

Corporate Unit Evaluation

Central Project Evaluation

KNOWING WHAT WORKS

Central Project Evaluation

Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in
Rural Areas, Palestine
Project number 2016.2151.5

Evaluation Report

On behalf of GIZ by Birgit Kundermann (FAKT Consult) and Dr Khaled Rajab (FAKT Consult)

Published: July 2022

Publication details

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a federal enterprise and supports the German Federal Government in achieving its objectives in the fields of international education and international cooperation for sustainable development.

GIZ's Evaluation Unit reports directly to the Management Board. It is separate from GIZ's operational business. This organisational structure strengthens its independence. The unit is mandated to generate evidence-based results and recommendations for decision-making, to provide plausible verification of results and to increase the transparency of findings.

The Evaluation Unit commissioned external independent evaluators to conduct the evaluation. This evaluation report was written by these external evaluators. All opinions and assessments expressed in the report are those of the authors.

Evaluator/s:

Birgit Kundermann, Dr Khaled Rajab, FAKT Consult

Author/s of the evaluation report:

Birgit Kundermann, Dr Khaled Rajab, FAKT Consult

Consulting firm:

FAKT Consult for Management, Training and Technologies

Hackländerstraße 33

70184 Stuttgart, Germany

T: +49 (0) 711 21095-0

E: fakt@fakt-consult.de

I: www.fakt-consult.de

Coordination and management:

Claudia Kornahrens, GIZ, Head of Section

Manuel Kern, GIZ, Evaluation Manager

GIZ Corporate Unit Evaluation

Central Project Evaluation Section

Responsible:

Albert Engel, GIZ, Director

GIZ Corporate Unit Evaluation

Editing:

International Correspondents in Education (ICE)

Published by:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für

Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices:

Bonn and Eschborn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36

53113 Bonn, Germany

T: +49 228 44 60-0

F: +49 228 44 60-17 66

E: evaluierung@giz.de

I: www.giz.de/evaluierung

www.youtube.com/user/GIZonlineTV

www.facebook.com/gizprofile

https://twitter.com/giz_gmbh

Design/layout:

DITHO Design GmbH, Cologne

Printing and distribution:

GIZ, Bonn

Printed on 100% recycled paper, certified to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards.

Bonn, July 2022

This publication can be downloaded as a PDF file from the GIZ website:
www.giz.de/evaluierung.

Contents

List of figures.....	4
List of photos.....	4
List of tables.....	4
Abbreviations	5
The project at a glance	8
1 Evaluation objectives and questions.....	9
1.1 Evaluation objectives.....	9
1.2 Evaluation questions	9
2 Object of the evaluation	11
2.1 Definition of the evaluation object.....	11
2.2 Results model including hypotheses	13
3 Evaluability and evaluation process.....	17
3.1 Evaluability: data availability and quality	17
3.2 Evaluation process	18
4 Assessment according to OECD/DAC criteria.....	22
4.1 Impact and sustainability of predecessor projects.....	22
4.2 Relevance.....	22
4.3 Coherence	30
4.4 Effectiveness	34
4.5 Impact.....	50
4.6 Efficiency	58
4.7 Sustainability	63
4.8 Key results and overall rating	69
5 Conclusions and recommendations.....	71
5.1 Key findings and factors of success/failure	71
5.2 Recommendations.....	73
List of references	76
Annex: evaluation matrix.....	82

List of figures

Figure 1: Current results model (March 2021), adapted during the inception mission of the evaluation	14
Figure 2: Milestones of the evaluation process.....	18

List of photos

Photo 1: Start Up Project to grow special hot pepper, Maithalun (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).....	26
Photo 2: Agriculture project, Kufur Jammal Tulkarem (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).....	47
Photo 3: Qalqilia agriculture land (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).	47
Photo 4: Farkha women cooperative products (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).....	56
Photo 5: Water User Association in Ras Ateyyeh (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).	69

List of tables

Table 1: Knowledge interests by main evaluation stakeholder group	10
Table 2: List of evaluation stakeholders and selected participants	20
Table 3: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: relevance	22
Table 4: Dividers/escalating factors in the project context.....	26
Table 5: Connectors/deescalating factors in the project context	27
Table 6: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: relevance	28
Table 7: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: coherence	30
Table 8: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: coherence.....	33
Table 9: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: effectiveness	34
Table 10: Assessed and adapted objective indicators for specific modules (outcome level)	35
Table 11: Selected results hypotheses for effectiveness	39
Table 12: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: effectiveness	48
Table 13: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: impact	50
Table 14: Selected results hypotheses for impact	54
Table 15: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: impact	57
Table 16: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: efficiency	58
Table 17: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: efficiency	62
Table 18: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: sustainability	63
Table 19: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: sustainability	68
Table 20: Overall rating of OECD/DAC criteria and assessment dimensions	70
Table 21: Rating and score scales.....	71

Abbreviations

AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (Spanish Cooperation)
AWRAD	Arab World for Research and Development
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CSO	Civil society organisation
DC	Development Cooperation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DoA	Directorate of Agriculture
EQA	Environmental Quality Authority
ESDC	Economic and Social Development Centre of Palestine
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation (of the United Nations)
FGD	Focus group discussion
GDC	German development cooperation
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
iPCA	Integrated context and human rights analysis
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIP	National Investment Plan for food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PA	Palestinian Authority
PARC	Agricultural Development Association
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PHG	Palestinian Hydrology Group
PMO	Prime Minister Office
PT	Palestinian territories
PWA	Palestinian Water Authority
ROF	Results-Oriented Framework (of the EU Development Partners)
RWDS	Rural Women's Development Society
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SED	Sustainable Economic Development
SMART	Specific – Measurable – Achievable – Relevant- Time-bound
SWOT	Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats
ToC	Theory of Change
UAWC	Union of Agricultural Work Committees

UN-OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association



The project at a glance

Palestinian Territories: Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas

Project number	2016.2151.5
Creditor reporting system code(s)	14015 – Conservation of water resources (45%), 31130 – Agricultural land resources (35%) and 31166 – Agricultural advisory services (20%)
Project objective	The livelihoods of the agricultural population are strengthened.
Project term	March 2018 – May 2021
Project value	EUR 4,750,000 (of which EUR 750,000 was for the COVID-19 response)
Commissioning party	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Lead executing agency	Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
Implementing organisations (in the partner country)	Directorates of Agriculture (DoAs) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
Other development organisations involved	Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which include: Economic & Social Development Centre of Palestine (ESDC), Agricultural Development Association (PARC), Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC), Rural Women's Development Society (RWDS), and Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG). (The cooperation with NGOs refers in particular to Area C ¹ .) Private-sector companies, such as Sustainable Engineering Solutions (SES). Members of the steering committee, headed by the MoA: Palestinian Water Authority (PWA), Environmental Quality Authority (EQA).
Target group(s)	Agriculturally active households in selected regions of the West Bank in the governorates of Hebron, Tulkarm and Qalqilya, and across the West Bank. Employees of the MoA and DoAs Agriculturally active households are those that derive at least part of their income from agriculture and include landowners and tenants. Most of these families live in Areas A, B or C, but their agricultural lands are mainly located in Area C. Women's groups were a particular focus of cooperatives in the agri-business sector. University graduates, as well as young entrepreneurs in the agriculture sector, were also part of the target group. Experts and decision-makers in municipalities and village councils, and community-based civil society organisations were involved at the local level.
Development cooperation (DC) programme	Sustainable economic development, employment promotion and education
Implementing organisations of the DC programme	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB, the National Metrology Institute of Germany), KfW Development Bank
Organisation responsible for implementing and coordinating the DC programme	GIZ

¹ In 1995, the Oslo II Accord divided the Israeli-occupied West Bank into three administrative divisions: Areas A, B and C. Area A is administered by the Palestinian National Authority and comprises approximately 18% of the total territory of the West Bank. Area B is administered by both the Palestinian National Authority and Israel and comprises approximately 22%. Area C contains the Israeli settlements and is administered by Israel. It comprises the remaining 60% of the West Bank territory.

1 Evaluation objectives and questions

This chapter aims to describe the purpose of the evaluation, the standard evaluation criteria, and additional stakeholders' knowledge interests and evaluation questions.

1.1 Evaluation objectives

Central project evaluations of projects commissioned by BMZ fulfil three basic functions: they support evidence-based decisions, promote transparency and accountability, and foster organisational learning within the scope of contributing to effective knowledge management. GIZ structures the planning, implementation and use of evaluations, so that the contribution the evaluation process and the evaluation findings makes to these basic functions is optimised (GIZ, 2018d).

This project – Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas, project number 2016.2151.5 – was chosen for evaluation as part of a random sample drawn up by GIZ Corporate Unit Evaluation. The evaluation was a final evaluation, conducted at the end of the project following an inception phase five months prior to the project end. The evaluation mission had to be postponed in May 2021 – owing to an escalation of the conflict between Israel and Palestinians – until September 2021, after the project had ended. The field part of the evaluation mission was conducted in June and July 2021.

Because of travel restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluation was conducted under semi-remote/hybrid conditions, with the local evaluator in the Palestinian territories (PT) and the international evaluator in Germany, during both the inception phase and the evaluation mission itself.

1.2 Evaluation questions

The project was assessed based on standardised evaluation criteria and questions to ensure comparability by GIZ. This was based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD/Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\) evaluation criteria](#) (updated 2020) for international cooperation and the [evaluation criteria for German bilateral cooperation](#) (in German): **relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability**.

Specific assessment dimensions and analytical questions have been derived from this framework. These form the basis for all central project evaluations in GIZ and can be found in the **evaluation matrix** (see annex 1). Since the Palestinian territories are considered a fragile context, additional questions were incorporated into the evaluation matrix. In addition, contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its principles were taken into account, as were cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment, conflict sensitivity and human rights. Aspects regarding the quality of implementation were also included in all OECD/DAC criteria.

During the inception mission, the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), BMZ and GIZ, at country, programme and project levels, were consulted as main stakeholders and involved in the evaluation process. Their interests are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Knowledge interests by main evaluation stakeholder group

Evaluation stakeholder group	Knowledge interests in evaluation/additional evaluation questions	Relevant section in this report
MoA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did the project indicators contribute to the new indicators proposed in the Revised National Agricultural Strategy? How will the project results feed into MoA reporting on achievements towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 (Zero hunger)? What lessons have been learned from the project that could support MoA learning and quality improvement? How was the methodology and effectiveness of the project's training approach assessed? How can the project results/lessons learned lead to a better design of the next phase? 	<p>Included in: section 4.2 (relevance),</p> <p>section 4.5 (impact) and</p> <p>section 5 (follow-on project)</p>
BMZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the synergies between the project and the following: the Sustainable Economic Development (SED) programme and cluster; the German development portfolio; the water sector; and other value-chain activities, including in the private sector? What has been the impact of COVID-19 on the livelihood of Palestinians in rural areas? How effective were the COVID-19 measures in supporting project beneficiaries? How effectively did the project reach female target groups? How is the MoA perceived as a political partner, especially given that collaboration with the MoA was new to BMZ programming? What were the synergies with projects funded by other donors, especially in value chains? 	<p>Included in: section 4.3 (coherence)</p> <p>section 4.4 (effectiveness)</p> <p>section 4.2 (relevance) and section 4.4 (effectiveness)</p>
GIZ project level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can the lessons learned from the project help in structuring the follow-on project according to the DAC/OECD criteria? What are the possible opportunities for improvement and how can the evaluation recommendations be implemented in the next phase? What are the recommendations for the monitoring and evaluation system? How effective was the project steering structure? Should the follow-on project also work with other departments of the MoA? Should there be different focal points for each output at the MoA? Are the assumptions of the results model plausible and valid? What was the benefit of the approaches used (e.g. infrastructure versus training)? How was the effectiveness of the capacity of advisors and the collaboration with NGOs assessed? 	<p>included in: section 4.7 (sustainability) and section 5 (follow-on project), section 4.4 (effectiveness)</p> <p>section 4.4 (effectiveness) and section 4.5 (impact) section 4.6 (efficiency)</p>
GIZ SED programme level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did the project contribute to the SED programme in terms of employment – quantitatively as well as qualitatively? How was the cooperation with the MoA assessed, especially regarding employment and the new partnership for German DC? How was the regional set-up (intervention areas) of the project assessed in relation to the employment targets and in terms of the achievement of objectives? How did the project perform in Area C? 	<p>Included in: section 4.3 (coherence) and section 4.5. (impact),</p> <p>section 4.4 (effectiveness), and section 4.6 (efficiency)</p>
GIZ country office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the experiences and achievements of the strategic project regarding improvement in access to water for agriculture? How was the livelihood approach perceived? How effective was the project in Area C in cooperation with NGOs and the MoA? 	<p>Included in: section 4.4 (effectiveness) and section 4.2 (relevance) and section 4.5 (impact)</p>

2 Object of the evaluation

This chapter aims to define the evaluation object, including the theory of change, and results hypotheses.

2.1 Definition of the evaluation object

This is an evaluation of Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas in the Palestinian Territories, project number 2016.2151.5, which started in March 2018 and ended in May 2021, after a three-month cost-neutral extension. The project was incorporated into the GIZ Sustainable Economic Development (SED) programme during its term. There was no predecessor project, but a follow-on project (number 2020.2276.2) began in June 2021 and is scheduled to run for three years, until May 2024, with a project value of EUR 4,000,000. The commissioning value of the project under evaluation was EUR 4,750,000, comprising EUR 4,000,000 of initial funds and EUR 750,000 in additional funds allocated in September 2020, via a modification offer, for COVID-19 response measures. The project was entirely funded by BMZ.

The project included the improvement of planning and advisory capacities at the MoA at the national level and within its regional directorates (DoAs), mainly in selected governorates, i.e. Hebron, Tulkarm and Qalqilya (output A). The intervention area of the project included these three governorates, where activities to improve irrigation infrastructure were carried out (output B). Activities relating to income generation and to supporting the COVID-19 response were also implemented in other governorates of the West Bank territories.

The Palestinian population lacks opportunities for economic development and income generation, particularly in the rural areas of the West Bank. Major obstacles for further development, especially in Area C (60% of the West Bank's land area), which is completely administered by Israel, include a lack of security of supply, restricted access to water and other resources, and ongoing settler activities. About 70% of land in Area C is no longer available for development by Palestinians. In the face of the high population growth rate of 2.8%, the medium-term economic growth forecast of about 3.5% indicates, to all intents and purposes, a stagnation of income per capita (PMO, 2020; GIZ, 2017a). These economic indicators worsened from 2020 because of the impact of COVID-19 on livelihoods and the economy (FAO, 2020).

Agriculture is an important way for the rural population to generate additional income and secure their livelihoods. Even though agriculture's share of the Palestinian territories' (PT) gross domestic product is small (3.8%), it is very important for societal structure and economic development in the PT's rural areas. Nearly 75% of rural households are involved in agriculture. This reduces rural-urban migration and supports the social structure. Around 8% of the male and 13% of the female workforce are employed in agriculture (GIZ, 2017a), albeit on comparatively low incomes and with a high rate of food insecurity (PMO, 2020). Many farming households are located in Areas A and B, but their agricultural lands are mainly located in Area C. The restrictions on managing land in Area C limit the expansion of irrigation systems and agricultural use of the area. Climate change is an additional danger for rural livelihoods, with decreasing precipitation, changing rainfall patterns and increasing evaporation posing various risks to rainfed and irrigated farming (GIZ, 2017a). Processing of agricultural produce is only happening on a small scale. Insufficient access to markets leads to high unused potential in a sector with high production costs and under pressure from cheaper products from Israel or other countries. As a result, the livelihoods of the agricultural population are threatened (**core problem**).

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown measures and the restrictions on mobility of agro-products between PT governorates and external markets have affected the availability of products in central

wholesale markets and hindered farmers ability to market their own crops. This led to price distortions on the Palestinian market and declining income for Palestinian farmers and other value-chain actors (FAO, 2020).

Root causes: the abilities and knowledge of farmers and agricultural advisors regarding good irrigation practices and technologies, the use of sustainable rainfed agriculture to increase water productivity, improving management of natural resources and mitigating risks are inadequate. Water infrastructure, such as irrigation systems and water tanks, are lacking or in need of rehabilitation (MoA, 2016b – updated 2020). The net productivity of the agricultural sector is very low. Women perform 85% of informal agricultural work and 65% of the processing activities, with low productivity rates (PMO, 2020). In addition, business development abilities, including planning, post-processing and access to markets, are weak and hinder the development of new sources of income (FAO, 2018). Planning capacities of the MoA directorates for sustainable agricultural development are inadequate (GIZ, 2017a).

Negative impacts: the vulnerability of small-scale farmers to climate risks and economic shocks is increasing. Poor economic prospects lead to dependence of households on single earners, which are often employed in Israel, Israeli settlements or Palestinian cities. A generally unstable job market and job loss due to movement restrictions aggravate the situation. This weakens social structures, particularly in Area C. Fields lying idle are in danger of soil degradation and confiscation by Israel, which, in consequence, leads to further fragmentation of the Palestinian territories. Area C has been subject to strong migration trends to urban areas for decades (GIZ, 2017a).

Potentials: the Government of the Palestinian territories is highly interested in using agricultural production potential in Area C to mitigate further fragmentation and increase possibilities for income generation for – and thus strengthen the livelihoods of – marginalised groups (the population in Area C; women and young people in rural areas). The *National Agricultural Sector Strategy Resilience and Sustainable Development 2017–2022* focuses on strengthening farmers' resilience and perseverance, increasing water availability and effective use of scarce water resources.

Fragile context: the OECD's *State of Fragility Report 2020* (OECD, 2020) considered the Palestinian territories to be experiencing high fragility in the economic, political, security and societal dimensions. The key drivers of this fragility were identified as, among others, the ongoing conflict with Israel, manifesting in the occupation of the West Bank, and the blockade of the Gaza Strip. This fragility is further exacerbated by the division between the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinian Authority (PA) has jurisdiction over about 38% of the West Bank territory, with the rest, including borders and water resources, being under Israeli control. Lacking many of the instruments of a sovereign state, the PA is constrained in terms of its response to reducing fragility. The duplication of governance structures in the West Bank and in Gaza due to the political divide and the internal tensions between Palestinian factions, the postponed elections despite the expiry of presidential and legislative mandates, and the paralysis of the Palestinian Legislative Council all affect the legitimacy of the PA. This legitimacy deficit is compounded by the PA's limited ability to provide quality services for citizens in the West Bank and its absence from Gaza. The escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in May 2021 did not change these conflict settings (Donor int_19). The Israeli occupation (and consequent restrictions imposed on access and movement), the fragmentation of economic space within the West Bank and Gaza, the limited resource base due to Israeli control of 62% of the territory of the West Bank and of borders, air and sea (in Gaza) are significant factors that hamper investment and undermine economic growth. As a result, the Palestinian economy is characterised by inefficiency and a lack of competitiveness. The PA's limited financial resources and its inability to pay regular salaries add to the instability of more than one million Palestinians who depend on government salaries.

2.2 Results model including hypotheses

The **project's objective (outcome)** was that 'the livelihoods of the agricultural population are strengthened'. The underlying 'sustainable livelihoods approach' considers poverty to be a result of limited resources and 'capitals' (Kollmair and Gamper, 2002; GLOPP, 2008; Lax and Krug, 2013). It defines five different capitals that ensure sustainable livelihoods: human capital (e.g. knowledge, abilities, health); social capital (e.g. social networks); natural capital (e.g. land, water, soil); economic capital (e.g. means of production, technical capacities); and financial capital (e.g. income).

The mission of the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), as the **political partner** of the project, was (and remains) to lead the agricultural sector and its development, as well as that of the food and nutrition security sector, and to provide quality services for field work (research, extension, training and veterinary services). To this end, it aimed to improve the efficiency with which natural resources are used in order to increase farmers' profitability, protect the sustainability of natural resources, maintain agricultural production quality and secure the connection of Palestinian farmers to their lands. The scope of the MoA's strategy did not fully cover all five capital dimensions (see above) of the livelihoods to which the project's objective referred. Implementation partners of the livelihoods project at field level comprised the regional directorates of agriculture (DoAs) within the MoA and five NGOs.

Target groups comprised the agriculturally active households of the West Bank, with a focus on the governorates of Hebron, Tulkarm and Qalqilya (output B) and across the West Bank (output C and COVID-19 response support). The target households derive at least part of their income from agriculture and include landowners and tenants. These families live in Areas A, B or C, but their agricultural areas are mainly located in Area C. Women's groups and individuals received special attention via Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) and cooperatives in the agri-business sector. University graduates, as well as young entrepreneurs and small enterprises in the agriculture sector, were also part of the target group. Experts and decision-makers in municipalities and on village councils, as well as community-based civil society organisations (CSOs), were involved in implementation at the local level. As output A was oriented towards the MoA's capacities, with its staff as the target group, numerous activities extended to the national level. Indirect target groups might have benefited in various ways from knowledge transfer but this is impossible to quantify. The project adapted the initial results model representing the theory of change (ToC) several times since the project was planned, with the latest adaptation being made in November 2020, following the modification offer in June 2020. During the inception mission, the results model was updated once again (see Figure 1).

The project encompassed the following **outputs**:

Output A: the capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen the livelihoods of the agricultural population are increased.

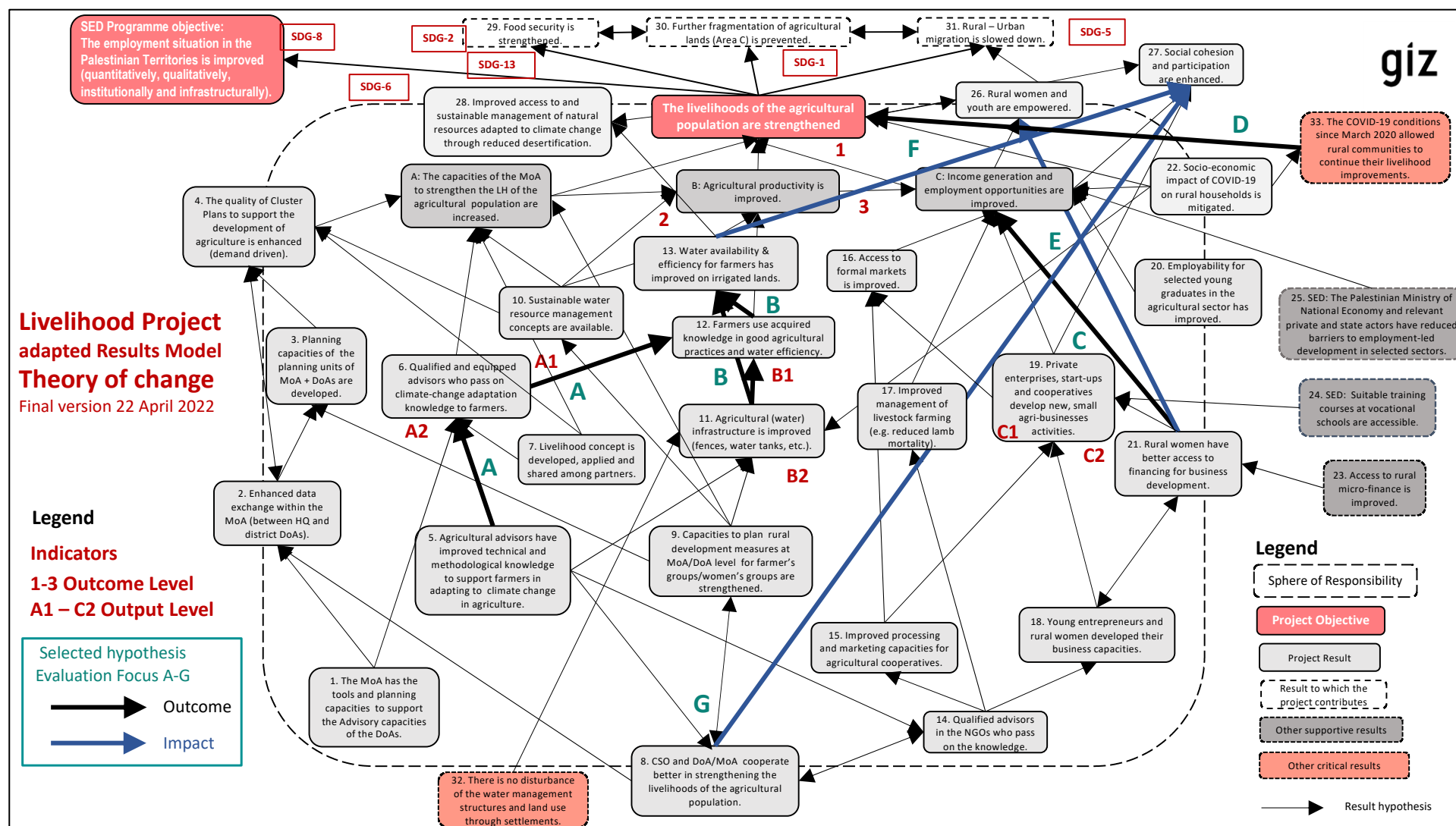
Output B: the conditions for increasing agricultural productivity are improved.

Output C: the conditions for income generation and employment opportunities are improved.

The modification offer in June 2020 did not refer to the outputs and outcome but to the adaptation of the target values of the indicators and to additional COVID-19 measures. The additional funds were partly used to increase livelihood investments and to provide humanitarian support to households in crisis due to COVID-19.

Output A focused on improving the planning capacities of the MoA and the advisory capacities of its regional directorates (DoAs) according to their original mandates. Based on a training needs assessment, the project's support referred to the provision of equipment and tools, and training on strategic planning (MoA) – box 1 in the results model below. As a result, data exchange was assumed to improve (box 2), e.g. via the water infrastructure projects that were developed into rural water management concepts by the DoAs. These fed into and enhanced the demand-driven perspective of the cluster plans (figure 1, box 4). Cluster plans came up as a new development concept in 2019 in the PT, but their formulation was not part of the project's responsibility.

