

Governance

Strengthening Civil Society Programme (CSP)

Background and Objective

Civil society in Palestine plays a key role in social and political development. Organisations take part in policy-making processes, as well as, assume an important role in holding the government accountable for its implementation. Palestinian civil society organisations (CSOs) vary in their scope of work and are manifold and complex. Their mandates include, but are not pertained to service provision, advocacy, human rights, gender equality, education, inclusion of persons with disabilities, and economic empowerment. The ongoing Israeli occupation, territorial and social fragmentation, in addition to a worsening economic situation, place impediments on organisations, particularly influencing their effectiveness and the potential for meeting development needs, as well as, representing their communities.

The Strengthening Civil Society Organisations Programme (CSP) works towards ensuring the Palestinian society is more inclusive and institutions are more approachable and effective. The programme partners with 21 civil society organisations, networks, community-based organisations, women's and youth organisations, and Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip to increase the political participation of the population in line with the Leave No One Behind principle of the 2030 Agenda. In line with its commitment to capacity development, the programme encourages initiatives in the areas of advocacy, organizational development, intra-civil society coordination, digitalisation, state-civil society dialogue, and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Project name	Strengthening Civil Society Organisations Programme (CSP)
Commissioned by	The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza
Partners	21 Civil Society Organisations
Duration	May 2019 – April 2023

To reach that, CSP is active in the following main areas:

- Improving the resilience of Civil Society through better organisational structures and processes;
- Providing accessible digital methods and instruments in order to represent interests of communities;
- Fostering participation and integration of marginalised groups in subnational planning processes;
- Strengthening the inclusion of persons with disabilities and other marginalised groups in the programmes of the German Development Cooperation in Palestine;
- Facilitating COVID-19 recovery and preparedness measures;
- Providing mental health and psychosocial support.

CSP works with international development advisors and Palestinian professionals who are based at partner CSOs to provide technical and strategic assistance.



Heads of CSP partner organisations Amal Syam (WAC) and Majeda Saqqa (CFTA) planning an advocacy campaign against early marriage during a CSP training on advocacy in Amman, Jordan, 2018.



Children with and without disabilities taking part in psycho-social support activities at the centres of Nawa (left) and Atfaluna (right) in Gaza, Palestine, 2019. Photo credit: Atfaluna and Nawa.

Key Achievements

- CSP assisted four partners in Gaza to upgrade their M&E systems to MEAL Systems (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning), which strengthens their decision-making processes and project management. In the West-Bank, CSP used its Organisational Capacity Self-Assessment Tool (OCSAT) to examine the needs and capacities of five partners, based on which organisational development plans are designed.
- CSP conducted capacity development measures for staff of partner organisations on digital campaigning and security. This strengthens their digital advocacy as staff can increase engagement and analyze interactions of audience in social media and security when conducting digital campaigns. CSP also supported in developing barrier free websites for three partner organizations and databases software for two organizations. The database softwares improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the beneficiaries' and members' data management, and also enhanced the reporting system of the organizations, while the barrier free websites allowed the access to information to persons with hearing impairments.
- In Gaza, CSP helps in activating the partners' various social media networks with different designs and content related to women issues in both Arabic and English to represent women and reach out to local and international communities. The programme supports numerous social media campaigns to raise awareness on Gender Based Violence, empowerment of persons with disabilities, Covid-19 safety precautions for marginalized groups, and access to higher education for persons with hearing disabilities.
- In the West Bank, CSP encourages the dialogue between marginalised groups and representatives of local government units (Village Councils and Municipalities). This enhances citizen participation in the subnational planning processes and eventually the inclusion of their needs in the formulation and implementation of development projects.
- In 2020, CSP launched a baseline survey to assess the level of knowledge, attitudes and practices of the German Development Cooperation staff and partner organisation workers on the LNOB principle. Based on the results, CSP will develop trainings and awareness raising sessions on LNOB inclusion. The programme also conducted mainstreaming analysis for GIZ Palestine programmes to improve LNOB adoption within their activities.
- CSP offers disability inclusion assessments and trainings on inclusion to partner organizations of the German Development Cooperation in Palestine.

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