Its average monthly budget of 107 million USD before Intifada 2 was reduced to an average of 22 million USD. At the Palestinian municipal level the pressure on budgets is also severe largely because consumers cannot pay water and electricity charges.

As a result, basic public services are in decline. Budget support given by the European Union and Arab countries is used for the payment of salaries. The PA is forced to pay much attention to this short-term problem. Investing in long-term development policies is difficult.

Despite of these difficulties Belgium and the Palestinian Authority continue to maintain the long-term development policies agreed upon during the last Joint committee of November 1998 enriching them with appropriate measures responding to the deteriorating socio-economic situation of the PA as well as the Palestinian population. This Belgian Indicative Development Co-operation Programme in the Palestinian territories is the result of a consultative process, based on Palestinian development priorities and Belgium's overall development co-operation policy.

1.2 BELGIAN CO-OPERATION POLICY

1.2.1 Overall Objective

The Belgian delegation outlined the policy framework and institutional set up resulting from the new law on Belgian International Co-operation of the 25th of may 1999. The law introduces the concept of international co-operation; thereby indicating that co-operation is a joint operation between partners placed on equal footing. It clarifies the objectives of poverty reduction, sustainable human development, and partnership. Further it sets criteria for Belgian co-operation activities such as relevance to development, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and viability.

A
Xo

The law also limits the number of partner-countries, territories or regional organisations with which Belgium can have a long-standing bilateral co-operation relationship to 25. Bilateral co-operation programmes are also concentrated on mainly five sectors (public health, education and training, agriculture and food security, small-scale infrastructure, and institutional development) and three cross-sector themes (gender, environment, social economy).

1.2.2 Information about the implementation modalities

Each individual co-operation activity (programme/project) within the Indicative Co-operation Programme is subject to standardised procedures and well-defined process and phase.

A. Identification phase.

The first phase in the project cycle is carried out under the responsibility of the partner country. The study and consultancy fund is the most important mechanism to facilitate and finance the services required to:

1. Identify the nature, the scope, the magnitude, the needs and the components of the programme/project;
2. Define the inputs needed to formulate a project proposal.

The participatory approach is the methodology applied in the different phases of the project cycle, with the effective involvement of all concerned Parties, in line with the terms of the general agreement between Belgium and the P.A.

For each project or programme, a joint local consultative body, called steering committee, is created in principle where Belgium (BTC and the Attaché for Development Co-operation) and the Palestinian partners are represented.

B. Formulation phase.

The results of the identification phase constitute the fundamental inputs for formulating a full-pledged project document in accordance with prevailing guidelines and requirements. Belgian and Palestinian Parties assign BTC to carry out the formulation, whereby the participatory approach is the methodology of choice to organize and process the formulation phase. BTC, MoPIC, Attaché and the respective beneficiary are the main partners in the exercise. The output of the formulation phase is endorsed by the Palestinian Party prior to the submission to the Belgian Party for consideration and formal approval. A specific agreement, which fixes the budgetary commitments, is signed between the two Parties.

C. Implementation phase

This phase is the practical realization of agreed objectives within well-defined time schedule and budget allocation. The joint responsibility in this phase rests primarily with BTC and the respective beneficiary, who are to implement the programme/project as formulated and approved and accountable to the Belgian and Palestinian authorities.

The steering committee is in charge of monitoring the process of implementation and assessing the level of achievement of project results and objective.

Standard terms of reference should outline roles, functions and responsibilities of the steering committee and define its internal working procedures.

4 x

D. Monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring and evaluation systems are important management tools to analyse the process and results of implementation. Internal evaluation, periodical evaluation and post-evaluation are integrated parts of the monitoring and evaluation system.

Periodical evaluation is carried out jointly by both Parties, while specific evaluations (performance audit, financial control and post-evaluation) are carried out as may be required by respective regulations of the two Parties, in particular by the evaluation department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Brussels.