Figure 1: Current results model (March 2021), adapted during the inception mission of the evaluation



(The numbers in brackets in the text below refer to the results (grey boxes) in the model above. Text in bold refers to the hypotheses selected for the evaluation.)

At the advisory level, the project focused on technical and methodological skills to support farmers in adapting to climate change (5), on the assumption that the knowledge is passed to the farmers (6) to strengthen their livelihoods (output A). Studies of livelihoods in the intervention areas helped focus attention on the real needs and opportunities to change and adapt farming conditions (7) and to share and incorporate them into training (6) and the overall approach (output A). The key underlying assumptions were that the MoA would use the acquired knowledge, equipment and tools to closely cooperate within its own structures (centralised and decentralised levels) and with other ministerial departments, and to work according to a demand-driven approach focusing on the livelihoods of small-scale farmers and value-chain actors.

Output B focused on the improvement of agricultural productivity through enhancing water availability via water-related infrastructure projects and improving capacities for efficient water use. The infrastructure projects were planned at the local level according to proposals from local beneficiaries (9). DoAs, with the support of the implementing NGO partner, evaluated and improved the technical quality of the proposals in cooperation with the local stakeholders. This exercise strengthened the cooperation between community-based civil society organisations and the DoAs (8). **The improvement of water tanks and infrastructure (11) and the application of corresponding training in water management (12) increased water availability, ensured efficient water use and allowed for the irrigation of additional land (13).** Consequently, the conditions to increase agricultural productivity were improved (results matrix, output B). The proposals developed for sustainable water management were considered in the agricultural cluster plans, thus enhancing their needs-orientation and quality (10, 4, output A). The key assumptions were that water resource management is crucial for livelihood development in the intervention areas, and that the methods for water resource management and climate-change adaptation are adopted and disseminated by the actors involved in service delivery, and ultimately applied by the beneficiaries. **Additional funds for water infrastructure (11) and the provision, with the MoA, of greenhouse covers for vegetable gardening were also part of the COVID-related support.**

Output C focused on income generation and employment opportunities. The training, via several modules, of NGOs on climate-change adaptation in the agricultural sector together with MoA staff as a joint exercise improved relations, mutual trust and, hence, the conditions for good collaboration between the MoA and NGOs, which is crucial for the implementation of projects in Area C (8) and contributes to social cohesion and participation (27). With regard to output C, the project used four different approaches to transfer knowledge and business skills to different target groups: advisory services for improved management of livestock farming, with a view to increasing its profitability for livestock herders (17); improving the qualifications of female cooperatives in processing, marketing and business management (15); building the business capacities of young entrepreneurs; and helping young entrepreneurs develop their micro-businesses and cooperation activities (18, 19). All of this was intended to facilitate access to formal markets (16) and provide income and employment opportunities (output C). **Advising rural women to form VSLAs for financing their activities and investing in their productive and social activities (21) contributed to the creation of new agri-businesses while also improving the conditions for income generation and self-employment opportunities (output C).** Providing young graduates with internships and mentoring to help them obtain further professional qualifications improved their employability (20) and led to employment (output C). Other financing sources, vocational training and efforts in favour of employment (other results outside the sphere of responsibility of the project) contributed to enhancing the conditions for income generation and employment. The conditions for income generation and employment opportunities were therefore improved (output C). The key assumptions underlying output C were that the overall economic situation is favourable for the development of agri-businesses. **The adverse economic developments experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic led to the incorporation of additional activities in support of farming households, such as food baskets and temporary employment, as well as hygiene measures at community level**

(22). Additional funds for water infrastructure (11) and the provision of greenhouse covers for vegetable gardening were also part of the COVID-related support (output B).

Outcome and impact level

The outcome of the project, that 'livelihoods of the agricultural population are strengthened,' was to be achieved through three outputs (A, B and C). Three outcome indicators illustrate the achievement of the objective. These are: (1) an improved own assessment by target groups of two out of five livelihood dimensions, (2) increased agricultural yield compared with reference areas and (3) an improved own assessment of economic perspectives by target groups. The evaluation matrix (see annex 1) shows the formulation with baseline and target values and the status of results at the end of the project. Output A sought to create an enabling environment for the development and strengthening of livelihoods according to the five 'capitals' of the sustainable livelihoods concept through improved capacities within the MoA at central and regional levels. Output B sought to create the social and physical environment necessary to improve (the conditions for) integrated water-resource management as the main factor for improved access to crucial natural resources (land and water) in selected areas (28). Output C sought to enable the small-scale actors in the value chains to improve the profitability and income of their agri-businesses, as well as employment opportunities, and thereby contribute to creating viable socio-economic living conditions.

At the **impact level**, improved economic conditions were expected to contribute to strengthening food security for the population (29) and therefore to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 (Zero hunger), and to preventing further fragmentation of agricultural lands through value generation from irrigated land (30), thus improving access to water for irrigation (SDG 6) and combating the impact of climate change (SDG 13). Finally, improved livelihood conditions should slow down rural-urban migration (31), which, in addition to the other results, contributes to SDG 1 (No poverty). **Women and young people are particularly empowered through their growing agri-businesses, as they use the benefits for further investments based on their own decisions (26)**, thus contributing to SDG 5 (Gender equality). **The changes at the local level would enhance social cohesion and participation, as all actors, such as community-based civil society organisations (CSOs), local governments, national NGOs and Palestinian governmental organisations, would cooperate with each other (27)**. The key assumptions were that the activities focusing on economic development will directly result in overall improvements in livelihoods as the central outcome. Finally, the project contributed to the GIZ Sustainable Economic Development (SED) programme and its objective that 'the employment situation in the Palestinian territories is improved (quantitatively, qualitatively, in terms of institutions and infrastructure)'. The project contributed quantitatively and qualitatively to improved employment and income, in particular.

Risks to the achievement of the project's outcome related to the geo-political situation in Area C, which is under the control of the Israeli government. Other risks related to the financial situation and service provision of the Palestinian institutions, in particular at the MoA, as well as to the barriers for economic and market autonomy in the Palestinian territories. Social risks revolved around the MoA's own understanding of and attitude to working towards sustainable livelihoods as an integrated concept according to the principle of 'leave no one behind'. Ecological risks included torrential precipitation that causes erosion and soil degradation, flooding and destruction of infrastructure.

The **system boundaries** of the project included the direct reach of the three outputs in the livelihoods approach system at the level of the direct rural target groups with their human, natural, physical, financial and social capital dimensions. The MoA, because of the sector in which it works (agriculture), really only focuses on one of these capitals, i.e. economic capital – the technical agricultural capacities to improve productivity, profitability and food security. Others, such as social capital, do not fall under its mandate. Consequently, it did not fully cover all targets of the project (value chains in output C related to business development and finance, as well as the social dimensions of livelihoods). Moreover, while it could improve the quality of the natural

capital it could not increase its quantity in territories not under the control of the Palestinian Authority. Output A involved some results that were only partly under the control of the project, e.g. enhanced data exchange within the ministry (2), which was strongly influenced by the culture of communication and hierarchies. The cluster plans introduced in 2019 became part of the tasks of the MoA in those governorates with significant agricultural activities. Although the development and implementation of the cluster plans were outside the sphere of responsibility of the project, it contributed to the technical content and quality of the plans (4). The project worked towards strengthening cooperation between CSOs and the MoA (mainly its directorates) (8), but this cooperation depends on many other socio-political factors outside the system boundaries of the project. The cooperation with other actors in charge of local development, economy and social development was not well developed. At the same time, cooperation with NGOs ensuring service delivery in the agricultural territories was based not necessarily on complementarity but partly on competition and duplication. Positive influences were derived from the SED programme, such as improved access to rural micro-finance (23), vocational training courses (24) and the reduction of employment barriers (25). These, too, were found to be outside the sphere of direct influence of the project. Finally, the mitigation of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 measures (22) was strongly influenced by many other factors out of the control of the project, whose support had only limited effects during a short period.

3 Evaluability and evaluation process

This chapter aims to clarify the availability and quality of data and the process of the evaluation.

3.1 Evaluability: data availability and quality

This section covers the following aspects:

- availability of essential documents,
- monitoring and baseline data, including partner data, and
- secondary data.

Availability of essential documents

The essential documents for the evaluation were available. The documents are detailed in the List of References at the end of this report under 'GIZ standard project documents' and 'Other project documents'.

Monitoring and baseline data, including partner data

At project level, all documents were available, including endline studies on the outcome indicators and on some output indicators. The baseline study was conducted between April and June 2020 and the endline one year later, at the end of the project, in April-May 2021, so the timescale for differences to become apparent was short. Owing to COVID-19 limitations, both studies were carried out remotely through telephone interviews with beneficiaries. National statistics referring to the period of the project term were not available at the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). Other sources and secondary data were also scarce. The most recent and comprehensive report was the *Atlas on Sustainable Development 2020* (PMO, 2020), which corresponded to the baseline situation of the project. The project did not develop specific tools for context- and conflict-sensitive monitoring but did consider conflict-related issues in regular working meetings. At the macro level, monitoring of the overall status of the conflict and security risks in the Palestinian territories is carried out by the United

Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA), which issues weekly updates. Changes in the overall political conditions were reported in the project's annual progress reports.

Secondary data

Primary data of the monitoring system were available to the evaluation team, e.g. beneficiary lists for most activities and monitoring data. The evaluation mainly referred to the baseline, endline and monitoring reports. In addition, the evaluation team considered numerous secondary data, such as documents on the context and the livelihood approach, national policies and strategies of the government and of sectoral institutions, especially the MOA, and those of other donors.

The main activities of this new project only started in 2019, with some delay also encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic from March 2020. Consequently, many activities were only finalised at the end of the project, in May 2021. Therefore, there were some limitations encountered in assessing the results and the impact of the project – for example, with regard to agricultural yields in the recently rehabilitated irrigation systems.

3.2 Evaluation process

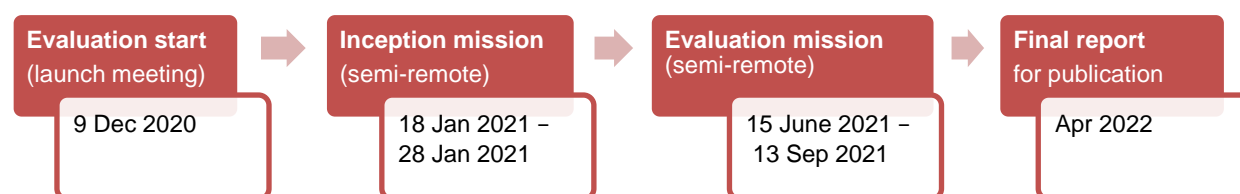
This section covers the following aspects:

- milestones of the evaluation process,
- involvement of stakeholders,
- selection of interviewees,
- data analysis process,
- roles of international and local evaluators,
- (semi-)remote evaluation, and
- context and conflict sensitivity within the evaluation process.

Milestones of the evaluation process

Figure 2 shows the milestones of the evaluation process. Owing to the violent escalation of the overall conflict in May 2021, the initially foreseen evaluation period was rescheduled, with eight days of assessment at field level between 14 June and 7 July with the national evaluator, followed by the central part of the evaluation mission between 30 August and 13 September 2021, in a semi-remote format.

Figure 2: Milestones of the evaluation process



Involvement of stakeholders

The involvement of stakeholders began during the inception phase, with the capturing of interests at MoA, BMZ and GIZ levels (see Table 1 in section 1.2). The discussions with the project team during the inception mission and the joint work on the results model and other topics had established a good culture of debate on the evaluation itself, as well as on its results, in the form of either discussions, such as in an internal workshop held

at the end of the evaluation mission, or exchange of comments on the preliminary results. The project organised online meetings (using Microsoft Teams) throughout the evaluation process at field level or with other stakeholders. A member of the project team usually participated in the field visits and remote meetings as an observer, helping to clarify any unclear issues after the meetings. This culture of cooperation also served to meet the express interest of the project team in learning from the evaluation. Other GIZ representatives at programme and country levels were also consulted during the inception and evaluation missions (see Table 2 below).

The field assessment comprised six focus groups discussions (FGDs) with irrigation farmers in the water projects and five FGDs with female members of six VSLAs. These FGDs covered the assessment of two hypotheses each at output and impact levels (hypotheses B, C, E and F). The project team organised meetings with beneficiaries of all other activities, including interviews with three women's cooperatives, three start-ups and with a local council on COVID-19 response measures (hypothesis D). FGDs with livestock herders and interns were also part of the field assessment. Finally, meetings with DoA representatives in two of the governorates involved allowed the local technical context and cooperation procedures (hypothesis G) to be assessed. The interviewees and groups were selected according to a stratified sampling of the diversity of activities and regions (with different ecosystems and water resources, activities and technology requirements), with a focus on the three core governorates and some activities in other governorates (especially for output C) as well as logistical requirements. A random sampling approach was then followed within these categories.

The evaluation mission included different types of stakeholders – above all, the members of the steering committee and representatives of the partner organisation – partly in joint meetings (steering committee, DoA representatives), partly in individual meetings with the different departments, according to their role and activities in the project. The FGDs with DoA advisors who had participated in the training on climate-change adaptation allowed an in-depth insight into the transfer of knowledge (hypothesis A). A workshop with stakeholders included an extended SWOT (Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats) analysis of output C activities and an assessment of the cooperation as part of the analysis of hypothesis G. All other meetings were conducted as semi-structured interviews with, among others, donors, international organisations and national civil society organisations and think tanks. Representatives of partner institutions and implementing partners participated in the debriefing meeting and gave their views on the preliminary results.

Those stakeholders who were involved in project implementation and therefore had a well-informed view of the project were consulted on their understanding of the project results. These stakeholders were, in particular, the national institutions in charge of water and environmental quality, the different organisational units of the MoA and the implementation partners in charge of knowledge transfer, as well as the different categories of beneficiary groups. Thus, participation during the evaluation mission was ensured in different ways.

Selection of interviewees

The selection of interviewees is shown in Table 2. Interviewees included eight donor representatives, 13 GIZ staff members, 27 representatives of partner organisations, three national civil-society stakeholders and 104 beneficiaries. The selection followed the OECD/DAC criteria and the contribution analysis, and incorporated all thematic areas and cross-cutting themes, with a view to ensuring a broad collection of views from all stakeholders. At field level, the selection was based on beneficiary lists and logistical feasibility. In accordance with data protection requirements, the identities of interviewees have been anonymised using an 'interview coding list'. The abbreviations used stand for the following methods: Int = Interview, FGD = focus group discussion, WS = workshop, Incept = Inception phase, CSO = civil society organisation WS, SCO,

Table 2: List of evaluation stakeholders and selected participants

Organisation/company/ target group	Overall number of persons involved in evaluation (including gender disaggregation)	No. of interview participants	No. of focus group participants	No. of workshop participants	No. of survey participants
Donors and UN organisations	8 (2f, 6m)	8			
2 BMZ, 3 UN-OCHA, 3 Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), 1 Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID, Spanish cooperation)					
GIZ	13 (10f, 3m)	13			
7 livelihood project staff, 2 SED programme staff, 3 GIZ country office staff, 1 GIZ planning advisor					
Partner organisations (direct target group)	27 (6f, 21m)	27	4	7	
6 Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) staff, 12 Directorates of Agriculture (DoA) staff, 1 member of staff each from the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and the Environmental Quality Authority (EQA), and 7 staff of NGO implementing partners (ESDC, PARC, PHG, RWDS, UAWC)					
Other stakeholders (e.g. public actors, other development projects)					
-					
Civil society and private-sector actors, universities and think tanks	3 (3m)	3			
Arab World for Research and Development (AWRAD), Ta'awon (rural development organisation)					
Final beneficiaries/indirect target groups (sum)					
Irrigation farmers	33 (1f, 32m)		33		
VSLA group members	53 (53f)		53		
Other beneficiaries	35 (29f, 6m)		16		
Local council	2 (2m)		2		
Note: f = female; m = male					

Data analysis process

The evaluation mission considered various quantitative data and qualitative data from the baseline and endline surveys that were conducted by a local consultancy firm (AWRAD), as well as final reports submitted by the implementing partners and GIZ, plus many other data. All documents were available at the beginning of the evaluation mission. The evaluation included exchange with AWRAD and the implementing partners on the reports provided, to better understand the results. Mainly qualitative data were collected during the evaluation mission itself. In addition to those evaluation questions that were not included in the endline survey conducted by AWRAD on the assessment of indicators, the qualitative assessment served to triangulate data with the endline survey results and project documents. All interviews were conducted according to guidelines and the

results were documented by the evaluation team, distinguishing between factual information, individual perspectives on the topics and consensual or non-consensual group analysis. Where indicated, gender disaggregation or other group-specific disaggregation of data was ensured. At the end of the field mission and on a regular basis during the evaluation mission, the results were compared and analysed in light of the influence of external factors (e.g. COVID-19). A thorough triangulation of the results of different interviews, sources and methods was ensured by the evaluators, as was research triangulation between the evaluators throughout the evaluation process. The evaluators documented the results and the analysis thereof with codified sources.

Roles of international and local evaluators

The evaluation team was composed of a national and an international evaluator, with the latter as team leader. Both evaluators conducted the entire evaluation process together. The national evaluator was responsible for the field assessment in the intervention areas and the consideration of national partners, information and standards for the evaluation. The international evaluator was responsible for drafting the inception and evaluation reports and the consideration of GIZ standards during the evaluation process. A female student helped during the field assessment to ensure good communication with and earn the confidence of women's groups. She also helped with the documentation of the focus group discussions (FGDs) and other interviews. Research triangulation of results between the evaluators was part of the process, where different perspectives on the collected data were discussed and further investigated throughout the process.

Semi-remote evaluation

In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the evaluation was conducted in a semi-remote format, with the inception mission and the evaluation mission conducted as virtual meetings using digital conference tools (MS Teams). A few meetings were conducted in a hybrid format, while, during the field assessment, 'in-person' meetings were conducted by the national evaluator in rural areas. Interview guidelines were followed for the semi-structured interviews, focus groups discussions and the SWOT analysis. The debriefing workshop was organised in a hybrid format with the implementation partners.

Context and conflict sensitivity within the evaluation process

The Palestinian territories are considered a fragile context. An 'Integrated context and human rights assessment' (usually referred to as an 'integrated peace and conflict assessment', iPCA) was carried out during the planning period of the project in 2017. The project and, consequently, the evaluation, did not directly interfere with the overarching conflict. There was no direct contact with the Israeli government, which has administrative and security control over Area C. However, the project implemented interventions in parts of Area C that are subject of conflict with the Israeli government. The tense situation here in the context of land annexation by the State of Israel and violence perpetrated against Palestinian farmers by Israeli settlers was taken into account by the project, which avoided infrastructure works in areas likely to be demolished in the context of the conflict. The evaluation team invited DoA staff to participate in visits to see NGO activities being conducted, to ensure transparency of the evaluation process. The evaluation mission followed the project implementation through the visits. It took care of sensitive communication with all stakeholders especially on politically critical issues. The quality of collaboration between Palestinian governmental organisations and NGOs was the subject of hypothesis G. The field assessment was carried out in close cooperation with the GIZ Risk and Security Management Office to avoid exacerbating the ongoing tension. As a result, the schedule had to be adapted and some field visits had to be rescheduled.

4 Assessment according to OECD/DAC criteria

This chapter discusses the results of the evaluation according to the DAC criteria. The specific evaluation questions within the assessment dimensions of the evaluation criteria can be found in the evaluation matrix (see annex 1).

4.1 Impact and sustainability of predecessor projects

No predecessor project was part of the evaluation because the present project was the first project aimed at 'strengthening livelihoods' in the Palestinian territories. The idea for the project stemmed from a previous water programme (PN: 2013.2257.7) and it was also inspired by the lessons learned from the Adaptation to Climate Change in the West Bank in Palestinian Territories programme (PN: 2012.9755.5). It is (informally) expected to continue working in these thematic areas.

4.2 Relevance

This section analyses and assesses the relevance of the project Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas in the Palestinian Territories. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GIZ project evaluation matrix (see annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of relevance

Table 3: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: relevance

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Relevance	Alignment with policies and priorities	27 out of 30 points
	Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	27 out of 30 points
	Appropriateness of the design	17 out of 20 points
	Adaptability – response to change	19 out of 20 points
Relevance total score and rating		Score: 90 out of 100 points Rating: Level 2: successful

The project's relevance was assessed according to the four dimensions shown in the table above. In summary, it was well in line with the main sectoral policies and priorities of both BMZ and the partner (the MoA), such as the latter's Palestinian National Agricultural Sector Strategy (MoA, 2016). The project was implemented based on in-depth needs assessments and consideration of those needs at all levels in the design of activities and selection of competent partners and target groups, thus ensuring good alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders. In terms of diversity of activities, the project design was very ambitious for a first intervention aimed at improving livelihoods. Although still highly appropriate, it was not, as a first intervention with a new partner, realistically achievable over a term of just three years. The project took many recommendations of the iPCA towards a peaceful development into account in its design and in the selection of implementing partners, intervention areas and activities (GIZ, 2017c). Moreover, it showed good adaptability to changes in the context, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and in working conditions, by providing additional

funding in response to the effects of these crises. It adapted equally well to changes at the overall policy level (e.g. the cluster-planning approach).

In total, the relevance of the project is rated as Level 2: successful, with 90 out of 100 points.

The relevance criterion analyses the extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are in line with national, international and BMZ strategies, and consistent with stakeholders' and beneficiaries' needs and capacities and the extent to which the project is appropriately designed to meet them. The appropriateness of the design was assessed by comparing the strategy in terms of its feasibility in the Palestinian rural areas, the appropriateness of the solutions in relation to the problems and the available budget and time frame of the project. Additionally, the criterion assesses the project's adaptability to change, with particular regard to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the policy changes during the project. The central evaluation questions for these dimensions and the respective evaluation design are shown in Table 6 at the end of this section. Assessments were made based on global, national and BMZ-related policies and strategies, as well as on the projects' strategy, design, context analysis and needs assessments (documents). During the inception and evaluation missions, understanding of the policies and their alignment by different key stakeholders (MoA, GIZ, BMZ, implementation partners) was critically analysed and compared with the documents through semi-structured interviews (all dimensions) and through a SWOT analysis and focus groups (dimensions 2 and 3). Some aspects were critically reviewed with representatives of national think tanks, e.g. the livelihoods approach and the context-specific cooperation settings. A triangulation of the different data supported the process of analysis.

Analysis and assessment of relevance

Relevance dimension 1: Alignment with policies and priorities

The project was in line with the BMZ *Country Strategy* (BMZ, 2016), which focuses on three sectors: governance, water and sustainable economic development. The original planning of the project was initiated when GIZ was active in the water, wastewater and waste management sectors. Since German-Palestinian cooperation in the water sector is currently under revision, it subsequently became part of the sustainable economic employment sector at the beginning of project implementation (the SED programme). It contributed to the SED programme in terms of employment and income generation, in particular. The project was also well aligned with:

- the objectives of poverty-reducing, resource-saving and climate-smart agriculture, as described in the BMZ *Strategy Paper* on promoting sustainable agriculture (BMZ, 2013) and subsequent complementary papers,
- the *Strategy Paper* on the development of rural areas and their contribution to food security, in particular its multi-level approach (BMZ, 2011),
- the roadmap to gender equality (BMZ, 2019b), and
- BMZ's climate-change adaptation policies (BMZ, 2017), as the livelihood concept represents a cross-sectoral approach that fits well with the water, energy and food security nexus approach by using water as economically as possible to benefit multiple sectors. In this regard, it also refers to security and stability aspects related to water as a trigger for migration within the PT (BMZ, 2019a).

The project was also in line with the Palestinian *National Agricultural Sector Strategy* (MoA, 2016, updated September 2020) and the *National Investment Plan* for food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture 2020–2022 (MoA, 2019), especially given its strategic objectives of enhancing the resilience and steadfastness of female and male farmers (1), sustainable management of natural and agricultural resources (2) and improving the access of female and male farmers and entrepreneurs to quality agricultural services needed for increasing value along agricultural value chains (4). It was also aligned with the *National Policy Agenda 2017–*

2022 (PMO, 2016) and was readapted to the newly introduced cluster-planning approach of the PA, focusing on agriculture (Partner int_12, 17, 23). Although the Palestinian policies aim to improve livelihoods in general, they do not describe a specific integrated livelihoods approach. The agendas of the partner and international donors are strongly oriented towards SDG 2 (Zero hunger), while the project contributed only indirectly to SDG 2 (in terms of its impact) as part of the envisaged livelihood improvements and through the poverty reduction-oriented agenda of the SED programme.

The project's strategy corresponded in many regards to the *Agricultural Sector Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan* (MoA, 2018; Partner int_29), to the *National Water and Wastewater Strategy for Palestine* (PWA, 2013; Partner int_29) and to the *Strategic Framework & Program of Executive Action for Area C* (PMO, 2018b), especially with the latter's priority 3 to integrate Area C into sustainable development. Moreover, it took many recommendations of the Integrated Context and Human Rights Analysis in the form of a PCA results matrix (iPCA; GIZ, 2017c) into account, e.g. the targeting of marginalised groups and involvement of civil society in Area C of the West Bank (GIZ, 2017c). According to the iPCA (GIZ, 2017c), most of the escalating factors refer to the overall political situation and the unresolved autonomy of the PT, but not to the project context. Violent clashes between Palestinians and the Israeli army (or Israeli settlers) were observed in the Gaza Strip area and Jerusalem, but also in the rural areas of the West Bank. The iPCA states the relevance of the agricultural sector to three peacebuilding needs: social cohesion, legitimacy of the state, and economic and social development.

Relevance dimension 1 – Alignment with policies and priorities – scores **27 out of 30 points**.