1.3. BELGIAN CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES IN THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Belgium has been co-operating as a donor in Palestine, in the following sectors: health, education, rural development and basic infrastructure. In these sectors Belgium financed co-operation activities directly with the Palestinian Authority and indirectly through other Palestinian and international organisations and institutions.

A broad understanding exists between both parties that consolidation of the achievements of that ongoing co-operation programme is of prime importance. New initiatives, broadly in these same sectors, are also envisaged.

1.4 PALESTINIAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY

In line with the development policy and objectives clearly defined and outlined in the Palestinian Development Plan, the Palestinian Authority assigns special emphasis on the following areas of co-operation:

- a) strengthening the institution building process at the national, municipal and communal levels;
- b) improving quality service delivery in the health sector, in particular the control and reduction of cardiac diseases;
- c) promote rural development in the peripheral areas through rural electrification and the provision of basic infrastructure and administrative equipments and services;
- d) improving primary and secondary general and technical education through construction and rehabilitation of schools and curriculum development;
- e) accelerating employment creation and poverty alleviation.

These interventions reflect the overall policy objectives of the Belgian development co-operation, which are to:

- a) contribute to the establishment of strong, sustainable and well managed Palestinian Institutions and Public Services in the spirit of good governance and a viable economy for the future Palestinian State;
- b) alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian People during the current crisis through reduction of poverty and the provision of basic services and inputs.

2 40

2. AREAS OF CO-OPERATION

Whenever possible, the Belgian Government and the Palestinian Authority will give due consideration to the approach of basket funding and welcome the participation of other donors in funding of joint programs/projects.

2.1 Ministry of Health (MoH)

The population of Palestine is three millions residing in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Jerusalem. Cardiac diseases are increasing progressively in Palestine, particularly hypertension and cardiac insufficiency, at a rate that is all but the same as those depicted in the modern states. The number of cases reported yearly of congenital heart diseases, Eschermic H.D and, to a lesser degree, RH valvular diseases are 5000 cases, which need catheterization and management.

In 1999 a new Cath lab has been installed in Ramallah Hospital through a donation from the Government of Belgium.

In Gaza, with its one million population, the Ministry of Health is obliged to collect the cases that need catheterisation and send them out to Cairo/Egypt in groups of 10 patients at a time, accompanied by two cardiac specialists. The patients undergo Catheterisation and medical intervention in Egypt which also offers training opportunities to doctors with a view to enhancing their diagnostic skills towards acquiring professional competence.

A bilateral Agreement is signed between the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Belgium under which the Belgian Gov, will establish a Catheterisation lab for Gaza strip and to upgrade ICU/CCU in Ramallah hospital. Once this lab starts functioning, in the beginning of the year 2003, 30 cath cases per week will be performed.

To realise the National Goals and Objectives of the Palestinian National Strategic Health Plan, Belgium aid will continue to contribute to the improvement of the curative and preventive health care by reducing morbidity, disability and mortality due to cardio-vascular diseases.

The purposes of this Co-operation policy are:

- to upgrade existing cardiology facilities;
- to establish two preventive cardiology centres in Gaza and the West Bank;
- to upgrade the neonatology centre in the Shifa hospital in Gaza;
- to enhance paediatric cardiology surgical human capacity.

2.2 Ministry of Education (MoE)

Some goals published in the five Year Plan of the Ministry of Education are:

- To improve and raise the quality of education,
- To ensure equity in educational opportunities,
- To maintain a safe, accessible and suitable educational environment,
- To contribute to the Palestinian nation building.

To realise the National Goals and Objectives of the Palestinian National Strategic Education Plan, Belgium aid will continue to improve the quality of primary and secondary education in Palestine.

The purposes of this Co-operation policy are:

- To print school textbooks for the scholastic year 2002-2003,
- To rehabilitate and build schools in the West bank and the Gaza Strip,
- To develop vocational and technical education curricula.