Relevance dimension 2: Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders

The direct target group of output A was composed of the planners and advisors of the MoA (central level) with a focus on the DoAs in three governorates (Hebron, Tulkarm and Qalqilia). The interventions aimed to increase the capacities of the MoA (output A) and were based on intensive analysis of the existing structures, processes and capacities in the ministry (MoA, 2019a; AWRAD, 2021a). The MoA selected the participants of the training courses according to its own priorities. These priorities did not always match the project need that mainly referred to the level of field advisors (AWRAD, 2021a). Some NGO advisors also participated in the training on climate-change adaptation to increase their knowledge but also to strengthen connecting factors between governmental and non-governmental actors (GIZ, 2017c).

The governorates selected for field interventions (outputs B and C) are among those with the highest poverty rates in the West Bank, ranking 1, 2 and 5 out of 10 governorates (PCBS 2021 online). The final beneficiaries were various, mainly vulnerable sub-groups in Area C of the West Bank and comprised 956 farming households (including 120 female household representatives), who benefited from improved water infrastructure in 13 locations (output B). They included families with access to land, although their tenure and water availability were both precarious. The target groups of output C on income generation and employment were not land-based and the vast majority were women. They comprised 520 vulnerable rural women in 19 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA), 169 members of five women's cooperatives, 134 livestock herders (including 26 female), 29 young graduates for internships (including 23 female graduates), as well as 10 entrepreneurs and start-ups (including four female) with the potential to create jobs. In sum, 47% of the project's beneficiaries at field level were women. The activities of outputs B and C were implemented, with various partners, according to detailed needs analyses and via a demand-driven process in the rural areas of the West Bank (GIZ, 2021b; monitoring data). The alignment with the needs of target groups is well documented in the final reports of the implementing partners for outputs B and C (PARC, 2020; ESDC, 2020; PHG, 2021; RWDS, 2020; and UAWC 2021) and became obvious in the vast majority of the focus group discussions and other interviews in the rural communities (field visits). Many of the women interviewed were the only breadwinners in their respective households, especially during the COVID-19 related crisis, when job losses in Israel became a heavy economic burden (FGD_4, 5, 6, 7, 9). Numerous women reported that they

had to care for household members living with disabilities (FGD_ 4, 7) or they lived in critical areas affected by demolition by the Israeli army (FGD_4, 9). Particularly relevant was the design of those measures with a strong focus on available resources, skills and capacities at target group level, and on the rural value chains and the interaction between the rural population and graduate trainees in cooperatives (RWDS, 2020). The embedment of the organisational approach within existing groups or social networks in the local context also proved beneficial. Finally, the selection of implementing partners with strong competence and experience in the different project areas was relevant for the quality of specific project design elements, e.g. livestock (FGD_12) and for good adoption and ownership of the project (CSO WS_1). However, the selection of intervention areas through the implementing partners and the MoA across the territory of the West Bank did not promote synergies between the different activities.

The planning of activities in rural areas was preceded by a livelihood analysis, which considered the economic activities, diversity of farming systems, available assets and access to resources, and potential to improve livelihoods in the given political context (GIZ, 2019e). The planning of all outputs was based on thorough needs assessments among the specific target groups, and the identified needs were well considered in the project design. The evaluation confirmed the inclusion of a high number of female beneficiaries and good consideration of vulnerable farming families and households, as described above – all important for social cohesion as a prerequisite for peacebuilding (GIZ 2017c). The strengthening of the legitimacy of the Palestinian Authorities in cooperation with the NGOs in the project design fulfilled a second peacebuilding need in this setting. However, it depends on the extent to which donors avoid competition between the actors in the field in the design of the intervention and ensure the overall facilitation of the intervention process in good quality (CSO int. 8). In terms of the project under evaluation, the design allowed for good cooperation, but the overall planning, monitoring and learning processes could have involved more exchange between governmental and non-governmental actors. Finally, all activities contributed to economic and social development in Area C of the West Bank, as a third peacebuilding need, and were, at the same time, relevant to the national policy on Area C (PMO, 2018b). In sum, connecting factors were strengthened in many regards. Moreover, the selection of locations and the close cooperation with the GIZ Risk and Security Management Office during project implementation contributed significantly to avoiding security risks.

Relevance dimension 2 – Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders – scores **27 out of 30 points**.

Relevance dimension 3: Appropriateness of the design

The evaluation team considered this to be a 'pilot' project on livelihood improvement – a first and complex intervention in a new setting for German development cooperation (GDC). It was well appreciated by the partner (Partner int_17, 23, 29; Incept_3) and by GDC (GDC Int_13, 25; Incept_1, 4), and was keenly observed by all parties. Its design was highly ambitious (given the short time frame and limited budget), with the livelihood approach as the overarching concept and three different pillars (outputs) aiming at improving the livelihoods of rural farming households. It constituted a holistic approach to sustainable development, involving five dimensions, or 'capitals', of livelihood improvement (natural, physical, financial, human and social) and favouring sustainable social and economic development taking these capitals into account. In addition, climate-change adaptation was the focus of capacity-building efforts at the MoA/DoAs, representing a crucial environmental factor. Some livelihood capitals are difficult to improve in the political context of PT, in particular access to natural resources, such as land and water. However, the quality of existing accessible resources can be improved. The involvement of various well-qualified and experienced national and local implementing partners ensured an appropriate technical and organisational design. However, the project's limited budget and duration (three years) hampered development of the approach, capacity-building at the implementation level and the achievement of sustainable results for the rural population. The complex area of livelihood improvement is rather difficult to measure but was well reflected in central indicators. Livelihood improvement generally requires more time to produce tangible results than the project term of three years and its long

preparation period allowed. Numerous other influences on livelihoods (the COVID-19 pandemic, the political situation, agro-climatic conditions) were also issues. The promotion of start-ups proved relevant for the development of technical innovations that might be incorporated into rural activities in the agri-food sector in the future (PARC, 2020b).



Photo 1: Start Up Project to grow special hot pepper, Maithalun (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).

The project design regarding output A on capacities within the MoA was appropriate but very ambitious, considering the project was a unique intervention in cooperation with a new partner (the MoA) with whom trustful relations and ownership first had to be established (and they were, with much success) (Partner int_17, 23). In addition, the available resources for funding the implementation of the plan were limited in view of the numerous needs identified in the capacity-building plan. As the DoA's equipment and resources to reach the areas where increased capacities at beneficiary level are needed are scarce as well, the logistical support provided by the project was useful (Partner int_17, 20) but couldn't fill the gaps related to the ongoing budget crisis at the level of the MoA.

The project's ambitions were also high regarding the other outputs, but more realistic. The three-year project term for an initial intervention was rather limited for a participatory cooperation approach.

Conflict sensitivity in the project design

Tables 4 and 5 show the analyses of dividers and escalating factors (4)² and of connectors and deescalating factors (5)³ in the project context and how these were taken into account as part of conflict sensitivity.

Table 4: Dividers/escalating factors in the project context

Which dividers/escalating factors were identified in the project context?	Addressed by the project (yes/no)?	If addressed, how it was this considered by the project design?
Control over land and water, and land annexation in Area C by Israeli settlers, as well as prevention of access to water and as a result, territorial integrity, are reduced (land fragmentation).	Yes	Improvement of the irrigation systems to increase land productivity and possibly prevent annexation in the future when cultivated, since uncultivated/unused land may be more likely to be confiscated by the Israeli authorities (output B).

² Dividers and escalating factors can be seen as sources of tension – for example, destructive institutions, structures, norms and behaviour. For more details, see: GIZ (2007).

³ Connectors and deescalating factors are the opposite, and take the form of peace-promoting actors and institutions, structural changes, and peace-promoting norms and behaviour. For more details, see: GIZ (2007).

Which dividers/escalating factors were identified in the project context?	Addressed by the project (yes/no)?	If addressed, how it was this considered by the project design?
Growing intra-Palestinian tension between the government and the population (legitimacy, transparency, violation of human rights, and perception of corruption) resulting partially in violence and hampering social and economic development.	Yes	Working through the MoA and its DoAs helped highlight the central role of the MoA (government) in supporting farmers, which should help reinforce the position and thus legitimacy of the government and reduce possible tensions with the population. This was particularly valid during the COVID-19 crisis, when the Palestinian governmental organisations was often accused of further weakening the economic conditions of the population (output A).

Table 5: Connectors/deescalating factors in the project context

Which deescalating factors/connectors were identified in the project context?	Addressed by the project (yes/no)?	If addressed, how it was this considered by the project design?
Contribution to social cohesion	Yes	<p>Involvement of civil society organisations at community level and implementation level, e.g. agricultural cooperatives.</p> <p>Demand-driven planning and support mechanisms, especially regarding proposals for water infrastructure.</p> <p>Enhanced cooperation between the Palestinian governmental organisations and NGOs.</p> <p>Involvement of female beneficiaries and good consideration of vulnerable farming families and households.</p>
Strengthening the legitimacy of the state partners (reach/performance/representativeness of the state partners)	Yes	<p>Fostering exchange among actors in many regards during climate-change adaptation training with Palestinian governmental organisations and NGO representatives, and during the planning and implementation of activities at the local level (municipalities, DoAs and community based organisations).</p> <p>Enhancement of cooperation between government staff (MoA and DoA) and with smallholder groups, and improving service delivery for target groups.</p> <p>Working towards good cooperation between governmental organisations and NGOs in the context of the project.</p>
Contribution to economic and social development	Yes	<p>Provision of services that improve social conditions, the well-being of farmers and communities, and that strengthen social cohesion, e.g. VSLAs.</p> <p>Empowering of women and smallholder groups.</p> <p>Consideration of territorial integrity in Areas B and C through the selection of the geographic location of water infrastructure and management projects.</p>

Relevance dimension 3 – Appropriateness of the design – scores **17 out of 20 points**.

Relevance dimension 4: Adaptability – response to change

The project adapted very well to the changes in the context in PT. Changes included those to the government agenda and planning approach (2019) and in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the rural population. The project responded with an additional budget and other relevant measures in 2020.

The project adapted well to the new cluster approach introduced to the national agenda in 2019 by contributing to the design of the cluster plans with highly appreciated water-project proposals for those clusters, with a focus on agriculture, i.e. in the Qalqilya and Tulkarm governorates (Partner int_1, 2). These proposals were a 'by-product' of the selected proposals for implementation under output B, well adopted by the DoAs and a promising way to achieve more water infrastructure projects with other resources in the medium term.

The adaptation of the MoA/DoA extension system to the lockdown conditions imposed from March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic was limited (FGD_13; Partner int_20). The NGO partners identified or started incorporating more digital services as a result of these special and unforeseen circumstances. The temporary assignment of young graduates to the cooperatives proved successful in overcoming the movement restrictions imposed on NGOs and DoA staff (RWDS, 2020; CSO WS_1). The graduates themselves also contributed to developing digital services, such as the creation of Facebook platforms for marketing products for the cooperatives (Beneficiary int_30; RWDS, 2020).

The adaptation of the project to the economic decline in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and related lockdown conditions (see the discussion of hypothesis D in section 4.4) consisted of an additional budget, which was used to mitigate the effects for rural households in the short and medium terms. The measures are assessed in section 4.4 (effectiveness dimension 3).

Relevance dimension 4 – Adaptability – response to change – scores **19 out of 20 points**.

Methodology for assessing relevance

Table 6: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: relevance

Relevance assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
Alignment with policies and priorities	<p>The alignment of the project was assessed against the following policies and priorities:</p> <p>BMZ: Country Strategy; concepts for the development of rural areas and contribution to food security, promotion of sustainable agriculture; water – the source of development; climate-change adaptation policies; roadmap to gender equality.</p> <p>PA and MoA: 2017–2022 National Policy Agenda, Palestinian National Agricultural Sector Strategy and update, incl. indicators referring to SDG 2, National Investment Plan Agriculture (NIP) 2020–2022, Agricultural Sector Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan, National Water and Wastewater Strategy.</p> <p>Conflict context: Germany: Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace, 2017;</p>	<p>Evaluation design: comparative analysis between policies, project design and understanding thereof.</p> <p>There was no reasonable alternative to this design.</p> <p>Empirical methods: assessment of content of policy and strategy documents of the PT and MoA and BMZ/Germany in relation to the project's objectives, results matrix and conceptual approach.</p> <p>Supporting interviews with representatives of the MoA, PWA and EQA, as well as with BMZ.</p>	<p>All relevant documents were available and reliable as official sources</p> <p>Some documents were outdated or superfluous.</p> <p>Recent analytical documents on the conflict in its specific context (rural PT in Area C) were scarce.</p> <p>Difficult to address sensitive questions in virtual settings and without building confidential relations beforehand.</p>

Relevance assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
	PMO: Strategic Framework & Program of Executive Action for Area C. GlZ: Integrated Context and Human Rights Analysis (iPCA).	Supporting interviews and SWOT with implementation partners and national think tanks on the selected project strategy in relation to the conflict context.	
Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	<p>Target groups of the project:</p> <p>Planners and advisors of the MoA/DoAs and in NGOs were the stakeholders targeted under output A. Their needs were in relation to developing their planning and capacity to provide advice and deliver services to rural agricultural households.</p> <p>Rural agricultural households were considered target groups (outputs B and C), with needs in relation to developing their livelihoods sustainably in a fragile context with limited access to resources.</p> <p>Conflict context: Connectors and dividers in the national/local context and recommendations of the iPCA.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: comparison of the project design and studies (documents) with the express needs of the target groups and MoA advisors.</p> <p>Analytical questions of the evaluation matrix.</p> <p>Empirical methods: semi-structured interviews, focus groups and SWOT analyses, triangulation between diverse express needs in interviews conducted during the evaluation.</p> <p>Supporting interviews with NGOs/national think tanks on the selected project strategy in relation to the conflict context.</p>	<p>Documents were available with good or moderate data quality. The information in some documents was not very specific.</p> <p>Limitations could be mitigated through the assessments during the inception and evaluation missions, in particular during the field visits.</p> <p>Difficult to address sensitive questions in virtual settings and without building confidential relations beforehand.</p>
Appropriateness of the design*	<p>Project design and theory of change (ToC)</p> <p>Analysis of the offer, ToC (results model) and hypothesis compared with the project's framework and resources, and with living conditions/livelihoods in the intervention areas and the capacity to induce change through the project (feasibility of the project design).</p> <p>Geographic distribution of the activities in the West Bank territory.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: comparison of the design according to the offer and results model, partner structure, project budget, intervention processes and areas.</p> <p>Empirical methods: small workshops on understanding the project design with the project team (inception phase) and with partners during evaluation (interviews and SWOT analysis with partners).</p>	<p>Documents were available, partly not sufficiently specific or updated, e.g. Capacity WORKS tools.</p> <p>Partners were not available for long discussions and were sometimes represented by other people not involved in the project.</p>
Adaptability – response to change	Modification offer June 2020 in response to the COVID-19 crisis.	<p>Evaluation design: comparison between needs assessment at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis (FAO, PCBS) and response measures planned by the project</p> <p>Empirical methods: analysis of documents, triangulation with focus group results at the level of target groups and representatives in the intervention areas.</p>	National documents on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis were available but not sufficiently specific and did not take the evolution of the situation into account (most data related to 2020 only).

* The project design encompasses the project's objective and ToC (GlZ results model, graphic illustration and narrative results hypotheses) with outputs, activities, instruments and results hypotheses, as well as the implementation strategy (e.g. methodological approach, capacity development strategy).

4.3 Coherence

This section analyses and assesses the coherence of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GLZ project evaluation matrix (see annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of coherence

Table 7: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: coherence

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Coherence	Internal Coherence	45 out of 50 points
	External Coherence	44 out of 50 points
Overall score and rating		Score: 89 out of 100 points Rating: Level 2: successful

Although the project was planned as a stand-alone intervention at the planning stage in 2016 and 2017, and only integrated into the Sustainable Economic Development (SED) programme at the beginning of its implementation in 2018, it demonstrated high coherence within the sector and, with the livelihoods approach, enriched the SED programme's scope. In practice, the strategic importance and measurement of the success of the project are strongly related to output C. Its planning adequately considered context and human rights, gender and environmental analysis, and it contributed to several SDGs, in particular SDGs 1 (No poverty), 2 (Zero hunger), 5 (Gender equality), 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and 13 (Climate action). Regarding external coherence, the project's strategy related to several strategic objectives (SO) of the National Agricultural Strategy: to increase farmers' resilience on their lands (SO 1); sustainable management of natural resources (SO 2); and quality of advisory services on agricultural value generation (SO 4). In practice, the partners attributed the importance of the programme to output B on water infrastructure. The project was also coherent with the relevant donor agendas, in particular with the Results-Oriented Framework of the European Union Joint Programming (EU, 2020). Although it contributed to these agendas, it operated according to its own unique livelihoods approach, with its own reference system (indicators) to measure success.

In total, the coherence of the project is rated as Level 2: successful, with 89 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of coherence

According to the analytical questions in the evaluation matrix, the evaluation team assessed the internal coherence by comparing the project design with the SED programme design and with other sectors of GDC, as well as with the SDGs and international norms such as those documented in the safeguards and gender studies in preparation for the project. External coherence relates to the support of partners' efforts in the sector and to coordination with donors and other projects in the agricultural sector. It also assesses the extent to which systems and structures of the partners, donors and international organisations were used to implement activities and whether common systems for monitoring, learning and accountability were used. The comparison included a study of relevant strategic documents and reference frameworks, and interviews with different stakeholders of GDC, partners and representatives of donors and international organisations in the sector.

Coherence dimension 1: Internal coherence

The project was planned as a stand-alone project on the basis of the results of a climate-change adaptation intervention in relation to German-Palestinian cooperation in the water sector, which is currently under revision. During its implementation, the project became part of the Economic Development and Employment Cluster of GDC and the Sustainable Economic Development, Employment Promotion and Education (SED) programme

in Palestine. The project's connection to these areas is obvious, mainly under output C (income and employment generation) but also, indirectly, through employment created as a result of intensified agricultural production thanks to the rehabilitated irrigation schemes (output B). Nevertheless, the indicators and expectations in terms of the project are related to output C (employment and income). This first GDC project with the MoA has been keenly observed. It was a complementary project, focusing on rural livelihoods based on natural resources for agriculture in Area C, which is not a main focus of other components of the SED programme (GDC incept_1 and Int_3). The nature of employment and income as covered by the project differs somewhat from that in other projects, since rural employment in the agricultural sector is often informal, family-based, seasonal and part-time. Many of the households supported earn only part of their income through their agri-food systems (GIZ, 2019e). The indicator system of the SED programme includes informal employment and income sources, while other dimensions formerly considered to fall under 'livelihood', such as social and natural capital, and their improvement, are no longer reflected in the SED programme's monitoring system. These elements do, however, represent an added value for the SED programme and strengthen the social inclusion of vulnerable segments of the rural population, as well as ownership of the activities by beneficiaries (GDC int_26). Synergies with the SED programme related to vocational training, entrepreneurship and access to finance, regarding which the project can benefit from other technical cooperation modules.

The intervention was not directly linked to other instruments of German development cooperation, such as financial cooperation. However, there is potential to exploit synergies with the business incubation centres introduced by the KfW Development Bank (GIZ, 2020e).

The intervention was in line with international and national norms and standards, because it was based on the iPCA analysis (GIZ, 2017c), and on gender and environmental analyses (GIZ, 2017d; GIZ, 2015). It took into account many recommendations from these analyses and learned lessons from previous projects, all of which contributed to its strong orientation towards women and gender and, indirectly, towards social cohesion and a peaceful development. By considering the informal activities of the agri-food sector at household and family level in rural areas, it was able to involve a high percentage of vulnerable rural women and households and thus address their specific problems of access to natural resources, especially water for irrigation purposes (GIZ, 2015; GIZ, 2017c and d). Regarding the SDGs, it contributed to SDGs 1 (No poverty), 2 (Zero hunger), 5 (Gender equality), 8 (Decent work and economic growth), 13 (Climate action) and, to a limited extent, SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation – for agricultural use only, in this case).

Finally, the project identified implementing partners who shared its objectives and strategy, and thus strengthened the internal coherence of the project (websites [ESDC](#), [PARC](#), [PHG](#) and [UAWC](#); CSO WS_1).

Coherence dimension 1 – Internal Coherence – scores **45 out of 50 points**.

Coherence dimension 2: External coherence

The project supported the MoA's efforts to develop the agriculture sector and improve food security for farmers and families. It contributed to a number of objectives of the *National Agricultural Sector Strategy (2017–2022)*, specifically to:

- Strategic Objective 1 – 'Female and male farmers' resilience and steadfastness on their lands are enhanced' – through empowering them in the targeted governorates to overcome the negative effects of political and security instability, while enforcing farmers' presence on their lands and improving their agriculture, income and standard of living (through VSLAs and water projects).
- Strategic objective 2 – 'Natural and agricultural resources are sustainably managed and better adapted to climate change' – through providing training to the MoA and NGOs on climate-change adaptation, which should be transferred to farmers through a train-the-trainers approach. This supports the MoA to act as the leader of the sector, with the aim of ensuring continuous coordination with all other stakeholders to reach maximum sectoral results.

- Strategic objective 4 – ‘Female and male farmers and entrepreneurs can access quality agricultural services needed for increasing value along agricultural value chains’ – by helping the MoA, NGOs and cooperatives to maintain and improve a range of services to support farmers and producers, particularly by providing extension, veterinary and marketing services.

The performance indicator framework of the aforementioned Palestinian National Agricultural Sector Strategy embraces many project activities, such as entrepreneurial agricultural activities (indicator 1.4), adequate and balanced food self-sufficiency (indicator 2.1), increased available water volume and its efficient management (indicator 3.1), expanded cultivated land (indicator 3.2), cluster-based approach (indicator 4.1), area with high value crops and livestock farms (indicator 4.2), competitiveness of local agricultural products (indicator 4.4) and competitive costs of agricultural production (indicator 4.5). It also contributes to national indicators in the specific project locations for SDG 2 (see section 4.2 on relevance). Finally, the project provided a good contribution to the cluster plans in the Palestinian Governorates through the provision of water infrastructure plans (Partner int_1, 29; Incept_0). Although there was a relevant contribution by the project to these indicators, a common framework for monitoring them had not yet been established by the MoA at the time of this evaluation. Despite the high degree of overlap in terms of themes, the projects’ indicators were formulated specifically according to the project’s unique design, its results model and the requirements of the GIZ results monitoring system, so they differed from the national targets. For some indicators, project data were available, e.g. on the increase in efficiently irrigated land. The MoA indicator framework, as well as those of international donors (see below), are strongly oriented towards SDG 2, while the project contributed only indirectly to SDG 2 (in terms of its impact) as part of the planned livelihood improvements and, latterly, through the poverty reduction-oriented agenda of the SED programme (in terms of employment and income activities – see above).

The project was coherent with the agendas of relevant donors, in particular with the Results-Oriented Framework of the European Union Joint Programming (EU, 2020), which relates to the MoA’s National Investment Plan 2020–2022. The most important contributions to the implementation of the ROF derive from Denmark, France, Ireland. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) contributes investments to the micro-finance sector (Donor int_14). The Green Climate Fund is currently supporting irrigation works. All outcomes of Pillar 5 – ‘Sustainable Economic Development’ – of the European Joint Programming were strongly considered in the SED programme and in output C of the project under evaluation.

In terms of the ROF for private-sector development (ROF 5.1), the project contributes to the following ROF results:

- Improvement in the competitiveness of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises at local and international levels – contribution of the present project relating to micro enterprises in the agri-food sector at the local level.
- Contribute to professional skills development, sustainable job creation and decent work – contribution of the present project relating to the support of cooperatives, start-ups and new graduates.
- Improve participation of women and young people in the economy, build the path towards a green economy – contribution of the present project relating to output C in general, ensuring good involvement of women and young people.

In terms of the ROF for labour (ROF 5.2), the coherence refers, in particular, to its outcome of increased involvement of the cooperative sector in employment, and to the ROF for agriculture (ROF 5.3), where the present project contributes as follows:

- Support to farmers and producers who have sustained damage as a direct result of natural disasters and market crises – contribution of the present project relating to the project’s COVID-19 support.
- Increase in land areas planted with crops and trees – contribution of the present project relating, in particular, to output B and increased irrigated land and production potential.

- Increase in investments in fixed productive assets by enterprises and cooperatives – contribution of the present project relating to the delivery of equipment and the saving of funds by the VSLAs on behalf of the farmers who will carry out investments with these funds.
- Cost of agricultural production is more competitive – contribution of the present project relating to efficient water use and its costs, but also to the processing in cooperatives.
- Plant and animal diseases are controlled – contribution of the present project mainly relating to livestock.

The project was also linked to Pillar 4 on ‘Self-sufficient water and energy services’, in terms of agricultural water and energy use. Energy costs for water provision are very high (FGD_1, 10), making self-sufficient energy services very important, therefore.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation’s (FAO) *Country Programming Framework 2018–2022* was drafted before the adaptation of the Palestinian policies and the NIP. Nevertheless, it relates closely to the objectives of the NIP. The project has strong links to three of its four priorities, such as sustainably managed natural resources in the agri-food value chains (priority 1), increased competitiveness of the agri-food value chains (priority 2) and enhanced protection and inclusion of highly vulnerable groups in agri-food value chains (priority 3). The project shows complementary coherence with FAO work in the sector that relates more to the policy framework. The relevance of the project was strongly confirmed by the FAO representatives (Donor int_24). Although the project contributed to these agendas, it worked according to its own unique livelihoods approach, with its own reference system (indicators) to measure success. In practice, the contribution to SDG 2 was not measured.

The project participated in the agricultural sector working group co-chaired by the MoA and AECID (Spanish Cooperation, Donor int_14). Exchanges within the group were generally to do with policy issues and there was not a lot of focus on regular cooperation in practice. For instance, the capacity development plan for the MoA developed with support of the project (output A) had been presented, but contributions to implementing the plan were neither discussed nor did any materialise (Donor int_14, 24). Based on analyses of the websites of national NGO implementing partners, the project showed strong coherence with the objectives of these partners, though they would have appreciated being more involved in the overall planning processes (CSO WS_1).

Coherence dimension 2 – External Coherence – scores **44 out of 50 points**.

Methodology for assessing coherence

Table 8: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: coherence

Coherence: assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
Internal coherence	Coherence with the SED programme, its objectives, indicators and synergies, especially in terms of the regional set-up of the project in relation to employment.	Evaluation design: the analysis followed the analytical questions from the evaluation matrix (see annex 1).	Relevant documents were available and reliable.
	Coherence with other sectors of German development cooperation (water, governance, democracy and civil society).	Empirical methods: interviews with GIZ SED programme and GIZ country representatives.	
	Coherence with international and national norms relating to gender, the environment and human rights, as well as with the SDGs.	Analysis of GIZ programme documents (results matrices, offers and reports of the SED programme).	

Coherence: assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
External coherence	<p>Assessment of complementarity with partner's efforts (subsidiarity) and contribution to the indicators in the National Agricultural Strategy/NIP.</p> <p>Coherence with the ROF and coordination with other donors, in particular with the FAO and EU, and with bilateral cooperation partners.</p> <p>Synergies with other donors' interventions, especially in relation to value-chain promotion.</p> <p>Use of partner system and structures.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: the analysis followed the analytical questions from the evaluation matrix (see annex 1).</p> <p>Empirical methods: interviews with MoA and steering committee members.</p> <p>Analysis of MoA documents and those of other donors.</p>	<p>Documents on the national strategies were available and of good quality.</p> <p>Documents from the EU and FAO were available and of good quality.</p> <p>Difficult to find other bilateral partners with similar projects to compare interventions, such as value-chain promotion.</p>

4.4 Effectiveness

This section analyses and assesses the effectiveness of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GIZ project evaluation matrix (see annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of effectiveness

Table 9: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: effectiveness

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Effectiveness	Achievement of the (intended) objectives	20 out of 30 points
	Contribution to achievement of objectives	26 out of 30 points
	Quality of implementation	18 out of 20 points
	Unintended results	18 out of 20 points
Overall score and rating		<p>Score: 82 out of 100 points</p> <p>Rating: Level 2: successful</p>

Although the COVID-19 pandemic-related economic crises and movement restrictions occurred during a critical implementation period, the project achieved its intended objectives. At the outcome level, the improvement of livelihoods became partly obvious through improving livelihood elements (financial capital, indicator 1) and increased agricultural yields (indicator 2). They became fully obvious from the beneficiaries' own assessments of their economic prospects (indicator 3). The additional funding in the form of COVID-19 response measures meant hardship was able to be compensated for to a limited extent in the short term and to a larger extent in the medium-to-long term by supporting development-oriented results. The project contributed to these achievements especially through the careful selection, preparation and rehabilitation of water infrastructure (hypothesis B), the excellent performance of the VSLA groups (hypothesis C) and through establishing cooperation mechanisms between implementing partners and stakeholders involved at the local level. The creation of good and trustful relations with the MoA became an important factor of success and allowed results-oriented steering and management with the full support of the MoA. The quality of implementation was very good and respected the relevant safeguards, especially in a sensitive context and with regard to gender. As the national policy context evolved during the project term, the project provided an unintended and highly

appreciated contribution to the newly developed cluster plans in two governorates. Other meaningful unintended results have not been observed.

In total, the effectiveness of the project is rated Level 2: successful, with 82 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of effectiveness

The evaluation team assessed the achievement of the intended objectives (livelihood improvement) according to the three indicators at outcome level (effectiveness dimension 1) through a comparison between the baseline and endline results (quantitative surveys; AWRAD, 2020 and 2021b). It triangulated these results with the qualitative field survey conducted by the national evaluator as part of the evaluation mission with a retrospective perspective. The analysis of the contribution to the achievement of objectives (effectiveness dimension 2) followed the formulated hypotheses A–C (one per output), and to the impact of COVID-19 on the achievements and the response measures applied (hypothesis D). They are shown in the results model in Figure 1. The evaluation team assessed the quality of implementation (effectiveness dimension 3) through the GIZ management model for sustainable development, Capacity WORKS, taking in the processes, results-oriented steering and monitoring, a cooperation analysis and the learning and innovation mechanisms. The evaluation team studied the preliminary safeguards analysis of the political context, human rights/conflict context, environment and gender to observe intended, but also potential unintended and undesirable or negative results, as well as those results that deviated from the intended results because of unforeseen changes in the context of the project (effectiveness dimension 4). The analysis was supported by a SWOT analysis and a cooperation analysis with implementing partners. The results were verified and triangulated with additional sources, especially regarding the attribution of results for effectiveness dimension 1.

Effectiveness dimension 1: Achievement of the (intended) objectives

Table 10 gives an overview of the status of achievement of the three outcome indicators (I1, I2 and I3).

Table 10: Assessed and adapted objective indicators for specific modules (outcome level)

Project's objective indicator according to the (last modification) offer (June 2020)					Assessment according to SMART criteria (SMART = specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound)
I1: 3,000 beneficiaries, 30% of them women, rate their livelihoods on average one point higher (on a scale of 1 to 5) for two out of five dimensions (capitals) of the sustainable livelihoods concept.					S: medium; economic support high compared with other dimensions, some dimensions did not receive direct support (social capital, impact level) different target groups are summarised. M: low; difficulty of measurement resulting in limited validity of data. A: high; referring to two dimensions. R: high; dimensions all relevant for improvements. T: low; limited time period (11 months) between baseline and endline.
Dimension	Base value	Target value	End of project value	Change	
Natural capital	3.63	4.36	3.10	-14.6%	
Physical capital	2.65	3.18	2.97	+12.1%	
Financial capital	1.87	2.23	2.61	+40%	
Human capital	3.23	3.87	3.13	-3.1%	
Social capital	2.97	3.56	3.43	+15.5%	
Average	2.87	3.27	3.05	+10.0%	
Percentage of women: 39% ⁴ Base value (28 June 2020): 2.87					

⁴ The endline report does not present gender-disaggregated data, but the project indicates 39% of women beneficiaries. In light of the figures in section 4.2 (relevance dimension 2) and effectiveness dimension 2, this share of female representatives is plausible.

<p>Target value (30 June 2021): 3.27⁵ Current value (31 May 2021): 3.05 Achievement in % (31 May 2021): 10% increase on average for all dimensions, one out of five dimensions > 20% (corresponding to one point on the scale – see footnote 6 and results matrix (GIZ, 2020a)) Source: Baseline and endline surveys conducted by AWRAD.</p>	
<p>I2: 40% of the 1,000 producers supported by measures in the field of good agricultural practices achieve, on average, an additional yield of 10% compared with reference areas. Base value (28 June 2020): 2,193 t/dunam Target value (30 June 2021): 2,412 t/dunam Current value (31 May 2021): 3.2 t/dunam (+46%) Achievement in % (31 May 2021): according to the endline and project progress reports, 270 producers of a representative sample produced 3.2 tons/dunam/season, corresponding to a 46% yield increase (productivity of crops)⁶. 1,460 farmers and livestock herders were supported, including 956 irrigation farmers (output B), 134 livestock farmers (output C) and 460 farmers⁷ who received greenhouse cover sheets as COVID-19 support. 36.9% of the irrigation farmers achieved an additional yield of at least 10% compared with reference areas (previous year, baseline 2020)⁸. Source: Baseline and endline surveys conducted by AWRAD.</p>	<p>S: medium; the good agricultural practices promoted by the project mainly refer to water management, but hardly to other cropping practices. M: low; impossible to measure reference areas and yield changes within one year. Yields of various crops in different seasons, taking climatic influence into account, were compared among 176 farmers and 93 livestock herders. A: high; improved water availability and reliability has a high potential to increase yields. R: high; yield in general a good indicator. T: medium; short period between baseline, construction of water infrastructure and endline.</p>
<p>I3: 1,500 producers supported in the area of good agricultural and business practices rate their economic prospects on average one point higher on a scale of 1 to 5. Base value (28 June 2020): 2.17 Target value (28 June 2020): 3.17 as numeric increase of 1 point from 2.17 to 3.17 as of modification offer (GIZ, 2020a) Target value (28 July 2021): 2.60 (20% conversion as relative increase from 2.17 to 2.60 as of endline and project progress reports (GIZ, 2021b)) Current value (31 May 2021): 2.89 Achievement in % (31 May 2021): 0.72 (out of 1) numeric points increase according to modification offer version of 28. June 2020 and 33.2% (out of 20% related to the conversion rate) increase according to endline and progress report versions (GIZ, 2021b). In total, 1,705 producers were supported. Source: Baseline and endline surveys conducted by AWRAD.</p>	<p>S: medium; could include many envisaged elements rather than actual achievements. M: medium; difficult to assess perspectives properly. A: medium; influenced by COVID-19 and economic turbulence. R: medium; agri-businesses are already in place, though these real improvements could also have been measured. T: medium; limited period affected by economic turbulence did not allow a realistic picture to be gained.</p>
<p>* SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound</p>	

Preliminary observation: as soon as the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Palestinian governmental organisations took unprecedented measures to contain the spread of the virus and protect the health and safety of people. These measures included: closing of crossings, imposing mandatory quarantine, and closing government and private institutions. The government also banned any movement between the governorates on the one hand and access by inhabitants of villages and camps to city centres on the other. The full lockdown lasted from March to June 2020. The baseline survey on the above outcome indicators was conducted in May 2020, at the end of the three-month lockdown (GIZ, 2020b), with the endline survey following one year later, in May 2021. Both were carried out remotely by AWRAD via telephone interviews. The majority of the beneficiaries

⁵ Average increase of 0.40 corresponds to an increase of 1 numeric point for two of the five dimensions (modification offer (GIZ, 2020a)). In consequence, the project understood the target value of a 1-point increase as 20% increments compared with the baseline value (1–5 X 20% = 100% = 1 point, e.g. from 3.63 to 4.36) and not as an absolute numeric point increase, e.g. from 3.63 to 4.63.

⁶ The endline states that the sample included 176 crop farmers and 93 livestock farmers. 60% of the 160 crop producers who completed the interviews declared they had achieved higher yields. It is unclear how the baseline and endline incorporated livestock farmers into the productivity data required in this indicator.

⁷ An additional 204 farmers received greenhouse cover sheets after the endline survey.

⁸ According to endline-related communication (CSO int_16), 36.9% of the 160 interviewed irrigation farmers declared having achieved an additional yield of at least 10%.

interviewed reported severe income losses at the time of the baseline (72% of the farmers interviewed, 88% of the livestock herders and 81% of VSLA members) (AWRAD, 2020). In addition to income losses (due to job losses, lack of markets to sell products and lack of access to inputs), the movement restrictions resulted in limited access to agricultural plots to cultivate them and reduced availability of agricultural advisory services. Both the baseline and the endline values were strongly influenced by these overarching pandemic conditions (AWRAD, 2020 and 2021b; FAO, 2020; UNCTAD, 2021; see also the analysis of hypothesis D below).

The evaluation team concluded that **project objective indicator 1** was partly achieved. According to the endline report (AWRAD, 2021b), one dimension substantially increased (financial capital), two dimensions moderately increased (social and physical capital), the human capital dimension remained almost unchanged and the natural capital dimension decreased. On average, one out of five dimensions achieved an increase of 1 point (translated as 20% on the scale of 1 to 5) compared with the target value of two dimensions achieving an increase of 20%. The baseline results (AWRAD, 2020) had already included the impact of the lockdown conditions (losses of jobs and income in the agri-food sector from March 2020 and limited access to agricultural plots and markets until May 2020). The qualitative assessments during the field mission and other sources confirmed that many families lost external income during the COVID-19 lockdown (job losses in Israel and reduced access to land and markets). However, the situation improved once the full lockdown was eased, after the baseline assessment. The financial capital of beneficiaries increased by 40% on the defined scale since June 2020 (AWRAD, 2021b). This improvement is assumed partly to be the result of successful project activities under output C and partly the result of contextual factors, such as the overall trend of recovery from the crisis (see the assessment of effectiveness dimension 2). The irrigation infrastructure (output B) was only completed at the end of the project. During the field assessment, the FGDs highlighted the improvement in availability of irrigation water, but most of the irrigation farmers had not yet harvested crops, as the rehabilitation works had been completed (see hypothesis B, effectiveness dimension 2). The relative income share from farming decreased by 12.4% and only 24% of the farmers reported income increases from farming (AWRAD, 2021b and communication related to CSO int_16). The income values were influenced by the difficult marketing conditions. According to the endline report, the social capital increased by 15.5% on the scale, as a result of consolidated family work and cooperation with other farmers. It seems that the available (jobless) labour force was, to a certain extent, invested in agricultural and home-based income-generating activities (FGD_7) and this strengthened family and neighbourhood ties. At the same time, membership of cooperatives reduced, mainly because of the annual fees. The field assessment also revealed that social relations among the VSLA group members intensified (see the analysis of hypothesis C in the assessment of impact dimension 2). The physical capital increased by 12.1% on the scale as a direct result of the provision of equipment for all supported groups (irrigation systems, tools and implements for agricultural and livestock activities). The human capital showed a non-significant slight decrease on the scale (-3.1%). According to the endline report, only the graduates saw improvements in their capacities, while farmers' knowledge actually decreased (AWRAD, 2021b and communication related to CSO int_16), probably because the capacity of MoA to transfer knowledge was and remained limited once full lockdown conditions were lifted. In contrast to these moderate results, the comparison by the field assessment and the NGO indicated good capacity increases for income-generating activities under output C since the period of the start of the activities of output C (an earlier reference point before the lockdown) (CSO WS_1). The natural capital decreased by 14.6% on the scale due to the reduced renting of land and access to agricultural plots during the lockdown and to loss of land because of the steadily ongoing construction of Israeli settlements (AWRAD, 2020; Donor int_19).

According to the endline report and the project reports, **project objective indicator 2** was fully achieved by the end of the project when crop farmers and livestock herders were taken into account (AWRAD, 2021b; GIZ, 2021a). The evaluation team concluded from its own qualitative assessment and the triangulation of sources that the indicator had only been partially achieved (up to that point) as a result of the project. The services for irrigation farmers were provided at the end of the project and therefore could hardly be reflected in the endline results, as at least one full agricultural season would be required to measure any project-related yield increases. The qualitative assessments assumed that the yields will increase considerably in the future and

would become obvious in the following season. Regarding the applied methodology of the endline survey, the composition of the sub-groups of farmer beneficiaries and the reference to productivity per dunam did not fully fit the requirements of this indicator. A total of 956 irrigation farmers benefited from the project, almost reaching the target of 1,000 producers. In addition, 134 livestock herders and 664 farmers who received greenhouse covers as part of COVID-19 response measures benefited from the project (GIZ, 2021b), making a total of 1,754 farmer beneficiaries⁹. The endline report and project progress report (GIZ, 2021b) refer to 1,460 beneficiaries. When considering crop farmers only, 36.9% of them reported yield increases of 10% and more¹⁰. The attribution of the yield increases to project activities is unclear, since most of the improved irrigation infrastructure was not yet functional during the agricultural season that was taken into account in the survey between the baseline and the endline. According to additional information in the endline data, the perceptions of available water quantity and soil fertility were actually rather negative (CSO int_16 and related communication). These endline results did not, at the time, reflect the results of the focus groups that were conducted a few weeks later with irrigation farmers, who strongly confirmed the improved availability of water – indeed, triple the quantities were reported (FGD_2, 3, 10, 11, 14; see also hypothesis B). Therefore, the evaluation team strongly assumes there will be yield increases in future seasons. Regarding livestock herders, the endline report showed very positive results in the form of significantly increased assets and equipment, and the fact that 53% of herders reported income increases (AWRAD, 2021b). The focus group conducted during the evaluation's field assessment confirmed the positive developments, mainly as a result of direct veterinarian support to livestock herders that made up for the shortage of governmental veterinarian doctors (FGD_12). Farmers' knowledge of agricultural practices, the second important project support after provision of irrigation infrastructure, did not increase (see human capital, above). In fact, it decreased by 10% (3.1. to 2.8 on the scale – communication related to CSO int_16), owing to reduced advisory services by the DoA (Int_20 and FGD_13). At the same time the climatic conditions during the period of the baseline survey were good (high rainfall) with high yields (GIZ, 2020b and 2021b), while the access to plots and the availability of agricultural inputs were difficult and limited during the season between the baseline in May 2020 and the endline surveys in May 2021. Given all the above factors, yield increases of 46% are not really plausible during that period. The telephone interviews under pandemic conditions, high expectations for the future and an attitude of preference for positive responses (AWRAD, 2020) might have induced farmers to overestimate their achievements. However, the prospects for yield increases in the future were strongly confirmed by the FGD (see under hypothesis F, impact dimension 2). Therefore, the evaluation team is convinced that the target value of the indicator will be achieved in the future as a result of the project's support.

The evaluation team concluded that **project objective indicator 3** was fully achieved by the end of the project. The beneficiaries supported (including farmers, livestock herders, VSLA groups, cooperative members, start-ups in the agri-food sector and graduates) rated their economic prospects for the future higher, as before (endline report; AWRAD, 2021b). Although the target value of 1 numeric point (modification offer, GIZ 2020a) was only achieved by 72% (2.89 out of 3.17), the adapted target value (converted to 20%) (AWRAD, 2021b; GIZ, 2021b) was achieved. Independently of this inconsistency in target values, the endline report (AWRAD, 2021b) mentions a number of positive developments that are attributed to positive perspectives:

- For the VSLAs as the largest group (520 members), 84% of the women said that they improved their skills to manage their current businesses, and 82% reported that they are now capable of sustaining their businesses.
- For the cooperatives (169 members), the positive assessment was even higher, with 97% of the women reporting being capable of sustaining their businesses and at least 84% confirming improvements in a number of skills related to business management.

⁹ The AWRAD assessment report of June 2021 (AWRAD, 2021c) includes 460 farmers who received greenhouse cover-sheet support (total of 1,550 beneficiary farmers). These greenhouse-sheet beneficiaries had not been included in the quantitative surveys. An additional 204 farmers received greenhouse cover sheets later.

¹⁰ The original formulation is understood as yield compared with reference areas, which is not applicable to livestock herders that were included in the sample consisting of 160 farmers and 93 livestock herders. The share of farmers and herders considered in the baseline and endline surveys does not correspond to the share of beneficiaries of 956 irrigation crop farmers and 134 livestock herders.

- For 134 livestock herders, access to artificial insemination for their animals improved considerably and 53% reported higher income.
- Of the 37 graduates, 54% found jobs after their internships and reported having increased their competencies, particularly in small business management, business planning and identifying business opportunities.
- The equipment and advisory services resulted in income increases so that the influence of the pandemic conditions was felt less.

The evaluation's field assessment confirmed these results for all beneficiary groups with the exception of female graduates (interns), who have been less successful on the jobs market (FGD_8). A number of additional positive results were found and are described under effectiveness dimension 2 and impact dimension 2.

The outcome indicators relate to one of the deescalating/connecting factors (see Table 5), economic and social development, which was confirmed by several of the above-mentioned results, with the most important changes occurring in relation to financial and social capital, with promising economic prospects. Since the beneficiary groups showed various vulnerabilities (see relevance dimension 2 and sections 4.5 and 4.7), the development was considered inclusive.

Effectiveness dimension 1 – Achievement of the (intended) objectives – scores **20 out of 30 points**.

Effectiveness dimension 2: Contribution to achievement of objectives

Table 11 outlines the assessment of the four selected hypotheses linking outputs with the outcome. The transfer of knowledge on climate change to the farmers – hypothesis A – constitutes a central element of the capacity of the ministry to strengthen the livelihoods of the rural population. Improved water availability – hypothesis B – provides the basis for climate-resilient and viable agricultural value chains for rural livelihoods. The use of income opportunities by VSLAs – hypothesis C – proved successful in involving women and was focused on by the follow-on project as a new output, making it of particular interest. And finally, the influence of COVID-19 on the project and the response to mitigate its effects – hypothesis D – was assumed to be important for understanding the contextual influence of the pandemic.

Table 11: Selected results hypotheses for effectiveness

Hypothesis A (activity – output – outcome)	HA (output A, results 5, 6 and 12 in the results model (Figure 1)): transfer of knowledge on climate-change adaptation from advisors to farmers: 30 agricultural advisors with improved technical and methodological knowledge on climate-change adaptation in agriculture and livestock management (5) pass their knowledge on to farmers to support them in adapting to climate change (6) as an important part of the capacities of the MoA to strengthen the livelihoods of rural farmers (outcome).
Main assumptions	Studies of livelihoods in the intervention areas help focus attention on the real needs and opportunities to change and adapt farming conditions (7) and to share and integrate them into training (6) and the overall approach (output A). It is assumed that the knowledge is passed to the farmers (6–12, especially irrigation farmers under output B) on the basis of the livelihood concept of the project. The MoA uses the acquired knowledge, equipment and tools to cooperate closely within its own structures (at centralised and decentralised levels, as well as between sectoral departments) and to follow a demand-driven livelihoods approach, with a focus on small-scale farmers and value-chain actors.
Risks/ unintended results	Agricultural advisors often focus on big farms and neglect smallholders in Area C. They might not orient the advisory services towards the targeted groups. Predominantly male advisors might avoid working with women. The MoA might use the logistical equipment (vehicles) for other purposes, e.g. enhancing communication with the private sector and research institutions.
Alternative explanation	Farmers use other information sources to develop their farming systems, e.g. YouTube videos, private sector and NGOs, in the absence of DoA advisory staff.

Confirmed/partly confirmed/ not confirmed	The hypothesis is partly confirmed.
Hypothesis B (activity – output – outcome)	HB (output B, results 11, 12 and 13: water infrastructure and the application of improved water management methods improve water efficiency and availability. The implementation of the small rural projects (water tanks and infrastructure (11), and corresponding training (12)) increases water availability and irrigation of additional land and leads to more efficient water use (13). The conditions to improve agricultural productivity are therefore enhanced (outcome).
Main assumptions	The infrastructure projects are planned at the local level according to proposals from local beneficiaries (9). DoAs evaluate and improve the technical quality of the proposals in cooperation with the local stakeholders. This exercise strengthens the cooperation between community-based civil society organisations and the DoAs (8). The new water infrastructure is well established and functioning, and farmers know how to manage it through improved water efficiency. Methods for water-resource management and climate-change adaptation are used and disseminated by the actors involved in service delivery and ultimately applied by the beneficiaries.
Risks/ unintended results	Israeli settlers occupy the improved land and the target groups cannot benefit as foreseen/are forced to move away. Water infrastructure might be damaged or destroyed through severe rainfall and storms, as the surrounding areas are not sufficiently protected against erosion and flooding.
Alternative explanation	Good rainfall (abundant quantities and adequate seasonal distribution) led to high yields in 2020. Farmers use new drought-tolerant seed varieties available on the local markets.
Confirmed/partly confirmed/ not confirmed	The hypothesis is fully confirmed.
Hypothesis C (activity – output – outcome)	HC (output C, 21 – (and 19 –) to Output C) focuses on VSLAs that access finance and training to improve members' economic situation. Motivating rural women to form VSLAs for financing their activities and investing in their productive and social activities (21) will allow them to generate income and employment (output C). This process will partly involve the development of new agri-business activities (19).
Main assumptions	Women's groups are able to convert other support from the DoAs and NGOs into viable economic activities. Women invest considerable amounts of their self-generated funds into their agri-businesses.
Risks/ unintended results	Women use the acquired capital to pay back debts or pay schooling fees for their children and for other family interests but do not invest the money in their cooperative businesses or productive activities.
Alternative explanation	Other financing sources, vocational training (other results outside the sphere of responsibility of the project) help enhance the conditions for income generation and employment. The women's groups develop on the basis of their own capacities and those of young female graduates.
Confirmed/partly confirmed/ not confirmed	The hypothesis is confirmed.
Hypothesis D (activity – output – outcome)	HD (Output C, 22 – project objective): mitigation of COVID-19 impacts on rural households The adverse economic developments experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic have probably affected rural livelihoods and might have hampered or slowed down the progress of agri-business development and investments in agriculture. The inclusion of additional activities – provision of food baskets, temporary employment and greenhouse covers – in support of the targeted farming households that were particularly hidden during the crisis might have alleviated the impact of COVID-19 (33).

Main assumptions	The overall economic situation is favourable for the development of agri-businesses. The economic problems related to COVID-19 were caused by the imposition of quarantine measures on individual households that experienced infections, as well as the closure of commercial establishments and limitations on markets, which affected the income and employment of households.
Risks/unintended results	The targeting of particularly affected households might fail. Potentially less transparent handling of the support might cause dissatisfaction among other community members.
Alternative explanation	Because the project support arrived late (in October 2020), the recovery of targeted households was based on their own resources and a good harvest in summer 2020 as a result of abundant rainfall.
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	Regarding the impact of COVID-19 , the hypothesis is confirmed. Regarding the mitigation of the impact of COVID-19 by the project , the hypothesis is confirmed.

The following analysis consists of a general description of the outputs and level of achievement of the indicators as a contribution to the outputs, as well as a specific contribution analysis of the selected hypotheses.