2.3 Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)

Institution building on local level has to contribute to the creation of strong, sustainable and well managed Palestinian Institutions and Public Services, in the spirit of good governance, and a viable economy for the future Palestinian State.

- The "Local rural development policy (LRDP)" of the PA envisages the improvement of living conditions and alleviation of poverty in the least developed and under-privileged rural areas of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by:

- Improving basic infrastructure and services.
- Promoting local economic development and employment.
- Promoting community participation in planning and implementing local development projects.
- Strengthening the capacity of rural municipalities.
- Promoting decentralisation by transferring funds from the central PA.

The "LICP" is to improve in a sustainable way the living conditions of the rural populations by providing them with basic social and economic infrastructure.

A Specific agreement, signed at the occasion of the Joint Committee, is to improve the local services delivery and capacity building in 23 target municipalities and villages, in the regions of Tulkarm, Salfeet and South East Jerusalem. This improvement will primarily derive from the construction of basic social infrastructure and the local institution building linked to this purpose.

A second phase of this project aims employment generation which will take into account the needs of women, could be envisaged on PA proposition. Priority will be given to activities in the field of rehabilitation and extension of water distribution networks, wasted water, environment, land reclamation, irrigation and marketing of agricultural produce.

- A second phase of the intervention in the village of Artas could be envisaged on PA proposition. With the construction of an appropriate low technology waste water treatment plant. This phase would complete the ongoing project.

Handwritten signature/initials

2.4 Ministry of Planning and International Co-operation (MoPIC)

Both Parties consider institution building at the national level as a fundamental element contributing to the creation and the promotion of strong, sustainable and well-managed Palestinian Institutions and Public Services. Good governance, efficiency and quality service delivery are conditions sine qua non for a sound development policy, solid social and economic infrastructure and rational use of limited aid resources.

The strategic importance of the ministry in charge of aid coordination and development management is evident as MoPIC is the direct partner to the international donor community and plays an essential role in mobilizing external resources. Indeed, a well-organized and adequately staffed MoPIC is essential to the work of the donor community towards nation building and social and economic development in Palestine.

Consequently, the joint project in MoPIC is of strategic dimension. Its main objective is to improve the technical, organizational and managerial capacity and to strengthen the aid coordination role and development management of the international co-operation department in the ministry.

As the funds initially assigned within the aid programme with Germany are re-programmed, some basic underlying assumptions of the joint project in MoPIC are now unrealistic, so that the achievement of project objectives are jeopardized.

Consequently, the recent steering committee strongly recommended considering additional assistance from Belgium:

- a) to support the project department;
- b) to re-design the aid coordination database;
- c) to remodel and adjust the management information system.

Both Parties agree that it is imperative for the success of the joint project to create and maintain the necessary administrative and managerial pre-requisites for the smooth and timely implementation of the project. Both Parties reiterate their commitment to ensure the full success of this important project.

The Belgian delegation agrees on the strategic importance of MoPIC and is willing to provide support to the ministry.

2.5 Palestinian Energy Authority (PEA)

The goal of the Belgian support for PEA is to improve in a sustainable way the living conditions of the rural populations by providing them with access to electricity. A contract has been awarded for the connection of 40 villages.

The eventual connection of 9 villages more to the distribution network is envisaged. The Belgian Party is willing to consider favourably a request of the Palestinian Party for this extension.

4-30

2.6 Scholarships

From 2002 onwards:

- Belgium will continue its present scholarships programme whereby six Palestinian students receive scholarships in Belgium, as decided under the joint commission of November 1998. The Minister of Higher Education and scientific research will be the Palestinian partner.
- Belgium will make available a number of fellowships and short training programmes at local and regional institutions.

For the award of all-future scholarships, good academic or / and technical capacity of the candidates concerned and gender equality will be aimed at.

[Handwritten signature]

ANNEXE 4

OTHER MODES OF CO-OPERATION

An overview of Modes of Co-operation between Belgium and Palestine other than Direct Bilateral Co-operation is given in Annexe 2 (points 2 to 6).