For **output A**, the project followed a strong and highly appreciated partnership approach and conducted a number of activities to learn about the new cooperation structure and the management mechanisms, with a focus on capacity development. A process analysis conducted by a national consultant (MoA, 2019b) with the support of the project was very helpful for understanding how the MoA functioned and its workflow. Its results were used by the project and the MoA but not to design specific advisory services, owing to the pandemic and the changes in priorities of the MoA. Some planned activities on communication and data transfer within the MoA provided information to the project team but did not result in a systematic change to data transfer procedures. The activities related to the MoA itself (such as the capacity development assessment, see below) helped establish good relations with many departments of the ministry, which proved to be a success factor of the project. The project also conducted a detailed capacity assessment at the MoA and prepared a training plan for the DoAs. This plan was rather all-embracing and could have taken a more focused approach by setting training priorities (MoA, 2019a). The assessment and subsequent plan did not properly consider gender, either. The capacity requirements regarding climate-change adaptation were not mentioned in the plan. Nevertheless, it was highly relevant to and beneficial for conducting the training. The plan is coordinated by the administrative department and was implemented to a small extent so far. Its comprehensive and full implementation would have required considerable additional external resources from other donors, as the MoA's resources were generally scarce (Partner int_11, 23). Some training was implemented with project support, such as social media communication training for the extension department, and resulted in the production of some technical advisory videos on YouTube. The extent to which female members of the farming communities were included as recipients of advisory services depended on the specific thematic agenda. As female cooperatives were among the target groups, it is estimated that roughly 30–40% of those involved in the training were women (Partner int_20; FGD_13). With regard to irrigation farming, female farmers are under-represented, at just 13% of the registered beneficiaries, mainly female heads of households, and only one woman among 33 men attended the focus group meetings with irrigation-farmer representatives. A central part of the capacity-building related to the climate-change adaptation training delivered in six modules (see analysis of hypothesis A, including **indicator A2**, below). Other training was conducted on livelihoods analysis and strategic planning, in addition to some technical training (e.g. in media production, dam construction, cheese production). There is no indicator that measures the planning capacities of the MoA, since the focus and ambition of 'local concepts for rural development that take e.g. the efficient use of resources such as water and soil, risk mapping and market analyses into account in three pilot areas' (**indicator A1**) (Hartveld, 2018) were considered in the context of output B, without description of the intended three pilot areas. The target figure (three concepts) initially referred to the three governorates that became the subject of the cluster approach in

the new national agenda in 2019. DoAs provided relevant contributions to cluster plans for two governorates. The initially planned concepts were then shifted to the water projects (output B) and were converted into ‘farmer groups and cooperatives development concepts’ (WeeCon, 2021).

Analysis of hypothesis A

The hypothesis is partly confirmed, as 46.7% of the DoA advisors of the MoA (or 63.7%, when only considering the 22 out of 30 who were in direct contact with farmers) stated that they had transferred their knowledge to farmers (at least three opportunities for knowledge transfer, indicator A2 (AWRAD, 2021a)). The advisors were generally well satisfied with most of the training topics and learned a lot about climate change. They did not like the remote training format that had to be followed in 2020, because of the pandemic (FGD_13; AWRAD, 2021a). Many of the methods taught require investment and might be difficult to apply by farmers without external support. Thus, the advisors might concentrate on those techniques that are easily applicable, such as ‘half-moons’ to facilitate water infiltration (FGD_13). The four DoA advisors who participated in FGD_13 reported serious challenges in providing training and advisory services during the pandemic and that those occasions on which they were reported to have been provided were rather sporadic. Irrigation farmers – among other farmers assumed to have received this knowledge – did not confirm increased knowledge on climate change or related agricultural practices, although the cooperation with the DoAs was appreciated by most of the groups. Training by DoA advisors on climate change and related agricultural practices was not mentioned in the six FGDs with irrigation farmers or the interviews with farmers, but a short training module on the management of water infrastructure by the PHG, one of the NGOs that implemented the project, was mentioned (e.g. FGD_2). AWRAD found a decrease in farmers’ human capital, i.e. knowledge and abilities (CSO_int 16 and related communication). The current (at the time of the evaluation) training and advisory service operations do not fully incorporate ‘train the trainer’ elements that would favour efficient knowledge transfer. Instead, the MoA favours farmer field schools conducted by its own staff to foster farmer-to-farmer exchange (Partner int_20, 21; FGD_13). The advisors reported that, in general, 30–40% of their audience in different knowledge transfer formats were women, mainly as cooperatives.

For **output B**, the 13 selected water infrastructure projects provided the basis on which to draft ‘local concepts for rural development’, (indicator A1 under output A). A national consultant drafted 13 plans according to the specific water infrastructure projects, including a contextual analysis of the locality, the outline of the project and expected results, as well as further water infrastructure and development potential related to irrigated agriculture in the irrigation scheme and the farmer groups and cooperatives managing the system. The technical quality of these ‘project plans’ was good. Most of the works included the rehabilitation and construction of pipes and reservoirs/tanks for efficient irrigation. The projects showed solid planning and design, but their technical innovations were limited. One project referred to solar panels to decrease water costs as a crucial factor of efficiency for the irrigation schemes (Partner int_17, 29; SCO int_8). Water accounting and pricing schemes were considered as well, and a 20% cost reduction for water sold to farmers was achieved. The water projects were planned and implemented in close cooperation with DoAs, cooperatives, local councils, farmer representatives and PHG, as the technical implementing partner. **Indicator B2** refers to 13 irrigation groups and systems, where 27 technical improvements were completed. PHG devoted some initial technical training to water efficiency and the operation of the water management systems. The cooperation worked well (FGD_2, 10, 11) and successfully, with a few exceptions, where farmers complained about DoA services (FGD_1). The results are reported under hypotheses B and F (see previous section 4.3 and the following sections on impact 4.5 and sustainability 4.7). **Indicator B1** is analysed under sustainability dimension 1.

Analysis of hypothesis B

The hypothesis is fully confirmed. Thirteen irrigation projects were implemented between November 2020 and January 2021, providing relevant and efficient solutions for a total of 956 farmers – between 9 and 159 farming households per irrigation project, of whom 12.6% were female heads of farms (PHG, 2021; WeeCon, 2021). Farmers were organised in cooperatives or farmer groups, partly based on family connections (Local development concepts; WeeCon, 2021; GDC WS_2). The availability of irrigation water has reduced competition and waiting time for water and improved the reliability and quality of irrigation water (FGD_2, 3, 10, 11, 14), allowing investments in and more profitable farming on about 2,000 ha cultivated with fruit and vegetables (WeeCon, 2021). Many farmers were able to increase the irrigated land area compared with previous years, when water was not available because of pipe and tank leakages. In some irrigation schemes, larger areas were able to be irrigated with bigger tanks compared with the previous tanks (WeeCon, 2021; GDC WS_2). This meant land at higher altitudes was able to be irrigated, too (FGD_2). The use of solar energy in some of the new water infrastructure (FGD_1), together with other improvements, will decrease water costs – a crucial aspect of irrigation farming systems (CSO int_8) – as well as maintenance costs for water pumps (as a result of them no longer being degraded by unclean water (algae) (FGD_3)) and costs for plastic sheets to prevent evaporation (FGD_10). In sum, the irrigation systems work more efficiently and more effectively. One farmer group reported that tomato production has doubled (FGD_11). The very recent (at the time of the evaluation) completion of the systems meant subsequent yield increases could not be measured (see limitations of evaluability in section 3.1. and other analysis).

For **output C**, the activities included female VSLA groups, women's cooperatives, livestock herders, young graduates and start-ups. All projects were thoroughly planned and monitored, with detailed reporting of results. The VSLA groups were observed in particular through hypotheses C and E (see below and the following section on impact). Women's cooperatives managed to succeed in difficult conditions and have been able to reduce their production costs and achieve higher productivity with improved processing equipment provided by the project and new products (Beneficiary int_4, 6, 30; RWDS, 2020). The cooperatives remained stable throughout the crisis, which was characterised by unstable markets, e.g. withdrawal of orders, closure of school canteens and loss of the pastry market under COVID-19 restrictions (Beneficiary int_4, 6). They also succeeded in maintaining the number of paid workers (28% of the cooperatives' members, 48 seasonal jobs), while the average income per worker decreased from EUR 94 to EUR 72/month during this difficult period (RWDS, 2020). The groups reported a substantial improvement in their management capacities (**indicator C1**, see section 4.7 on sustainability) and that they are now able to sell their products with improved packaging, labelling and registration in urban markets and via Facebook (Beneficiary int_30). The NGOs (ESDC, RWDS and PARC) initiated contacts with other value-chain stakeholders for improved marketing. They developed five new products (**indicator C2**), which have been registered under specific brand names and diversified according to market demand, in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy (CSO WS_1). However, market demand proved unstable in 2020 (Beneficiary Int_4). The capacities of livestock herders in Bethlehem Governorate were built up in many regards (technical knowledge, equipment, management capacities) allowing them to conduct activities in a more profitable way (UAWC, 2021; AWRAD, 2021b) by replacing veterinarian services (which were rarely available) (FGD_12) and stepping up artificial insemination of their animals (AWRAD, 2021b). The project supported start-ups in the agri-business sector, with PARC as implementing partner. As a result, 10 businesses were assisted in the production, processing and services segments. The support package included capacity-building, in terms of various entrepreneurship skills, and seed funding. The entrepreneurs were generally very satisfied with this support (Beneficiary int_5, 27, 28). At the time of the evaluation, it was not yet possible to assess the success of the different projects. Moreover, the project organised internships for young graduates on farms, which were appreciated by the interns for the acquisition of practical skills and competence in running a small business (AWRAD, 2021b). The NGOs continued to mentor individual interns, and other sources confirmed that between 52% (UAWC, 2021) and 54% (AWRAD, 2021b) had found jobs before September 2021. However, female graduates encountered more difficulties in finding employment (FGD_8). Digital skills for advertising and marketing their products themselves were enhanced for many of the beneficiary groups under output C. The NGOs further developed digital advisory

services during the COVID-19 crisis, including mentoring and coaching services (CSO WS_1; PARC). The digital services were less appreciated compared with personal meetings. However, one female entrepreneur declared high satisfaction with the digital services, as she was easily able to combine attendance with various other duties (Int_5).

Analysis of hypothesis C

The hypothesis is confirmed. According to project reports (GIZ, 2021b) and endline data (AWRAD, 2021b), 520 women were incorporated into 19 VSLA groups to save money for small businesses; they also received some equipment for their individual agri-business projects (three members/group). The VSLA management mechanisms were highly appreciated, because they did not include interests that went against cultural and religious convictions (e.g. FGD_4, 5). 90% of the women said they were better able to access financial resources to support their households and start or strengthen existing small businesses. 82% of the women in VSLAs reported that they are now capable of sustaining their businesses (ESDC, 2020; AWRAD, 2020 and 2021b). The FGDs all confirmed the enhanced agri-business activities. As a result of job losses by other family members (mainly males) during the COVID-19 crisis and related movement restrictions, women also used the financial resources available through the VSLA groups to support immediate family needs, pay university fees for their children and afford health care. They also used income from their own businesses for three purposes. Some members supported their male family members in their activities (FGD_4, 5, 6, 7, 9). The project reported accumulated savings amounting to EUR 360,000 for all groups by the end of the project (GIZ, 2021a).

In addition to the outputs, the project implemented **measures to support farmers affected by the COVID-19 crisis** in the short term by buying excess food on local markets (due to movement restrictions/export ban) and supplying food baskets to 1,931 vulnerable households. It also conducted an awareness campaign on good hygiene practices and healthy nutrition through the public media. In addition, short-term employment schemes were organised for 196 vulnerable households in the agricultural sector in 2020 to help them cope with food insecurity and to help the (grape and olive) farmers overcome the economic losses during the crisis (GDC incept_1; Int_12; WS_2). The short-term employment established good relations between farmers and workers, who continued cooperating on a voluntary basis afterwards (Beneficiary int_7). Moreover, the MoA distributed 1,823 greenhouse cover sheets to 664 farmers (GIZ, 2021b) to enhance vegetable and fruit production. The distribution was based on a list of damage caused by heavy winter storms in the north and south of the Palestinian territories in February 2020, just before the onset of the COVID-19 crisis. In the south, the distribution coincided with seasonal needs (Partner int_21). According to the assessment report (AWRAD, 2021c; Partner int_21), the project support was generally highly welcome and covered a critical need, since insurance against natural disasters does not exist and public resources were not available to cover such damage (Partner int_21). The activity allowed the MoA and DoAs to prove their management capacity and gain respect from the farming community. Other activities funded through these extra funds were directly inserted into the existing outputs, such as four additional water infrastructure projects, as well as further support to the grape farmers, to develop the value chain in the south.

Analysis of hypothesis D

The hypothesis regarding the impact of COVID-19 (D-a) is confirmed. The COVID-19 crisis resulted in movement restrictions and market distortions from March 2020, with consequent negative impacts on household incomes and food security. Many household members lost jobs in Israel and could not access their plots, agricultural inputs or business equipment, and they had to sell their products at low prices (AWRAD, 2021c; FGD_4, 5, 6, 7, 9). The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development estimated a decline in the GDP per capita of 17.5% in 2020 (UNCTAD, 2021). The unemployment rate increased by 11.9% (Abuzerr et al., 2021). The FAO (2020) expected serious impacts on agri-food systems, with decreased food-security levels. Poor or borderline food consumption levels are still higher compared with pre-COVID conditions (Donor int_24; and additional communication with FAO representatives in September 2021). According to the MoA, the share of households experiencing food insecurity increased from 12% in 2018 to 28% in 2020 (Partner int_29). Agricultural production was affected between April and October 2020 (CSO int_10). After this time, mainly

other segments of the value chain, beyond production, were affected, e.g. processing and marketing (Partner int_29). Food prices showed only slight increases between August 2020 and August 2021 (2.3% in the West Bank – WFP, 2021). However, the demand for agricultural inputs (e.g. animal fodder) decreased substantially as a result of farmers' liquidity problems (FAO, 2020).

The hypothesis regarding mitigation of the impacts of COVID-19 by the project (D-b) is also confirmed. The project's interventions helped beneficiaries through the initially planned activities, in particular the establishment of VSLA groups at a time when they were really needed, i.e. during the COVID-19 crisis. The additional COVID-19 response funds were used to organise employment schemes (200 workers each paid for one month) and provide food baskets for households in need at the end of 2020, when markets had already stabilised. The project helped beneficiaries maintain minimum living conditions or pay back debts (Beneficiary int_7). The project bought food on local markets, thus also supporting the producers. Other additional funds were used to provide 1,162 greenhouse cover sheets for 460 farmers (AWRAD, 2021c); to support investments for grape farmers at the level of production, storage and processing; and to increase the number of water projects in response to the COVID-19 crisis from 2020. These measures will enhance productivity in the medium and long terms, and increase household resilience.

Effectiveness dimension 2 – Contribution to achievement of objectives – scores **26 out of 30 points**.

Effectiveness dimension 3: Quality of implementation

According to the evaluation team's assessment, the project's planning, preparation and monitoring processes were consistent and, when required, adaptive. The team adapted the results model several times in order to ensure results-oriented project steering. The adaptation of the results model mainly related to the internal processes and did not consider results beyond the project's sphere of responsibility, except for some far-reaching impacts. The incorporation into the SED programme was not yet fully reflected in the results model. Some additional results, especially impacts, had been added by the evaluation team during the inception phase of the evaluation (see results model, figure 1). The monitoring of most indicators (three outcome indicators and three of six output indicators) was conducted in the form of a baseline-endline comparison by the national consultancy firm, AWRAD. The project's own monitoring covered three output indicators and activities. It was conducted using a reasonable and plausible monitoring system. The implementing partners reported additional results for outputs B and C according to specific logical frameworks at activity level, and also described the monitoring mechanisms. The monitoring of unintended negative results was ensured through regular analysis of 'challenges and obstacles' in team meetings and in the reports of implementing partners, in a section on critical points. Although the planning of the project included many deescalating factors and conflict-sensitive aspects, the measurement dimensions of the indicators did not include conflict-sensitive elements, and, in consequence, neither did the monitoring system. However, developments in the overall conflict were well observed by the project.

The project's steering committee mainly comprised active representatives of the MoA, not just members of the committee who were involved in the overall implementation of the project, and representatives of the PWA and the EQA, whose competence was related mainly to output B on water issues. They all confirmed the soundness of the strategy and the positive achievements of the project (Partner int_29). The steering committee did not include any members representing income- and employment-generation issues, which became central topics when the project was incorporated into the SED programme. Neither did it include representatives of the MoA's extension and planning departments. Despite the limited influence and action of the steering committee (just two meetings were documented), the central MoA stakeholders ensured the smooth operation of the project in cooperation with the team. NGO implementing partners were consulted when needed. The cooperation with the MoA evolved very well as a new partnership for German international cooperation. The MoA assigned a very competent focal point to support the project at all times and in all relevant regards. MoA representatives considered the project to be a good pilot example and they followed the

results with great interest (Partner int_17, 23). Only the executive staff of the MoA's planning department seemed not to be completely on board, having requested better integration into the project planning and implementation (Partner int_11).

All key activities were designed according to detailed preliminary assessments and analysis. The project's inception report (Hartveld, 2018) provided a good strategic planning basis. The project carried out operational planning and instructed the partners to do likewise at the activity level, while also considering results orientation through indicator-related reporting. The activities for output A started at an early stage with a process analysis at the MoA and a livelihood analysis at beneficiary level. Activities at field level started in early 2019 with implementing partners (output C) and encountered limited delays of two to three months because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related movement restrictions. The implementation of the water infrastructure projects was based on a long and careful selection process involving many stakeholders and more than 500 proposals (GIZ, 2020b), demonstrating the high interest. Ultimately, 13 projects were selected for implementation according to solid feasibility and success criteria. Although the efficiency of this extended process, culminating in the selection of a small number of projects, may be questionable, the process did not incur additional costs for the project (GDC int_12; WS_2) and proved to be a good training exercise for local stakeholders on participatory and transparent project planning and cooperation with other stakeholders (GDC int_12). Projects that were not selected at this time became part of the cluster plans (Partner int_17) and may be implemented with other funds or as part of the follow-on project. Implementation of the 13 selected projects only started in November 2020 and was completed at the end of the project (PHG, 2021), making monitoring and follow-up of results almost impossible in the scope of the present project.

The evaluation team assessed the quality of implementation of activities in general as very good across all outputs. At beneficiary level, the vast majority of interviewees confirmed high satisfaction with the activities and the quality of implementation (combined field mission results of FGD_1–12 and 14). The MoA and representatives of the steering committee also confirmed high satisfaction and considered the project to be a pilot model for good cooperation (Partner int_17, 20, 23, 29). The reports of implementing partners indicate careful planning of activities, including detailed operational plans and the adaptation to requirements as they arose during the preparation process and during implementation. The final reports include consistent reporting of project results (ESDC, 2020; PHG, 2021; RWDS, 2020; PARC, 2020; and UAWC, 2021).

The **capacity development matrix** of the project, as part of Capacity WORKS (the GIZ management model for sustainable development), had been prepared in May 2019 on the basis of a SWOT analysis for each output. It shows very relevant elements, which were partly put into practice. The capacity development matrix was not directly linked to the capacity-building plan drafted for the DoAs. See section 4.7 on sustainability for an assessment of its application and usefulness.

Effectiveness dimension 3 – Quality of implementation – scores **18 out of 20 points**.

Effectiveness dimension 4: Unintended results

The livelihoods concept, with its five different dimensions, left hardly any scope for unintended positive results. However, the contextual conditions created a need for unplanned action. In this regard, the contribution to the cluster plans, which had not existed in 2017 when the project was planned, was an unintended positive result. The contribution to these plans in Qalqilia and Tulkarm governorates, with a strong agricultural orientation, was highly appreciated (e.g. Partner int_20 and 29).

Photo 2: Agriculture project, Kufur Jammal Tulkarem (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).



Photo 3: Qalqilia agriculture land (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).

Unintended negative results were not proven. Although some capacity losses were observed when trained staff changed positions at the MoA and therefore could not work and apply the knowledge in the context of the project (e.g. training on the livelihood approach and climate-change adaptation), it cannot be ruled out that the acquired capacities might be used for related purposes in a larger sense, especially by experts who may work at policy and strategy level. Negative results on the conflict context were not observed.

Effectiveness dimension 4 – Unintended results – scores **18 out of 20 points**.

Methodology for assessing effectiveness

Table 12: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: effectiveness

Effectiveness: assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
Achievement of the (intended) objectives	<p>Assessment of the indicators at outcome level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I1: self-evaluation of livelihood improvements according to five dimensions (capitals). • I2: yield increase of 10% for supported farmers compared with reference areas. • I3: self-evaluation of economic prospects. <p>SMART criteria* have almost been met, except M= measurable and T= time-bound.</p> <p>The capacity development dimension at MoA level (output A) is not reflected in the outcome indicators.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: comparison of baseline and endline data (quantitative) and with field assessment, consideration of secondary data and plausibility analysis of the data.</p> <p>Empirical methods (4 steps):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison of baseline and endline regarding the outcome indicators (quantitative surveys by external consultant). • Retrospective qualitative comparison by target group (women, farmers, herders, etc.) through focus groups and interviews. • Collecting secondary data on the development of target groups' livelihoods (DoAs, local government, etc.). • Statistical data on yields and income (PCBS). <p>Triangulation of the four types of sources and their results for the different target groups.</p> <p>There was no alternative design to the comparison of the initial situation with the situation at the end of the project.</p>	<p>Quantitative data (baseline and endline) were available, high interference by the COVID-19 crisis, attribution of results difficult.</p> <p>The quality of quantitative data of the baseline and endline was reduced because of the need, during lockdown, to collect the data over the phone and in a culture that might favour positive reporting (validity).</p> <p>Comprehensive analysis (full data set) in the baseline report, presentation of selected results in the endline report.</p> <p>Qualitative data were partly incomplete (limited time).</p> <p>Evidence and validity of the baseline data were limited because of external influences in 2020 (see below).</p> <p>Statistics on agricultural yields and data on rainfall with which to compare agricultural yields between the years were not available.</p>
Contribution to achievement of objectives	<p>HA: output A, 5–6: transfer of knowledge on climate-change adaptation from trainers to advisors to farmers.</p> <p>HB: output B, 11–13: water infrastructure and the application of improved water management methods improve water efficiency and availability.</p> <p>HC: output C, 21 – 19 – Output C: VSLAs access finance and training, and improve their economic situation.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: Contribution analysis: the specific contribution of the project was measured in three very relevant areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of the MoA/DoAs to transfer knowledge to farmers. • Access to and availability of water as crucial factors for sustainable production and livelihoods. • Support for women and joint networking for rural finance and income. • (Assessment of external influence of COVID-19 on the data.) <p>Empirical methods:</p>	<p>See above.</p> <p>Impact of COVID-19 has been very complex and highly dynamic since March 2020; most sources refer to 2020 only and are not disaggregated according to population group (e.g. farmers).</p>

Effectiveness: assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
	HE: 22 – output D: Influence and mitigation of impact of COVID-19 on rural households.	interviews with DoAs, focus groups, economic and vulnerability profiles, analysis of other sources for external factors (rainfall, impact of COVID-19), analysis of monitoring results and partner reports, triangulation of data.	
Quality of implementation	<p>Assessment of processes, monitoring and steering quality; analysis of outputs.</p> <p>Analysis of success factors and challenges.</p> <p>HG: assessment of the quality of cooperation among actors at field level, in particular MoA/DoA and NGOs/Community based organisations in Area C; MoA as a new partner.</p> <p>The project indicators did not take cooperation quality aspects into account.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: Capacity WORKS and cooperation analysis.</p> <p>Empirical methods: SWOT analysis with different organisational units, DoAs and NGOs; interviews.</p> <p>Analysis of the project reports of implementing partners.</p>	<p>There was no document available that describes the cooperation qualities.</p> <p>The stakeholder map is rather descriptive (list of actors) but does not include an analysis of relations and cooperation.</p> <p>Interviews at partner level did not allow in-depth assessments (e.g. SWOT analysis as initially planned) because of the limited time available and the fact they were partly conducted with other representatives (deputies) not too much familiar with the project.</p>
Unintended results	<p>Analysis of the social and political contexts and their evolution during the project term, as well as of other cross-cutting issues, on the basis of project documents on safeguards and gender interviews with project and partner staff and other sources, e.g. think tanks.</p> <p>Assessment of the unplanned contribution to the cluster plans as a result of the policy changes in the Palestinian territories during the project term.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: observation of cross-cutting issues, in particular gender, climate change, conflict sensitivity, human rights and the socio-political context throughout the evaluation.</p> <p>Empirical methods: interviews with project stakeholders, SWOT analysis with implementing partners. Comparison of safeguards analysis with observations throughout the evaluation process.</p>	<p>No direct/specific data on unintended results were available.</p> <p>The safeguards and gender documents were of good quality.</p> <p>Data on societal context were too broad and not specific to the project.</p>
* SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound			

4.5 Impact

This section analyses and assesses the impact of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GLZ project evaluation matrix (see annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of impact

Table 13: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: impact

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Impact	Higher-level (intended) development changes/results	27 out of 30 points
	Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes	35 out of 40 points
	Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes	24 out of 30 points
Impact score and rating		Score: 86 out of 100 points Rating: Level 2: successful

The project is likely to achieve considerable impact of various dimensions: it contributed significantly to the SED programme's indicators in terms of income and employment, and to the relevant SDGs 1, 2, 5 and 6. Initial evidence on access to and sustainable management of natural resources, the empowerment of women and social cohesion was identified. These impacts refer to generally vulnerable groups in Area C of rural PT and, moreover, to particularly vulnerable households with a high share of women. However, the adverse conditions in the PT might not allow for any impact on the fragmentation of land or on the outward migration from rural areas to urban centres. At the time of the evaluation, there was no obvious indication of any unintended impacts.

In total, the impact of the project is rated Level 2: successful, with 86 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of impact

The analysis and assessment of impact were structured along three evaluation dimensions and considered the (foreseeable) achievement of overarching development results, the contribution of the project to these results, as well as indications of positive or negative unintended impacts. The assessment of higher-level development results (impact dimension 1) related to the impacts added to the results model during the inception phase (see Figure 1), the impacts that were initially formulated in the results model and project offer, those related to the SED programme offer, as well as the relevant SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 13. These impacts included social, economic and environmental dimensions. Because of the project's short timeline and the late implementation of some activities, which meant evidence of the results at outcome level was incomplete at the time of this evaluation, it was difficult to collect robust evidence on impact and assess whether overarching results had been achieved or were likely to be achieved. Consequently, the assessment of the impact hypotheses was at least partly based on a plausibility analysis that also took the assumptions regarding the effectiveness of the project into account. The available indications of evidence of the project's specific contribution to higher-level intended impacts are grouped according to the three selected hypotheses: the empowerment of women (hypothesis E), social cohesion at community level (hypothesis F) and among development partners (hypothesis G). The hypotheses E and F were assessed as extensions of the previous hypothesis at outcome level focusing on the same groups (VSLAs and irrigation farmers – C and B) and through a cooperation analysis with different stakeholders (MoA/DoAs, implementing partners and national think tanks). Finally, the

unintended development changes were analysed according to environmental, social, contextual and gender observations, mainly as plausible risks, without any actual evidence (at the time of the evaluation).

Impact dimension 1: Higher-level (intended) development changes/results

The project is likely to improve **access to and sustainable management of natural resources** and reduce desertification processes in the short and medium terms, as access to irrigated land has already increased (output B). Some areas that were formerly rainfed or irregularly irrigated can now be irrigated at the required level and be managed profitably and sustainably (see effectiveness dimension 2). The training provided through the project focused mainly on the management of the irrigation infrastructure and efficient water use, and less on sustainable land and crop management. Measures to control erosion that were initially planned were not included in the final design of the water projects, and training in sustainable agricultural practices adapted to climate change had, at the time of the evaluation, been provided for only a limited number of DoA staff and had not yet reached the farming community (see hypothesis A, effectiveness dimension 2). However, one farmer group reported that flooding might decrease thanks to the rehabilitation works (FGD_3). The support to livestock herders did not include the management of grazing lands. Therefore, impact in terms of access and sustainable management of grazing lands is not expected. In general, it should be mentioned that Israeli settlement activities and demolitions undermine increased access to sustainable management of natural resources in rural Area C of the Palestinian territories, and that the scope and freedom of action of the Palestinian authorities are very limited (UN-OCHA 2021; workshops and numerous interviews with project partners and beneficiaries at the local level). For this reason, the project avoided creating new infrastructure (systems) such as wells, which would have required lengthy authorisation processes beyond the time frame of the project. Instead, it concentrated on the rehabilitation of existing water infrastructure (Partner int_1).

The evaluation mission, in particular the focus group discussions held during the field visits with female VSLA members, revealed an already obvious impact in terms of the **empowerment of rural women and young people, especially young women** (hypothesis E, see also impact dimension 2). The empowerment of the VSLA members relates to their status in their households, where they contribute financial resources to resolve immediate needs and care for social purposes, such as household members living with disabilities (FGD_9), but also to the strengthening of their own networks/VSLA groups as effective self-help organisations (FGD_4 and 5), in that they have been able to improve their businesses by making their own investments and to contribute to their communities through establishing social funds. Such empowerment is crucial, as women are often unable to access other financial resources from credit institutions without guarantees.

In addition to the rural women, young start-up enterprises were empowered through management advisory services (Beneficiary int_5, 27, 28). For many start-up enterprises, the project provided technical and financial resources that allowed them to improve their productivity and thus increase revenue. For example, a young veterinarian was able to increase his profitability and provision of services as a result of the project support to buy a mobile ultrasound device for testing animals. A female entrepreneur will be able to expand her family-owned business once the high-value seedless grapes are ripe and able to be sold on the local and external markets. In both cases, the community benefits indirectly from these innovations.

Although there was no substantial evidence at the time of the evaluation, it is most likely that **social cohesion and participation** (in the beneficiary farmer groups) **are enhanced** (hypothesis F, see impact dimension 2). First, the competition for water has been reduced through the project and will probably contribute to avoiding conflicts among water users. The increased prospects for profitability might offer farmers new opportunities for joint income-generation and building up their structures as farmer groups or cooperatives. Although there is no indication of this at present, these prospects could create competition in terms of access to irrigation plots in farming communities. Social relations in the farming community should therefore be monitored in the future, as it is too early to assess potential negative effects relating to competition at present. VSLA groups have also increased their internal social cohesion as effective self-help organisations (see impact dimension 2). Social

cohesion at community level was also enhanced through the involvement of local stakeholders in planning and implementing the activities, where the NGOs proved to be good facilitators (see impact dimension 2). The employment schemes with grape and olive farmers (part of the COVID-19 response) seem to have created some durable relations between producers and workers (Beneficiary int_7).

The project under evaluation was incorporated into the SED programme during its implementation and contributed to three **economic indicators (SDG 1): income and employment opportunities, increased income and benefits to entrepreneurs from business and financial services**¹¹. Out of the 550 **income and employment opportunities created or secured** and reported as contributions of the project to the SED programme, 43% were for women (GIZ, 2021c). Overall, they benefited:

- 169 members of cooperatives whose business capacities were supported, helping them secure income and increase their monthly income, despite the economic crisis, by 37% to about EUR 23 (RWDS, 2020; GIZ, 2021b),
- 57 graduates, who were either employed for five months to support capacity-building in the cooperatives and for livestock herders (37) or received business development support and capital for start-ups (20) (PARC, 2020; RWDS, 2020; UAWC, 2021),
- 134 livestock herders, who received support regarding better management practices (UAWC, 2021), with the endline report indicating that 53% were able to increase their income from livestock through the project's intervention, and
- 200 unemployed workers, who received cash for short-term work measures (one month each) to enable them to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic-related economic crisis (AWRAD, 2021b).

The evaluation team considers 240 income opportunities to have been sustainably secured (impact) and thus to have contributed to the household incomes of 169 cooperative members (RWDS, 2020) and 71 livestock herders (AWRAD, 2021b). In addition, about 30 of the 57 graduates either found a job to suit their qualifications on the Palestinian employment market or sustained a start-up as a result of project assistance (RWDS, 2020; PARC 2020a; UAWC, 2021). The evaluation team also believes that numerous other jobs will be secured or created once the full potential of the irrigation schemes starts to be realised and as farm profitability increases owing to crops of higher market value and extended cropping periods. Farmer groups and cooperative members will benefit from increased income, but so will a high number of workers employed in the irrigation schemes (up to about 80 people were reported to be employed in one irrigation scheme (WeeCon, 2021)). This employment might not only increase in scale (number of employees) but might also cover a longer season, owing to an extended cropping period. Processing might add further employment opportunities in the long term.

The project reported that 1,520 farmers (including irrigation farmers and those who received greenhouse cover sheets) and livestock herders had **increased income** as a result of the project. The endline report states that only 24% of the farmers were able to increase their income, partially as a result of the distorted market conditions during the COVID-19 crisis (AWRAD, 2021b). However, 71% were able to maintain their income during this critical period and only very few (5%) reported income losses. Among the livestock herders, 53% reported increased income. Data on income were not available in relation to those who had received greenhouse cover sheets. Overall, precise figures on increased income as a sustainable impact were not available at the time of the evaluation. According to plausibility considerations, all groups might achieve more and sustainable income in the future, as long as production costs do not increase and markets develop favourably.

¹¹ The business and financial services for entrepreneurs as the third SED indicator offered by the project are considered as project support (outputs) and cannot be considered at impact level.

The anticipated impacts according to the results model relate to three long-term impacts:

- **Food security is strengthened (SDG 2):** there is a high probability that food security is sustainably strengthened through the various activities that show good results, although these are not yet fully obvious and have been distorted by the economic crisis. Many beneficiary households proved being more resilient in the context of the currently critical overall economic and food security situation.
- **Further fragmentation of agricultural lands (Area C) is prevented (long term):** the fragmentation of land is mainly influenced through political developments in the Palestinian territories and so cannot really be influenced by the project but only by an overall resolution of the conflict.
- **Rural-urban migration is slowed down (long term):** there are numerous factors that influence rural-urban migration, including a particularly precarious situation in Area C and a generally unstable outlook (PCBS, 2010, 2021). The project results might not have a big influence on migration trends, which have proved to be strongly contrarious in the past in the PT. However, in one irrigation area that was supported, some people who had left were reported to have returned to resume their agricultural activities now that irrigation has improved (FGD_2).

An analysis of impact in relation to **SDGs 1 (No poverty)** and **2 (Zero hunger)** is already included in the analysis of the abovementioned SED programme indicators. It is worth mentioning that the project worked in favour of particularly vulnerable groups in Area C of the PT whose livelihoods depend on agricultural activities. Many beneficiary households became involved in agricultural activities to generate additional income, as other income sources were not sufficient to sustain their livelihoods (livelihood analysis, GIZ, 2019e). The project contributed in various ways to enhancing their food security and their resilience to withstand external shocks, as already proven during the COVID-19 crisis, e.g. through the enduring positive results of the VSLA groups and cooperatives during this difficult period. **SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth)**, also targeted by the SED programme, was also contributed to in the form of improved productivity of the businesses supported (RWDS, 2020; Beneficiary int_4, 5, 6, 27, 30).

The project is assumed to have contributed significantly to **SDG 5 (Gender equality)** because of the excellent consideration of women in the target groups (862 women, 43% of the target group, mainly VSLA and cooperative members). The project therefore ensured the full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making on mainly economic activities in the project context. Impact hypothesis E provides detailed evidence at community level. It is worthwhile mentioning that most of the female beneficiaries were members of particularly vulnerable households, including those with disabled members or jobless men (FGD_4, 5, 6, 9). However, women do encounter many difficulties in the formal Palestinian job market for graduates in the agri-food sector, as mentioned by the beneficiaries.

The project also contributed to **SDG 6 (Clean water and sanitation)** by increasing water-use efficiency in the agricultural sector for irrigation purposes.

Finally, the project contributed to **SDG 13 (Climate action)**. The improved irrigation schemes reduce the impact of climate change on farms that had previously depended more on rainfall. Flooding appears to have been reduced as well, in some cases (FGD_3). In a few cases, the use of renewable energy (solar panels) was reported as a climate-friendly innovation of the project (FGD_1). The various training modules on climate-change adaptation in agriculture for the DoAs – a central part of their capacity development – had only shown limited impact at the time of the evaluation (see hypothesis A). Some trainees may have used their acquired knowledge to incorporate climate-change measures into local or strategic development planning. Others might include affordable adaptation techniques in their advisory work in the future, ultimately improving extension systems (follow-on project).

In general, the wide distribution of activities across the territory slowed down the creation of synergistic and more sustainable impacts.

Impact dimension 1 – Higher-level (intended) development changes/results – scores **27 out of 30 points**.

Impact dimension 2: Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes

The evaluation team selected three hypotheses at impact level for detailed analysis. Hypothesis E was selected as a continuation of hypothesis C on the economic benefits of the VSLAs and their impact on the empowerment of women as a social dimension focusing on gender. Similarly, hypothesis F was selected as a continuation of hypothesis B on water-efficient production structures and their impact on social cohesion at community level. Hypothesis G assesses the social cohesion among development actors in terms of good cooperation. All three impact hypotheses also represent important connecting and deescalating elements for peacebuilding (see Table 5).

Table 14: Selected results hypotheses for impact

Results hypothesis E (outcome – impact)	Rural women are empowered (26). The financial benefits of savings and loans groups with female members only (21) enable them either to invest in groups for further development of economic activities oriented towards income and employment (output C) or to serve their individual and family needs, i.e. economic autonomy for them (outcome). This autonomy will boost their self-confidence and therefore empower them as important development actors (impact).
Main assumption	The strengthened livelihoods of the agricultural population (outcome) benefit women who are highly involved as members of VSLA groups, which can enhance the financial dimension of the livelihood approach that is essential for lasting success and crucial for development, especially of women.
Risks	The agricultural advisors are predominantly men as described in the gender analysis (GIZ 2017d) and might focus their field activities on mixed groups or male farmers, rather than on women's groups. However, there might be more female advisors in the NGOs, and the RWDS, as a Palestinian women's NGO, is particularly involved in the agri-business of the women's cooperatives. Another risk is that the economic independence and empowerment of women will upgrade their position in the family, which might result in tensions with male heads of families, who, traditionally, have a protective and dominant position and tend to consider women as 'dependants'.
Alternative explanation	There is no obvious and plausible alternative explanation.
Confirmed/partly confirmed/ not confirmed	The hypothesis is confirmed.
Results hypothesis F (outcome – impact)	Social cohesion and participation are enhanced (27). The management of the water infrastructure according to the concepts is down to farmer organisations and water-user groups that are enabled to take their own management decisions (13 – output B), thus improving their participation and, in consequence, their social cohesion in their organisations/groups and in the community (impact, 27).
Main assumption	The sustainable water-resource management concepts (10) have been developed in a participatory way by the target groups themselves at the initial stage and further refined in cooperation with advisors at the local level. They include all water-resource users at the local level in an adequate manner.
Risks	Social envy might counteract the positive development of selected groups in the community.

	There is a general risk of destruction of the new development standards achieved by demolition activities and displacement in Area C. Economic constraints and drought conditions might dilute the success of the activities and, therefore, the degree of social cohesion.
Alternative explanation	Numerous other factors influence social cohesion and participation, which could not be exactly analysed during the evaluation. However, in numerous cases, the influence was obviously related to the project.
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	The hypothesis is partly confirmed at this stage.
Results hypothesis G (outcome – impact)	CSO and DoA/MoA cooperate well in strengthening the livelihoods of the agricultural population (8). The project initiates cooperation between Palestinian governmental organisations as direct partners and NGOs as ‘auxiliary partners’ in Area C when trained together by the project, particularly during the several modules of climate-change adaptation training (iPCA – GIZ, 2017c). This will enhance communication and exchange at all levels.
Main assumption	DoA advisors might be satisfied with the contribution of the NGOs’ advice, which will increase the overall success of the water projects (output B), the value chains and farm management (output C).
Risks	Envy on the part of DoAs towards NGOs, which often have more professional staff who are better equipped. This might limit the degree of improvement in the quality of the cooperation but is not a substantial risk.
Alternative explanation	There may be numerous factors that influence the quality of this cooperation, but describing them would be pure speculation.
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	The hypothesis is confirmed.

Analysis of hypothesis E: rural women are empowered

The hypothesis is confirmed. Although the women's investment in their own businesses through VSLA loans was limited, because they had to cover many household needs as well, their contribution was highly appreciated and acknowledged by their husbands (FGD_4, 9) and it ensured a certain level of resilience of the households (CSO WS_1). Many of the VSLA members have supported the economic activities of their male household members (e.g. FGD_9). The materials provided and their investments in their own businesses increased their self-esteem (FGD_5, 6, 7), their production capacities, their commitment (FGD_9) and the respect afforded them by their communities. Members who joined the groups consider themselves to have ‘strong personalities’ (FGD_9). The activity created numerous social dynamics at community level (CSO WS_19). VSLAs included social funds to support poor community members (e.g. FGD_4, 5), and VSLA members were also empowered through this benevolent activity. Empowerment was also a factor within their own groups and increased cohesion, sharing of ideas and buying products from each other (e.g. FGD_5).

The economic changes also induced social changes in the farming households: the endline report states that decision-making regarding household budgets became more participatory in the irrigation farming households, although no changes in this regard were observed among the livestock farming households (AWRAD, 2021b).

Analysis of hypothesis F: social cohesion and participation are enhanced

The hypothesis is partly confirmed at this stage. It may be fully confirmed in the future. Many of the farming households reported less competition for water with the new structures and, as a result, less stress and conflict. In addition, the time saved on irrigation enabled them to focus more on product quality (FGD_2, 11, 14). The increased expectations regarding productivity were demonstrated by investments in new greenhouses and new crops (FGD_14). At the time of the evaluation, it was not yet possible to assess the extent to which farmers were organising to manage and sustain the water infrastructure. Nevertheless, it is expected that social

cohesion will increase in the future, at least partly because of reduced competition for water and increased productivity, as well as the extra farming areas with reliable irrigation. Other support might be necessary to help the farmers organise themselves, become solid water-user groups or cooperatives and develop more profitable farming systems. DoA support in this regard was limited at the time of the evaluation, due to movement restrictions related to COVID-19.



Photo 4: Farkha women cooperative products (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021)

Analysis of hypothesis G: CSO and DoA/MoA cooperate well in strengthening the livelihoods of the agricultural population

The hypothesis is confirmed. All actors confirmed good relations with the other implementing partners. The cooperation exercise through the project activities strengthened the partnership between DoAs and NGOs (FGD_2, 10, 11) and is considered as a trust-building element. The drivers for building trust and peace drivers seem to have been successful, given that both actors (ministry and NGOs) have sufficient resources to become involved in the projects at the local level. A few sources mentioned the competitive relationship between the MoA and NGOs with regard to external resources and attributed this to significant underfunding of the ministry by the Palestinian government (e.g. CSO_int 8). The condition for the success of such approaches seems to be balanced support to both types of structure to enhance cohesion. The MoA observed that farmers complained about the lack of funds of the DoAs (Partner int_29), while NGOs received international funds. The quality of cooperation depends on the roles assigned by the project, which needed to consider the coordinating role of the government (Partner int_17; GDC WS_2). The project succeeded as a facilitator. The MoA has a memorandum of understanding with 13 NGOs and is aiming to establish a General Directorate for NGOs in the near future for better coordination (Partner int_23, 29).

Impact dimension 2 – Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes – scores **35 out of 40 points**.

Impact dimension 3: Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes

The results model and the selected hypotheses cover a wide range of impacts, including in relation to six SDGs and other elements (see Figure 1). Thus, it is difficult to identify genuinely 'unintended' positive impacts. Unintended impacts therefore refer more to potential risks in the future. A very good result in this regard was that demolition of infrastructure and assets provided by the project had not, at the time of the evaluation, happened (GDC WS_2). It cannot be excluded that the intensification of agricultural production as a result of improved water infrastructure and irrigation potential, and intensification of farming systems, might lead to an increase in the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides in those areas where organic farming is not practised (some of the cooperatives do practise organic farming). In addition, farmers might voluntarily expand the irrigated area and over-use available water resources to make their farms more profitable, but take risks for unsustainable management of natural resources. The local development plans do not include such risk assessments (WeeCon, 2021). However, some conclusions of the consultant (WeeCon, 2021) suggest that the technical design of the system follows (undocumented) risk analysis. It is not excluded that other, non-beneficiary farmers might be dissatisfied or jealous that they were not involved in the project, e.g. in the water infrastructure projects, which might challenge social cohesion at community level.

As these risks are theoretical and there is no indication that they were realised, the assessment is rather positive. An assessment of such risks should be undertaken in the follow-on project (see section 5.2).
Impact dimension 3 – Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes – scores **24 out of 30 points**.

Methodology for assessing impact

Table 15: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: impact

Impact: assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
Higher-level (intended) development changes/results	<p>Project description (initial results model):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security is strengthened / SDG 2. • Further fragmentation of agricultural lands (Area C) is prevented. • Rural-urban migration is slowed down / SDG 1. <p>Programme results: employment and income.</p> <p>Additional results at impact level (inception mission and offer):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to sustainable and climate-smart (SDG 13) management of natural resources is improved with better access to irrigation water (SDG 6) and reduced desertification processes. • Rural women and young people are empowered / SDG 5. • Social cohesion and participation are enhanced. <p>Contributions to SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 13 are expected.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: there was no basis of comparison available in the baseline that focuses on impact level (no indicators). Therefore, a retrospective perspective (as the baseline) and a prospective perspective (on expectations for the future) were applied. The assessment was also based on plausibility.</p> <p>Empirical methods: the evaluation design used qualitative and participatory methods to describe the changes at impact level.</p> <p>Interviews and focus groups included a description of the current situation and tracking of changes according to the impact dimensions (see left column).</p> <p>The endline report, implementing partners' and project reports served to filter indications on impact.</p>	<p>There were no reliable sources on the impact of the project; it is still too early to assess and provide evidence of impact.</p> <p>Data on SED indicators were available but did not always reflect the impact dimension (partly output or outcome level).</p> <p>The collected data include potential perspectives on impact rather than substantially evident contributions. Only qualitative data were collected.</p> <p>The contribution to sustainable impact will be limited because of the generally unsustainable livelihoods in the fragile political context (risk of loss of land and water access).</p> <p>Difficulty in assessing cooperation among actors in virtual settings (difficulties might not have clearly been addressed).</p>
Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes	<p>HE: Rural women are empowered.</p> <p>HF: Social cohesion and participation are enhanced.</p> <p>HG: CSO and DoAs/MoA cooperate well in strengthening the livelihoods of the agricultural population.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: the evaluation of the impact is based on the contribution analysis.</p> <p>Empirical methods: The evaluation includes participatory methods to assess impacts (focus groups, interviews, SWOT analysis)</p>	<p>The same limitations of data as described above</p> <p>The deeper insight into the hypotheses allowed a better distinction of expected impacts in relation to external factors (COVID-19). Good indications of developing impact were found in the focus group discussions, but still no hard evidence.</p>

Impact: assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes	Safeguards and gender analysis.	<p>Evaluation design: analysis of overall risks (social/environment/context); assessment of demolition and displacement in the target communities.</p> <p>Empirical methods: interviews with DoAs, project team, beneficiaries and implementing partners.</p> <p>Assessment of UN-OCHA reports on demolition and displacement.</p>	<p>The safeguards and gender analysis provided a good assessment grid on potential unintended results.</p> <p>The accuracy of the monthly UN-OCHA reports on demolitions and displacement is high and includes donor-funded aid infrastructures and stop-work orders related to international aid infrastructures. Summary reports were not found.</p>

4.6 Efficiency

This section analyses and assesses the efficiency of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GIZ project evaluation matrix (see annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of efficiency

Table 16: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: efficiency

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Efficiency	Production efficiency (Resources/Outputs)	66 out of 70 points
	Allocation efficiency (Resources/Outcome)	24 out of 30 points
Efficiency score and rating		<p>Score: 90 out of 100 points</p> <p>Rating: Level 2: successful</p>

The project's efficiency in terms of its cost-effectiveness in transforming inputs into outputs (production efficiency) was very good, since the project was managed economically with adequate budget attribution to the different outputs and instruments, involving limited administrative and management costs and efficient use of human resources at the technical level. The selection of instruments allowed for high-quality results. A bigger project budget would have allowed for greater cost-effectiveness by increasing the volume of diverse activities with only limited increase in management costs. The efficiency of transforming inputs into results (allocation efficiency) was good at the field level, as many indications at outcome and impact levels were already obvious at the time of the evaluation in the irrigation schemes and among the beneficiaries of VSLA, suggesting high potential to produce numerous economic benefits for a considerable number of rural farming households. The efficiency of capacity-building measures at partner level was less obvious, as the transfer of knowledge that could expand the benefits has been limited so far. There are no alternative options that would have provided better value for money other than increasing the budget for the most successful interventions and extending the project period to maximise benefits.

In total, the efficiency of the project is rated Level 2: successful, with 90 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of efficiency

The efficiency criterion measures the extent to which outputs and objectives of an intervention have been achieved cost-effectively, through whether the project is managed economically. Efficiency is therefore understood as transformation efficiency, with inputs transformed into results and effects. The relation of inputs to results and effects indicates how efficient the measure is. A distinction is made between two types of efficiency: production efficiency (efficiency dimension 1) and allocation efficiency (efficiency dimension 2). While the first evaluates the transformation of inputs to outputs, the second evaluates the transformation of inputs to results at outcome and impact level. Following GIZ guidelines on assessing efficiency, the evaluation team applied the follow-the-money approach by using the GIZ efficiency tool, in which all intervention expenses were identified and assigned to specific outputs.

Efficiency dimension 1: Production efficiency

The following analysis relates to the distribution of inputs (financial, human and material resources) as costs according to the outputs and interventions, with the objective of assessing whether the outputs have been economically achieved. It also assesses whether the outputs could have been increased through the alternative use of inputs and whether the outputs were produced on time.

The total budget for the project was EUR 4,800,000, including EUR 750,000 in additional funds for COVID-19 response measures and a partner contribution of EUR 50,000 (GIZ, 2020a). The partner seconded staff for the implementation of the project for six months at national level and six months at DoA level (six coordinators per DoA). MoA also provided local venues for workshops (WS_2). The accumulated production costs of the project up to September 2021 amounted to EUR 4,313,737 (calculated using the GIZ efficiency tool).

The funds were used at follows: 7% overarching costs for management and administration; 23% for output A; 31% for output B; 32% for output C; and 7% directly for COVID-19-related response measures. Since the COVID-19 response funds were also used for additional activities across all three outputs and therefore were accounted for in the respective outputs, the 7% referred to here was only for direct emergency measures (food baskets and hygiene kits – see section 4.4 on effectiveness). The share of costs between the outputs is plausible and appropriate. The costs of activities in outputs B and C included infrastructure and equipment at beneficiary level and extended to many territories compared with output A, where activities were mainly related to capacity development. The integration of emergency funds into the existing results framework ensured the development orientated and sustainable utilisation of these funds. The following analysis relates to the amount spent up to September 2021, including remaining commitments.

The project spent 46% of the production costs on human resources (staff, administrative services, external expert assignments and travel expenses), 11.4% on the procurement of materials and equipment, 37.6% on financing local subsidies and 1.5% on training (related to participants), with 3.5% made up of other direct costs. This breakdown of costs is also plausible and appropriate. Most of the project services were related to capacity development measures and required human resources. The grant agreements for the five NGOs, as the second-highest cost category, covered the capacity development conducted with the NGO implementing partners, including training, equipment and advisory services, but also construction costs for water infrastructure.

The project staff included one expert per output in addition to staff for management (1), administration (2) and monitoring (1). There were two international staff members (head of project and advisor for output A) and five national staff members for the other outputs, administration and monitoring. The staff allocation was appropriate for the needs. However, the high diversity of activities, including the COVID-19 emergency response, meant there was a persistently high workload. The selection of competent national organisations to implement field activities for outputs B and C was wise in this regard. Human resources were efficiently used,

and staff managed the implementation of their specific tasks. Some staff members were only recruited late in the process, e.g. the monitoring staff. Therefore, the baseline survey was conducted late. As some activities of output C in rural areas had started earlier, some of the results may already have been anticipated in the baseline. Other activities under output B started late after an intensive preparatory period, but the delay in conducting the baseline survey did not interfere with the project results.

The most significant procurements were those made as part of the COVID-19 response measures (food baskets and hygiene kits, as well as greenhouse covers), the provision of three vehicles for the DoAs and hardware for the MoA (computers and technical equipment). Local subsidies were used to implement output B with the PHG (EUR 663,000) and output C with five national NGOs (EUR 703,000).

The project used the funds in a cost-effective way with competent partners, who delivered results of high quality for moderate amounts of money. It might have been possible to increase the cost-efficiency by targeting more groups and beneficiaries (e.g. doubling the targeted five cooperatives to 10, with less than double the amount of management costs).

Most of the water projects involved the rehabilitation of old irrigation structures, which should actually have been covered by national funds for their regular maintenance and rehabilitation. The project filled some of the structural financial and technical gaps with its rehabilitation and upgrading of the systems. An alternative would have been to provide funds to the DoAs to look after the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure under their control. However, the selection of projects and quality of the work might not have been the same in that case, given the limitations observed in the managerial and logistical capacities of the DoAs.

The planning and preparation for output B took a long time and the infrastructure could only be finalised at the end of the project, making follow-up of their operation impossible. The long planning process was mainly the result of a highly participatory process involving many stakeholders in the rural areas under the responsibility of the DoAs which were not used to conduct such processes before.

Efficiency dimension 1 – Production efficiency – scores **66 out of 70 points**.

Efficiency dimension 2: Allocation efficiency

The following analysis relates to a comparison of the funds invested with the results achieved at the level of the project objective. Most indicators show over-achievements. Since the outputs were achieved in cost-efficient ways (see efficiency dimension 1), and the outcome indicators show good achievements and good trends for impact, the allocation efficiency is good. However, the reported 'over-achievements' of outcome indicators (AWRAD, 2021b and GIZ, 2021b) do not yet confirm sustainable development results. The following analysis relates to the different beneficiary groups, so far with limited interaction at outcome level (geographic distribution of activities).

At MoA level, the reported data do not yet prove that the ministry has improved its capacities to strengthen the livelihoods of the agricultural population in a comprehensive way. For instance, there has been no progress in terms of farmers' human capital, which would be necessary to ensure that farming practices might change to more environmentally sustainable and profitable farming practices and systems. Thus, it was concluded that better knowledge transfer would have been needed for sustainable development results. These could have been achieved by other modes of knowledge delivery and transfer, e.g. via farmer field schools (initially foreseen) or, eventually, more efficient train-the-trainer formats and enhanced remote digital services. Allocation efficiency in this area was therefore limited.

The water infrastructure will probably operate well, but complementary measures to improve farming practices and systems would have been necessary to substantially increase the profitability of farming activities. The investment cost of EUR 694 per irrigation farmer was appropriate and there is potential for swift return if

farming systems are optimised with the new irrigation and related crop diversification potentials in the future, and increased yields are fully obvious. As irrigation farmer groups often include educated members, some innovations might also be introduced without external project or DoA support. The prospects for allocation efficiency were therefore estimated as quite good.

The available data on income-generating activities related to output C demonstrated good development results. In particular, the VSLAs managed to save up to EUR 360,000 among very vulnerable groups, and the investment tripled within a short and difficult period. Reinvestment in productive activities was not able to be taken into account at the time of this evaluation. The investment costs were particularly justified for activities that benefited larger groups, especially the VSLAs. Here, the investment of EUR 192 per beneficiary was largely paid back in terms of the benefits that accrued. The cooperatives and livestock herders showed a good to medium level of allocation efficiency. The capacities as well as the income prospects of cooperatives and livestock herders have considerably improved. They were sustained during difficult periods in the cooperatives and can expand in the future as the business environment improves. For start-ups, the allocation efficiency was not yet able to be assessed at the time of the evaluation. Some of the start-ups have used seed funding to provide services of high benefit in the future for not only their own business but also rural communities, e.g. veterinary services (Beneficiary int_27). For those cases, the allocation efficiency was rated high. The allocation efficiency of the internship programmes for young graduates was difficult to assess, as many of the interns (almost 50%, especially the women interviewed) had not, at the time of the evaluation, been able to find employment and were lacking meaningful opportunities to apply their knowledge (FGD_8). (The economic problems of companies in recruiting new staff during the COVID-19 crisis was also a factor in this regard.) However, PARC was continuing to mentor the interns for no additional fees. The allocation efficiency for these activities was therefore rated as good.

Output C was managed by way of grant agreements valid for one year. A longer implementation period could have allowed for more intensive follow-up and more outcomes and determination of impact, respectively (CSO WS_1).

The project adhered to two different concepts, besides the capacity-building work with the MoA: a water infrastructure development concept and an income and employment generation concept in the agri-food sector under the umbrella of a livelihood approach. The activities were not interconnected but were distributed across the territory of the West Bank. It might have been more beneficial to concentrate the income and employment measures in the geographical context of the water projects, and to add organisational development for beneficiary groups to ensure more sustainable long-term benefits. However, more time would have been needed for such an integrated approach – with more tangible results for all livelihood dimensions among the same beneficiaries – to be successful.

Efficiency dimension 2 – Allocation efficiency – **scores 24 out of 30 points.**

Methodology for assessing efficiency

Table 17: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: efficiency

Efficiency: assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and limitations
Production efficiency (Input/Outputs)	<p>The analysis of this assessment dimension was based on the GIZ efficiency tool, in which costs are retrospectively assigned to outputs according to the 'follow-the-money' approach.</p> <p>Benchmarks were not available.</p> <p>The assessment also included the timely completion of activities/outputs according to plans and potential budget deviations from plans.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: as the use of the efficiency tool is mandatory, there was no alternative evaluation design. It represents the 'follow-the-money' approach.</p> <p>Empirical methods: analysis using the efficiency tool.</p> <p>Comparison between costs and benefits. Interviews and SWOT analysis of NGO-related activities, and interviews with other DC partners taking efficiency aspects into account, especially when conducting similar projects with alternative options.</p>	<p>Data were available to feed into the efficiency tool (Kostenträger-Obligo-Berichte – committed costs reports). Data in these reports were not sufficiently specific to compare different types of activities, e.g. output A and output C.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable benchmarks, e.g. for the rehabilitation of irrigation systems, were not available.
Allocation efficiency (Input/Outcome)	<p>The analysis of this dimension was based on a comparison of the overall results (effectiveness and efficiency) and the inputs mentioned in the efficiency tool, as well as other project information on inputs.</p> <p>The analysis of alternative strategies with either reduced costs or increased benefits was also part of this assessment.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: as the use of the efficiency tool is mandatory, there was no alternative evaluation design. It represents the 'value for money' approach (cost-effectiveness).</p> <p>Empirical methods: the efficiency tool is completed with estimates on the monetary benefits of the applied strategies and activities under outputs A, B and C.</p>	<p>(See description under production efficiency.)</p> <p>The accuracy of the data on economic benefits was partly that of educated guesses and projections.</p>

4.7 Sustainability

This section analyses and assesses the sustainability of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GLZ project evaluation matrix (see annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of sustainability

Table 18: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: sustainability

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Sustainability	Capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	14 out of 20 points
	Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities	24 out of 30 points
	Durability of results over time	32 out of 50 points
Sustainability score and rating		Score: 70 out of 100 points Rating: Level 3: moderately successful

The project increased the capacities of beneficiaries by carefully selecting both competent stakeholders for its implementation and beneficiaries, and by planning activities in accordance with the needs identified and based on available local resources and capacities as important factors of sustainable success. The close involvement of the MoA in general and of implementation partners from civil society and stakeholders at the local level in particular will help in terms of future follow-up with beneficiaries regarding project achievements. The COVID-19 crisis proved to be the first stress-test of sustainability, with encouraging indications even for vulnerable groups. The sustainability of results at DoA level will largely depend on the capacity of the DoAs to adapt advisory services and include remote services as well as advisory services for the transformation of farming systems in the irrigation schemes to enable them to generate greater value. The durability of results is questionable, however, when considering the overall political conditions in the Palestinian territories, where the Palestinian authorities have limited scope and freedom of action. Adverse developments, such as new Israeli settlements, continue to affect the sustainable use of natural resources because of the loss of fertile land and water resources. The deficit of public funding for the agricultural sector constitutes a risk for the ongoing maintenance of irrigation systems.

In total, the sustainability of the project is rated Level 3: moderately successful, with 70 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of sustainability

The assessment relates to the extent to which beneficiaries and stakeholders have the required capacities and willingness to sustain the results of the project and the resilience to overcome risks (dimension 1), and how the project contributed to strengthening the sustainable capacities of the stakeholders (dimension 2). Capacities refer to institutional, human and financial resources, as well as to ownership and willingness to sustain the flow of benefits over time after the end of the project. Finally, the evaluation team analysed the stability of the context with its attendant risks (dimension 3). These risks refer to social, economic, environmental and institutional sustainability and their interaction at beneficiary and stakeholder levels, as well as the resilience of beneficiaries and stakeholders to apply and adapt acquired capacities to the context and external influences. Since many of the activities were completed at the end of the project, the following assessment was based partly on proxy indicators (such as some output indicators and previously described evaluation results) and a plausibility analysis.

Sustainability dimension 1: Capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders

The project had already considered sustainability aspects during the preparation phase by selecting viable partners with proven experience in project management. In many cases, these partners have offices in the selected areas and knowledge of the social, economic and institutional context, thus ensuring good embedment of the activities (CSO WS_1). Their familiarity with local stakeholders meant they were quickly able to involve those stakeholders and start the activities on an already established basis of trust without having to go through a confidence-building process. In addition, the implementing NGOs ensured they would be available for follow-up after the end of the project. As an example, PARC operates business incubation hubs in the target areas that can still be accessed by the start-ups, even though the project has ended (CSO WS_1). Regarding the irrigation projects, which, it is assumed, are being followed up by the DoAs, future support might be less intensive because of the general lack of resources for field monitoring. In one case, the focus group discussions revealed dissatisfaction among the beneficiaries with DoA services (FGD_13). All partners showed high ownership and adoption of the content of the project.

The financial allocation set in the PA's national strategies and government budget for agriculture was very low compared with other sectors. At less than 2% of the national budget, it only covered the running costs of the MoA and its staff and was in no way sufficient for development projects or capacity-building initiatives. Particular challenges were observed with regard to maintenance costs for the irrigation systems that cannot be adequately afforded by the users themselves. Despite this shortcoming, the willingness of the MoA to sustain the project after its end (and, in the first instance, continue the cooperation with the follow-on project) was obvious and repeatedly and convincingly confirmed.

The project team, in cooperation with the implementing partners, applied robust criteria to the selection of the target groups, taking sustainability aspects into account. For instance, the process to select irrigation projects incorporated an ex-ante assessment of the economic potential for generating benefits from the irrigation schemes and of the organisational capacities of the farmer groups (interviews during the inception mission; Int_12; Partner int_17). Water costs – a critical factor for profitability – were also taken into account. The water-project selection team made sure that the selected project sites were located in less disputed areas, where demolition by the Israeli army was not expected or less likely (Inception_0; Int_12). However, a risk mapping of environmental aspects was not documented in the local water development plans. As the initially planned erosion-control measures (terraces, fences) mentioned in the former results models (GIZ, 2018b and c; GIZ, 2019d) did not become part of the final project design, the infrastructure might suffer from silting up in the medium and long term. Many interventions under output C focused strongly on social criteria, e.g. incorporating vulnerable groups (families with female breadwinners, those with members living with disabilities), and on the suitability of the enterprises to benefit from the support, e.g. the size of the livestock farms and their preparedness to implement the planned practices. The cooperatives and start-ups were also selected according to their business potential and other factors relating to economic benefits, such as available assets, capacities, available markets and production and management capacities of the groups. The local selection processes were conducted in a joint process involving DoAs, NGOs, GIZ and, partly, municipalities (RWDC, 2020; PARC, 2020; CSO WS_1). This procedure ensured, on the one hand, that beneficiary groups with potential were selected and, on the other hand, that the stakeholders at the local level might engage in follow-up, when needed. Finally, the NGOs conducted technical baseline assessments to ensure that the services identified will fit the requirements or that the service packages can be adapted accordingly (ESDC, 2020; PARC, 2020b; RWDC, 2020; PHG, 2021; UAWC, 2021; CSO WS_1).

The services included different types of support, such as technical and management training, business planning, entrepreneurship and marketing, as well as equipment (cooperatives and VSLAs) and, in some cases, financial support, e.g. seed funding for start-ups. The deployment of young graduates to the cooperatives for several months helped the beneficiaries apply and adapt the acquired knowledge to the specific conditions. The service packages were strongly oriented towards the locally available resources

(existing assets) and the capacities of beneficiaries (ESDC, 2020; PARC, 2020; RWDS, 2020; CSO WS_1). As a critical aspect, the water infrastructure projects were only implemented at the end of the project, so the structures could not yet be verified for a full season nor could yield be observed in practice. The training as part of these projects included operation and maintenance of irrigation systems (four hours per site) and methods for sustainable water use in agriculture (four hours per site – PHG, 2021). The evaluation team concluded that the short duration of the training might not have been sufficient to ensure sustainable management of the structures and application of the complexity of water efficiency methods. Furthermore, the project did not offer advisory services regarding the transformation of the production systems into more profitable farming enterprises, so the options to create economic benefits might not be fully explored and the full potential for economic sustainability might not be realised. However, the farmers have many years of experience and some group members have a higher educational background in agriculture (FGD_2, 10). As water costs and maintenance costs are crucial factors for the rate of return on the farms, the change to higher-value crops and more efficient production methods is an important factor of economic sustainability.

All projects proved to be sustainable during the difficult period of COVID-19 and produced numerous benefits. The good results achieved despite adverse conditions demonstrate the overall positive potential for sustainability of all interventions in general. Despite all the hardship, the crisis proved to be a good stress-test for sustainability. The VSLAs showed particular flexibility in orienting financial resources to the prevailing needs during the pandemic and avoided applying negative coping strategies (FGD_4, 5, 6, 7, 9). It is worthwhile mentioning that the unstable conditions in the Palestinian territories pose a serious threat to sustainability (see sustainability dimension 3).

Sustainability dimension 1 – Capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders – scores **14 out of 20 points**.

Sustainability dimension 2: Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities

Output A: the capacities of 30 employees of the MoA, in particular of the DoAs, have been substantially strengthened with regard to climate-change adaptation. The training was broadly appreciated. Although 46.7% of advisors confirmed having transferred knowledge to beneficiaries on at least at three occasions (**indicator A.2**; AWRAD, 2021b), these sessions were rather sporadic and stand-alone in nature and did not necessarily target the project beneficiaries, because the pandemic-related lockdown conditions hampered implementation of the usual field programme, even after the lockdown ended. Some of the methods can hardly be applied by farmers without financial or material support (FGD_13). Therefore, the farming community had not yet been able, at the time of the evaluation, to benefit from learning about improved practices. Consequently, the practices could not be applied to intensify the farming systems under improved irrigation conditions. However, it is assumed that the trainees would have applied their knowledge otherwise and will apply it in the future in their specific work context, even beyond the intended scope, e.g. in (strategic) planning processes. The capacity development matrix and the training plan developed for DoA structures under output A were highly ambitious. They featured a broad variety of individual and organisational capacities, including planning, management and monitoring, as well as digital knowledge, technical and administrative skills. The lack of digital preparedness of the advisory system seriously hampered communication between the DoAs and the target groups. Training elements on social media development were not able to be put into practice on a larger scale, while WhatsApp was used for day-to-day communication (Partner int_20). The targeted changes in behaviour (data exchange and communication, internal as well as external) were unrealistic, as they required a substantial change of culture and attitudes at the ministry. Numerous institutional obstacles interfered with the application of acquired knowledge, above all the lack of resources, which prevented implementation of planned activities, the lack of logistics and resources for field work, and frequent shifting of (trained) staff to other areas and departments. However, the communication with NGOs was improved through the practical implementation mechanisms of the project (see the analysis of hypothesis G in section 4.5).

Output B: the four hours' training provided by PHG to increase knowledge of methods for sustainable water use were delivered between November 2020 and January 2021 for 239 beneficiaries, including 83 women (partly gender-disaggregated training format), comprising 25% of the beneficiaries of the improved water infrastructure (PHG, 2021). According to the endline survey (AWRAD, 2021d), 82.6% confirmed they were applying at least two of the promoted methods (**indicator B2**). Most of the 36 interviewees reported applying eight of the eleven practices transferred. Many of these practices relate to the management of the improved irrigation system and do not necessarily depend on individual decisions of the trainees. The questionnaire used during this survey (AWRAD 2021d) did not refer to crop management practices on the individual plots. The duration of the training is considered short, given the complexity of the systems, and might require follow-up, as the infrastructure was only completed at the end of the project. Decision-making on the introduction of higher-value crops and their specific and seasonal water requirements in the future would have been important to include. With reference to the capacity development strategy (GIZ, 2019b), the intended capacity to implement water-efficient irrigation techniques has been built in relation to the irrigation systems but not yet (at the time of the evaluation) for the farming practices. Work had begun on developing capacities to implement climate-smart agricultural practices but these will need to be transferred if they are to be applied (FGD_13). With regard to the NGOs, the capacities for transparent selection and cooperation mechanisms have been confirmed. The support to farmers via agricultural field schools and exchange has not materialised and would have been difficult under lockdown restrictions. Most farmer field schools usually focus on specific crops and less on cropping systems (GDC WS_2). Training and advisory services on organising as a group to manage water infrastructure successfully, understanding the advantages and transforming into water-user associations in the medium term were not planned but could have enhanced organisational sustainability, especially in the context of the new 2018 bylaw on water-user associations (GDC WS 2).

Output C: the vast majority of trainees, including members of VSLA groups and cooperatives, livestock herders, young graduates and entrepreneurs (start-ups), confirmed the usefulness of the training received. This appreciation of its usefulness included context-specific factors, e.g. useful for enhancing skills and their application, for motivation to start new businesses, to access finance and improve connections with other relevant actors. On average, 83.6% confirmed the usefulness (**indicator C1**; AWRAD, 2021b). In comparison with the capacity development matrix, the intended capacities have been enhanced, such as business development and marketing skills, as has organisational strength to apply for grants and funding, and, finally, the capacity to find solutions to problems through the generally increased skills. Exchange with other actors in the value chain and the creation of additional markets have been initiated but had not been consolidated at the time of the evaluation, so it will take time for full and coherent value links to be established (Beneficiary int_4, 5, 30; CSO WS_2).

As previously stated, the project beneficiaries are part of a vulnerable segment of Palestinian society, as they depend on economic activities in Area C, where governance conditions are generally unsustainable and sustainable management of natural resources is under threat. The groups succeeded in managing their activities well and sustainably, with benefits during the difficult days of COVID-19, even though many of the beneficiaries, such as the 520 members of the VSLAs, were part of vulnerable individual households or were livestock herders in a very precarious work context (FGD_4, 5, 6, 7, 9).

Sustainability dimension 2 – Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities – scores **24 out of 30 points**.

Sustainability dimension 3: Durability of results over time

The prevailing conditions and the Israeli settlement policies are hampering efforts towards good governance by the Palestinian authorities in Area C, which is under the control of Israel. All construction projects depend on authorisation from Israel, while according to various interviews held during the evaluation mission, the priorities of the Israeli government are to secure fertile land and water resources for settlements and apply violent action to protect the settlers' interests. The restrictions are particularly adverse for sustainable water management,

which requires overall and integrated planning. Durability is out of reach, even. These difficult conditions are not new, and the project planning had taken them into account. For instance, it avoided including new wells that would have entailed long authorisation processes and, instead, concentrated on rehabilitating and upgrading existing systems (Int_1, 29).

It is assumed that water withdrawals are sustainable, because the works related to the rehabilitation of existing structures, for which such studies would have been carried out many years ago. However, the groundwater table and precipitation patterns might have changed since the initial planning. The 13 farmer groups and cooperative development plans did not indicate the available water resources and respective limits, but some assumptions should have been made and documented by the water engineers regarding the irrigable area based on an estimation of the available water resources.

Not only the management of natural resources but also external trade policies are heavily influenced by the Israeli government and can change in an unpredictable way, as happened in 2020 with the export ban (GIZ, 2020b). Therefore, access to external inputs and equipment, and marketing of products outside the PT are not guaranteed. In particular, risks relate to the export of fruit and vegetables as perishable products. However, the production lines supported through the project do not depend too much on external markets, since products are mainly sold on local markets and, increasingly, in Palestinian cities.

Greenhouses are widely used in the irrigation schemes and recommended as a climate-smart practice (farming group and cooperative development concepts). They are, however, vulnerable to destruction by storms and hail. Unfortunately, this risk is increasing with climate change, so structures made from more solid plastic or other materials will be required.

Sustainability dimension 3 – Durability of results over time – scores **32 out of 50 points**.

Methodology for assessing sustainability

Table 19: Methodology for assessing OECD/DAC criterion: sustainability

Sustainability: assessment dimensions	Basis for assessment	Evaluation design and empirical methods	Data quality and Limitations
Capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	<p>The changes identified at the level of outcome and impact (higher level development results) constituted central elements of the sustainability analysis.</p> <p>The basis of the assessment included social, economic, environmental and institutional aspects, as well as their interaction.</p> <p>Regarding resilience, the capacities of specific target groups and stakeholders to apply and adapt acquired competences in their working context were assessed, in particular the interaction with external influences and the fragile socio-political and economic contexts.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: the analysis followed the analytical questions from the evaluation matrix, which are integrated into the overall evaluation design of the contribution analysis.</p> <p>Empirical methods: sustainability aspects were included in all methods applied during the evaluation, in particular the SWOT analysis and interviews with partners.</p>	<p>Documents that explicitly describe sustainability aspects were not (yet) available. The project proposal, as well as the gender analysis and safeguards, were considered as the 'baseline'. However, these documents did not fully serve the purpose, as they were not sufficiently specific in relation to the local conditions of the activities.</p> <p>Unforeseen external influences became central elements for sustainability. Therefore, data had to be collected during the mission and attribution to be verified to the extent possible (with inaccuracies).</p>
Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities	<p>The capacity development matrix served as the basis of the assessment of output A.</p> <p>Output indicators A2, B1, C1 and C2, focusing on capacities, were considered by the evaluation as auxiliary indicators at the 'adoption level' to describe the sustainability of the changes (see adoption risk in the project proposal, GIZ 2017a).</p> <p>COVID-19 was considered as a 'stress-test' for sustainability.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: the same evaluation design as described above applied here also.</p> <p>Empirical methods: capacity aspects focused on the SWOT analysis with implementing partners and on the focus groups at target group level.</p>	<p>Endline data on indicators A2, B1 and C1 were available and good quality, providing indications mainly on usefulness as a proxy for adoption.</p> <p>Documents that describe the changes at the capacity level and their sustainability, as well as an exit strategy, were not (yet) available.</p> <p>Participants in the training provided for the MoA (strategic management, livelihood analysis) were not available (except main actors).</p>
Durability of results over time	<p>The risk analysis of the proposals for the project under evaluation and the follow-on project, and safeguards (environment, iPCA, gender) served as bases for the analysis of the durability of results.</p> <p>The impacts of the COVID-19 crisis were also considered (hypothesis D).</p> <p>Hypothesis G on the cooperation among actors will serve as a basis to assess potential in the future.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: the same evaluation design as described above applied.</p> <p>Empirical methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the assumptions and risks in the proposals and the iPCA. • Detailed assessment of 'threats' in the SWOT analysis with implementing partners and of specific questions in the FGDs supported the evaluation of durability of results over time. 	<p>Documents describing the risks were available and of reasonable quality (but not sufficiently detailed).</p> <p>The uncertain evolution of the overall political context limited the validity of the analysis.</p> <p>The evaluation of the COVID-19 impact and support measures was difficult (evolution over time and interference with other external economic factors).</p>

4.8 Key results and overall rating

The overall rating of the project indicates a high level of success, with some of the parameters on which the project team had significant influence during implementation even rated as very successful.

The relevance of the project is high, as it was very well aligned with the partners' policies and the needs of target groups, and also proved to be highly adaptive to the changes that occurred in the context. The same is true for coherence, although the uniqueness of the project's livelihood approach and its multi-sectoral design limited its coherence with partner systems. Its excellent implementation quality contributed to its effectiveness, although the ambitious livelihood improvement targets could not be fully achieved within the short duration period, which was also affected by COVID-19 issues. Despite these challenges, the target groups were able to sustain their activities with good results. The achievements contributed to considerable social impacts, such as the empowerment of women and social cohesion. The inclusive and participatory mechanisms in the cooperation among actors helped promote a peaceful development. Although the design and implementation processes considered sustainability factors, the political context threatens the overall durability of the results in the Palestinian territories in the long term.

Photo 5: Water User Association in Ras Ateyyeh (Source/©: Dr Khaled Rajab 2021).



Table 20: Overall rating of OECD/DAC criteria and assessment dimensions

Evaluation criteria	Dimension	Max	Score	Total (max.100)	Rating
Relevance	Alignment with policies and priorities	30	27	90	Level 2: successful
	Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	30	27		
	Appropriateness of the design	20	17		
	Adaptability – response to change	20	19		
Coherence	Internal Coherence	50	45	89	Level 2: successful
	External Coherence	50	44		
Effectiveness	Achievement of the (intended) objectives	30	20	82	Level 2: successful
	Contribution to achievement of objectives	30	26		
	Quality of implementation	20	18		
	Unintended results	20	18		
Impact	Higher-level (intended) development changes/results	30	27	86	Level 2: successful
	Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes	40	35		
	Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes	30	24		
Efficiency	Production efficiency	70	66	90	Level 2: successful
	Allocation efficiency	30	24		
Sustainability	Capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	20	14	70	Level 3: moderately successful
	Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities	30	24		
	Durability of results over time	50	32		
Mean score and overall rating		100	85		Level 2: successful *

Table 21: Rating and score scales

100-point scale (score)	6-level scale (rating)
92–100	Level 1: highly successful
81–91	Level 2: successful
67–80	Level 3: moderately successful
50–66	Level 4: moderately unsuccessful
30–49	Level 5: unsuccessful
0–29	Level 6: highly unsuccessful
<p>Overall rating: The criteria of effectiveness, impact and sustainability are knock-out criteria: If one of the criteria is rated at level 4 or lower, the overall rating cannot go beyond level 4, although the mean score may be higher.</p>	

5 Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Key findings and factors of success/failure

The project under evaluation was implemented in a highly challenging political and pandemic context in which freedom of action was limited by the prevailing conditions in the Palestinian territories, which are not under control of the Palestinian Authority. While the political context was known and taken into consideration at the planning stage, the COVID-19 pandemic obviously was not, and the subsequent movement restrictions affected the project's implementation and advisory mechanisms, and caused particular economic distortions and hardship in 2020. The project managed both challenges well and produced numerous good and sustainable results, despite these adverse conditions. The following are worth highlighting in particular:

- The impressive results achieved in favour of vulnerable rural women with the VSLA approach, via which culturally adapted self-help mechanisms were very efficiently transformed into powerful saving and lending systems. In combination with limited grant support (for income-generating materials and equipment) this led to good income opportunities and excellent empowerment of women. The approach also constituted the best response to the pandemic crisis, as it was the first emergency aid at community level available through the project.
- The favourable conditions for achieving sustainable development results created by the rehabilitation of water infrastructure, which meant agriculture could be intensified for sustainable livelihoods once that their full potential can be valued. On this basis, advisory services for improved farm management systems, value chain development and links as well as organisational development of the farming groups and cooperatives can be highly beneficial.
- The facilitation of good relations among stakeholders cooperating in different roles in a highly sensitive context, by applying participatory cooperation mechanisms and thus contributing to social cohesion and a peaceful development.

The evaluation team identified the following success factors that contributed to the very good quality of project implementation and positive results:

- **Good and trustful relations created with the MoA:** the project built very good relations with the MoA, which fully supported the project, despite its complex and unique livelihood approach that combines a high number of diverse activities with a limited budget.
- **Well-selected local partner organisations** with competent staff and experience, as well as credibility in the intervention areas.
- **High relevance of the activities**, which corresponded to the needs of target groups, thus ensuring ownership among the beneficiaries.
- **Excellent design of the activities**, based on thorough needs assessments, available resources and skills, and a good selection of micro-projects for outputs B and C.
- **Good cooperation between the MoA and implementing partners**, which is crucial for success in Area C. Most of the partners were already active in the specific governorates and created specific technical committees with local stakeholders for planning and implementing activities.

Some major challenges to the success of the project were also identified:

- The **complex livelihood approach** was not fully adopted by all the partners involved, with the result that it was not directly fully incorporated into partners' strategies in its complexity and uniqueness. The partner focused on agricultural productivity and not necessarily on all five capital dimensions on the approach.
- The **distribution of project activities across the West Bank territory** meant synergies couldn't really be built up between activities and their results.
- A number of **external factors** compromised its sustainability, such as the overall conflict and the limited resources available to the MoA to fulfil its mandate and follow up the project. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed project implementation to a limited extent and probably reduced the level of results achieved, because of the high economic stress at household and business activity levels.

Findings regarding 2030 Agenda

Universality, shared responsibility and accountability

The intervention shows numerous promising results and is likely to contribute to: **SDG 1**, mainly with the creation of self-employment in income-generating activities and increased income and employment in the irrigation schemes; **SDG 2**, as an indirect result of the income and employment generated, which have diversified livelihoods and increased the resilience of beneficiaries to external shocks; **SDG 5**, with the obvious economic results for the high number of women in rural areas and their general empowerment; **SDG 8**, with more profitable activities at the individual level and in an anticipatory way with the cooperation links forged among value-chain stakeholders; and **SDG 13**, through the generally improved economic resilience at household level and in the irrigation schemes. Furthermore, the project improved the quantity and quality of water for agricultural use (**SDG 6**). The contribution to SDG 13 could have been better had adequate and specific advisory services been provided on the management of the farming systems beyond water efficiency. The project used existing networks and competent partners who have highly adopted the project strategy and are committed to following up the beneficiaries in the future. Although the holistic character of the livelihood approach is not fully embraced by all involved parties, it serves to establish good synergies with all relevant development policies and good complementarity with the interventions of other donors. Coherence with other policies is not entirely translated into practice, as the dialogue among donors is superficial and the cooperation opportunities are not being exploited, e.g. the capacity-building plan developed for the agricultural directorates. The uniqueness of the project succeeded in creating a great deal of attention but limited its incorporation into shared monitoring, learning and accountability systems.

Interplay of economic, environmental, and social development

The project strategy was holistic, since it was based on the livelihood approach, which considers the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of livelihoods simultaneously. All specific activities took the three dimensions into account. However, in terms of their practical application, the respective activities were scattered across the West Bank territory, which meant there was little or no interaction or synergies between the benefits created. Therefore, the project's potential to create impact has not been fully explored. Furthermore, the organisational development of beneficiary groups in the production segment, e.g. as water-user associations, or the upgrading of farmer groups into cooperatives were not taken into account.

Inclusiveness/leave no one behind

The project was highly inclusive at several levels: first, it concentrated on the rural areas of PT with a focus on the vulnerable and the disadvantaged groups in Area C and their respective livelihoods; second, it targeted small-scale farming households as vulnerable segments of the rural society, including a high proportion (47%) of women, as well as young people, with specific activities; third, it included individuals with specific vulnerabilities, such as households with members living with disabilities or with particular hardship (e.g. their homes had been demolished) in sensitive areas close to the Israeli border; and fourth, the immediate relief measures carried out with the additional funds during the COVID-19 crisis benefited vulnerable households within the communities. The international norms and standards on participation have also largely been considered via a demand-driven and participatory approach and the involvement of stakeholders.

Findings regarding the follow-on project

The follow-on project (PN: 2020.2276.2) has been well planned, as it is well integrated into the SED programme and takes into account those activities that proved very successful during the project under evaluation, e.g. improving the access of women to VSLAs as an additional output. The focus on the quality of the advisory services provided by the MoA and agricultural advisors (DoAs), including digital advice, as a central element of support will enhance the effectiveness, quality and sustainability of results. However, livelihood improvement as a holistic approach is no longer obvious in the strategy of the follow-on project, which has a strong economic orientation, with outcome indicators that reflect the targets of the SED programme. This may undermine the value added by the project's contribution in this regard. The budget of the follow-on project is the same as that of the project under evaluation (EUR 4 million). Therefore, the potential achievements and results relating to increased water availability and climate-change adaptation might be limited, despite their high overall importance for the agri-food sector.

5.2 Recommendations

The follow-on project Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas (PN: 2020.2276.2) started in June 2021 and has already taken into account many lessons learned from the project under evaluation. The following recommendations for the steering and implementation of the follow-on project are for GIZ (for its portfolio) and the MoA (for its policies and extension instruments).

Recommendations to the MoA and GIZ for the steering and implementation of the project

The steering committee of the project should be extended by two additional members to represent the value chain and employment sector in the agri-business systems and the transformation of the extension system. In addition to the steering committee, a regular exchange mechanism between the MoA and implementing partners from civil society should be established to discuss best practices, for mutual learning about extension systems and other relevant topics, and for devising practical recommendations for strengthening the advisory and support mechanisms.

A strategy for selecting target areas and where to concentrate activities should be developed to promote livelihood improvements in all dimensions. The focus areas can be either identified around the water projects or close to business development opportunities and should offer conditions for creating good value chain development links and structures for business development, as well as interested and active target groups. Water projects could also be focused in selected areas with value chain development potentials.

Links between the livelihoods programming and the private sector/entrepreneurship should be intensively explored. The excellent experience with the VSLAs should be carefully studied and the lessons learned made available.

Recommendations to GIZ for the steering and development of its portfolio

The follow-on project should highlight the added value of the livelihoods approach within the SED programme for sustainable and inclusive results contributing to a peaceful development in the PT. The livelihoods approach and the cooperation mechanisms established among all stakeholders at the local level should be considered in this regard. The project should seek to obtain maximum benefit from the SED programme in terms of access to finance and vocational training for vulnerable rural target groups, with a particular focus on women and young people. GIZ should advocate for the livelihoods approach beyond its portfolio, e.g. in sectoral working groups and with partners. The multi-sectoral orientation of the project (water, employment, livelihoods) should be clarified within the German Development Cooperation portfolio to maximise coherence and efficiency. The water-sector irrigation projects/improvement of water efficiency and climate-change adaptation are still priority needs in rural PT and should continue as planned, but with a higher financial commitment. The targeting of water projects/infrastructure initiatives should focus on extending the benefit to larger communities and areas, either by increasing the number of small projects in selected areas or via strategically selected bigger projects requiring higher investment and technical capacity beyond the scope/capacity of the follow-on livelihood project. In the event that a political decision is made to continue strengthening the water sector, it could build the geographically concentrated water rehabilitation project areas into an integrated water management project, taking all environmental and climate-related aspects at this level into consideration.

Recommendations to the MoA for its policies, extension system and instruments

The instruments and mechanisms used by the MoA to foster agricultural development should be further developed beyond the overall strategy, as part of policy dialogue in the sectoral working group, to fit the needs of various production and livelihood systems across the West Bank, enhance sustainable results and reap more benefits from the livelihood approach. The MoA as an oversight body should concentrate on its policy development mandate and better develop, incorporate and guide the implementation of the livelihood approach, ultimately in relation to the cluster planning and the respective livelihoods and agro-ecological systems. The sectoral working group on agriculture and other sectoral working platforms should be enhanced to allow for coherent extension approaches and systems, and sharing capacity development plans and initiatives.

It was a good decision to focus the follow-on project on the extension services and to include digital extension services. The efficiency of the extension system should be analysed in following regards:

- direct training versus training of trainers,
- appropriate combination of face-to-face and digital/virtual advisory services, and
- existing applications that show good success or potential success among the farming communities.

Training and transfer of knowledge should be aligned with the institutional capacity plan of the MoA. Digital advisory and train-the-trainer approaches should be developed and incorporated into this plan as smart extension initiatives, according to the new deal with farmers. Cross-cutting issues, such as climate change,

environment and gender, should be further developed in the plans, and in the DoA capacity-building plan developed under the project. Sharing the updated DoA plan with other donors should be considered. The use of social media/virtual tools to provide advisory services and transfer knowledge, as well as tools to facilitate value links and marketing (effectiveness, impact, efficiency and sustainability) for all development partners, should be expanded. The inclusion of female beneficiaries in advisory systems should be enhanced.

DoAs should concentrate efforts in support of the achievements of the project under evaluation and follow up the irrigation schemes, assist with the transformation of farming systems – including climate-change adaptation practices and erosion-control measures – and support the value links that this will generate. They should also focus on the organisational development of beneficiaries into competitive cooperatives and/or water-user groups, according to the new 2018 bylaw on water-user associations.

List of references

GIZ standard project documents

- GIZ (2015) In-depth Environmental Assessment, April 2015
- GIZ (2017a): Project Proposal (Offer) with Results Matrix, September 2017 (English version)
- GIZ (2017b): Safeguards+Gender Checklist, March 2017
- GIZ (2017c): Integrated context and human rights analysis, August 2017
- GIZ (2017d): Gender Analysis – project specific update, July 2017
- GIZ (2018a): Operational Plan for 2018
- GIZ (2018b): Results Model, June 2018
- GIZ (2018c): Results Model, Update November 2018
- GIZ (2019a): Project Progress Report 1 for 7/2018 – 06/2019, July 2019
- GIZ (2019b): Capacity Development Strategy, May 2019
- GIZ (2019c): Operational Plan for 2019
- GIZ (2019d): Results Model, Update June 2019
- GIZ (2020a): Modification Offer with adapted Results Matrix, June 2020
- GIZ (2020b): Project Progress Report 2 for 7/2019 – 06/2020, July 2020
- GIZ (2020c): Operational Plan for 2020
- GIZ (2020d): Results Model, Update November 2020
- GIZ (2020e): SED Programme Progress Report, July 2020
- GIZ (2021a): Follow-on Project Proposal, Results Model and Results Matrix, February 2021
- GIZ (2021b): Project progress Report 3 for 07/2020 – 06/2021, July 2021
- GIZ (2021c): SED Programme Progress Report, July 2021

Other project documents

Agricultural Development Association (PARC) and Agribusiness Accelerator (PARC 2020a), Encouraging young entrepreneurs and developing their business models, Final Progress Report, 6.12.2020

Agricultural Development Association (PARC) and Agribusiness Accelerator (PARC 2020b), Encouraging young entrepreneurs and developing their business models, Presentation of activities for youth and supported ideas, 2020

Arab World for Research & Development (AWRAD, 2020): Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas Programme, Baseline Report, 27 June 2020, Final Revision: November 2020, Arab World for Research & Development, Ramallah, Palestine, 2020

Arab World for Research & Development (AWRAD, 2021a): Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas Programme, Training of MoA Agricultural Advisors/Extension Specialists – Survey, Output Indicator A.2 Analysis, February 2021, Arab World for Research & Development, Ramallah, Palestine, 2021

Arab World for Research & Development (AWRAD, 2021b): Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas Programme, Endline Results for Outcome Indicators 1-3, Endline Report, 14 June 2021, Arab World for Research & Development, Ramallah, Palestine, 2021

Arab World for Research & Development (AWRAD, 2021c): Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas Programme, Assessment of COVID-19-Related Activities – Assessment Report, 15 June 2021, Arab World for Research & Development, Ramallah, Palestine, 2021

Arab World for Research & Development (AWRAD, 2021d): Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas Programme, 2021, Results of Output Indicator C1, 17 June 2021, Arab World for Research & Development, Ramallah, Palestine, 2021

Arab World for Research & Development (AWRAD, 2021d): Strengthening Sustainable Livelihoods in Rural Areas Programme, 2021, Results of Output Indicator B1, 18 June 2021, Arab World for Research & Development, Ramallah, Palestine, 2021

Economic and Social Development Centre of Palestine (ESDC 2020), Enhancing women's accessibility to resources through community-based microfinance and supporting small led women agri-business, Final Progress Report, ESDC, 20.12.2020

Implementation Agreement with MoA, without date and author

GIZ (2019e): Socially Inclusive Promotion of Resilient Livelihoods in a Fragile Policy Environment in Palestine, Final Report, responsible Theo Rauch supported by Torben Leon Helbig, Berlin June 2019

Hartveld, Aart (2018); Inception Report of MoA-GIZ Livelihood Programme, August 2018

MoA (2019a): Training Needs Assessment, prepared by Mohammed AbuZayed, November 2019

(MoA 2019b) Process Analysis of data collection, planning, monitoring and evaluation processes etc. in the MoA, Author unknown

Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG, 2021), Improving Water Availability for Agriculture to Strengthen Sustainable livelihood in thirteen Communities in West Bank, Draft final progress report, PHG, June 15, 2021

Rural Women Development Society (RWDS, 2020), Enhancing the livelihoods and production capacities of rural women and increasing job opportunities for young women in various areas within the West Bank, Final Report, RWDS, May 2020

Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC 2021), Final Technical Report, UAWC, January 20th, 2021

Water, Environment and Energy Consulting (WeeCon) 2021, 13 Farmer groups and Cooperatives
Development Concepts for 13 water infrastructure projects, March 2021

Other GIZ documents

GIZ (2007): *Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen*, Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

GIZ (2014a): *Guidelines on Designing and Using a Results-based Monitoring System*, Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, unpublished document.

GIZ (2014b): *Indicators. A Working Aid*, Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, unpublished document.

GIZ (2015a): *The GIZ Results Model. A Working Aid*, Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, unpublished document.

GIZ (2015b): *Knowing What Works: Capturing Results Using Contribution Analyses*, unpublished report. Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

GIZ (2018d): *GIZ's Evaluation System – Central Project Evaluations for BMZ Business*, Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH [online]:
www.giz.de/en/downloads/GIZ_EVAL_EN_ZPE_BMZ%20business.pdf [14.08.2019].

GIZ (2018e): *Central Project Evaluations: Implementation Guidelines*, Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, unpublished document.

GIZ (2020e): *Report Writing Guidelines for GIZ Central Project Evaluations*, Eschborn/Bonn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, unpublished document.

Further references

Abuzerr, Samer, Zinszer, Kate, Shadeen, Amira, el Bilbeisi, Abdel Hamid, Daoud, Ayman Al Haj, Aldirawi, Ali and Alshaarawi, Salem (2021): Impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic on the Palestinian family: a cross-sectional study, SAGE open medicine, February 2021

Bond, B. Befani with M. O'Donnell (2016): *Choosing Appropriate Evaluation Methods Tool*, Bond [online]
<https://www.cecan.ac.uk/news/choosing-appropriate-evaluation-methods-a-tool-for-assessment-and-selection-version-two/> [last accessed 25 March 2021].

BMZ (2006): *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2006): Evaluierungskriterien für die deutsche bilaterale Entwicklungszusammenarbeit: Eine Orientierung für Evaluierungen des BMZ und der Durchführungsorganisationen*, gültig seit 28. Juli 2006, Neufassung gültig seit 3. September 2020, redaktionell aktualisiert am 15. August 2021, BMZ [online]
https://www.bmz.de/de/zentrales_downloadarchiv/erfolg_und_kontrolle/evaluierungskriterien.pdf [last accessed 20.10.2021].

- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2011): Konzept zur Entwicklung ländlicher Räume und ihr Beitrag zur Ernährungssicherung, Januar 2011
- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2013): Förderung einer nachhaltigen Landwirtschaft, Strategy Paper, 327, March 2013
- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2016): Country Strategy, August 2016
- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2017): *Adaptation to Climate Change, Promising Ways to tackle Climate Risks*, October 2017 (online)
[/www.bmz.de/en/publications/topics/climate/Materilie325_Adaptation-to-Climate-Change.pdf](http://www.bmz.de/en/publications/topics/climate/Materilie325_Adaptation-to-Climate-Change.pdf)
- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2019a): *Water – the source of development, position paper 465*, August 2019 (online)
www.bmz.de/en/publications/type_of_publication/strategies/Strategiepapier465_08_2019.pdf
- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2019b): *Road Map 2019, Development Policy Action Plan on Gender Equality 2016 – 2020*, May 2019 (online)
www.bmz.de/en/publications/type_of_publication/strategies/Strategiepapier520_02_2020.pdf (last access: 21 March 2021)
- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2020a): *Evaluierungskriterien für die deutsche bilaterale Entwicklungszusammenarbeit: BMZ Orientierungslinie zum Umgang mit den OECD-DAC-Evaluierungskriterien in Evaluierungen der deutschen bilateralen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit*, BMZ, [online]
https://www.bmz.de/de/zentrales_downloadarchiv/erfolg_und_kontrolle/210108_evaluierungskriterien.pdf [last accessed 25 March 2021].
- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2020b): *2030 Reform Strategy* (online) www.bmz.de/en/publications/topics/development_policy/Materilie520_reform_strategy.pdf
- Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BMZ) (2020c): *Stimulus for a green economy, Bonn/Berlin, February 2020* (online)
[/www.bmz.de/en/publications/topics/rural_development/Materialie475_stimulus-for-a-green-economy.pdf](http://www.bmz.de/en/publications/topics/rural_development/Materialie475_stimulus-for-a-green-economy.pdf) (last access 21 March 2021)
- Cali, Massimiliano, Nasser Eddin, Nur, and Niksic, Orhan (2014): *Area C and the future of the Palestinian economy*, A World Bank study Washington, D.C., World Bank Group.
- Economic & Social Development Center of Palestine (ESDC), *objectives* (online, latest accessed on 30.09.2021, <http://www.esdc-pal.org/index.php/2013-02-20-08-59-23/2013-02-20-09-01-36>)
- Environment Quality Authority (EQ) (2016c): *National Adaptation Plan (NAP) to climate change*, Ramallah, Palestine, August 2016
- European Union (EU 2020), *Results Oriented Framework (ROF) of the European Joint Strategy in support of Palestine 2017 – 2020*, Annual Report 2019 – 2020, 2020
- European Development Partners 2021, *Agri-Food System Transformation to achieve SDG2 in Palestine: Enabling policy and investment Environment, while strengthening private sector engagement in the agri-food*

system, Vision and programmatic priorities of the European Development Partners for 2022, Concept Note, 31 August 2021

Federal Government of Germany 2017: Guidelines on preventing crises, resolving conflicts, building peace, Berlin, September 2017

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO, 2018): Country Programming Framework for Palestine, 2018 – 2022, Jerusalem 2018

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO, 2020): National agrifood systems and COVID-19 in Palestine, Effects, policy responses, and long term implications, October 2020

GLOPP (2008): DFID's Sustainable Livelihoods Approach and its Framework, Globalisation and Livelihood Options of People Living in Poverty (GLOPP), 2008

International Labour Organization (ILO, 2020): Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the labour market in the Occupied Palestinian Territory – A forecasting model assessment, September 2020

Kollmair, M. and Gamper, St. (July 2002): The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach – Input Paper for the Integrated Training Course of NCCR North-South Aeschiried, Switzerland (9. – 20. September 2002), Development Study Group, University of Zurich (IP6), July 2002

Lax, Jutta, and Dr. Krug, Joachim (2013): Livelihood Assessment – A participatory tool for natural resource dependent communities, Thünen Working Paper 7, Thünen-Institut für Weltforstwirtschaft, Hamburg, Germany, July 2013

Marzin, J. Uwaidat, A., Sourrisseau, J.-M. (2019): Study on Small-scale Agriculture in the Palestinian Territories, Final Report (CIRAD – MARKAZ), submitted to FAO, June 2019

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) (2016): National Agricultural Sector Strategy 2017 – 2022, Final Version, November 2016 and Update September 2020

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) (2018): Agricultural Sector Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2018 – 2020 and Matrix, December 2018

Ministry of Agriculture (2019): National Investment Plan for food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture (NIP 2020 – 2022, draft version 4.0, July 2019

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2019): *Better Criteria for Better Evaluation*, OECD [online] <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf> [last accessed 20.10.2021]

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2020) The state of fragility in 2020, OECD [online] OECD [OECD The state of fragility in 2020](#) [last accessed 19.12.2021]

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2021) (no date): *Evaluation Criteria*, OECD [online] www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm [last accessed 25 March 2021]

Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC), *mission statement* (online, latest accessed on 30.09.2021) <http://www.pal-arc.org/articles/article/118>

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS, 2010): Migration's Survey in the Palestinian Territory, 2010 Press Release. Ramallah - Palestine

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics PCBS 2021:

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/417d607361ca439e975d9d314a2b9f57> (latest accessed on 29.10.2021)

Palestinian Water Authority (2013): National Water and Wastewater Strategy for Palestine, Final copy, July 2013

Palestinian Hydrology Group, *mission, vision & strategic directions*, (online, latest accessed on 30.10.2021) <https://www.phg.org/articles/view/4>

Prime Minister Office (PMO 2016): 2017 – 2022 National Policy Agenda, Final Draft, December 2016

Prime Minister Office (PMO 2017a): Security Sector Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022

Prime Minister Office (PMO 2017b): Nationally Determined Contributions / United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Submission to UNFCCC in August 2017

Prime Minister Office (PMO 2018a): Strategic Framework & Program of Executive Action for Area C – 2018 – 2019, January 2018

Prime Minister Office (PMO 2018b): Support of Resilience and Development, Strategic Framework & Program of Executive Action for Area C, 2018 – 2019, January 2018

Prime Minister Office (PMO 2020): Atlas of Sustainable Development 2020, Office of the Prime Minister of the State of Palestine & United Nations Country Team, August 2020

The Collaborative for Development Action Inc (CDA) (2004): *The Do No Harm Handbook. The Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Assistance on Conflict*, Cambridge, MA: CDA, pp. 11–12.

Union of Agricultural Work Committees, *Mission, Vision and objectives* (online, latest accessed on 30.10.2021) <https://www.uawc-pal.org/UAWCAbout.php>

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD, 2021): Integrated Simulation Framework – II Model for Palestinian Economic Policy

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) (2014): *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations*, New York: UNEG [online] www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616 [last accessed 25 March 2021].

[United Nations Office for](https://www.ochaopt.org) the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA) – Occupied Palestinian Territories (online, latest accessed on 26 November 2021) <https://www.ochaopt.org>

World Food Programme (2021): WFP Palestine Monthly Market Dashboard, August 2021, eISBN: 978-92-1-005707-3, WFP 2021

Annex: evaluation matrix

OECD-DAC Criterion Relevance - Is the intervention doing the right things? (max. 100 points) The 'relevance' criterion focuses on the intervention's design. It refers to the extent to which the objectives and design of a development intervention are consistent with the (global, country and institution-specific) requirements, needs, priorities and policies of beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups, organisations and development partners). It also identifies the ability of the intervention's design to adapt to a change in circumstances. "Relevance" is assessed in relation to 1) the time of the intervention design ¹ and 2) from today's perspective ² .								
Assessment dimensions	Filter - Project Type	Evaluation questions	Clarifications	Basis for Assessment / Evaluation indicators (e.g. module objective/programme indicators, selected hypotheses, or more generally a definition of the aspects to be used for evaluation)	Evaluation Design and empirical methods (Design: e.g. Contribution analysis, Follow-the-Money Approach) (Methods: e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, online survey, etc.)	Data sources (e.g. list of relevant documents, interviews with stakeholder category XY, specific data, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	Data Quality and limitations (Description of limitations, assessment of data quality: poor, moderate, good, strong)	Data Quality Assessment (weak, moderate, good, strong)
Alignment with policies and priorities	Standard	To what extent are the intervention's objectives aligned with the (global, regional and country specific) policies and priorities of the BMZ and of the beneficiaries and stakeholders and other (development) partners? To what extent do they take account of the relevant political and institutional environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation at BMZ country strategies and BMZ sector concepts • Strategic reference framework for the project (e.g. national strategies including the national implementation strategy for Agenda 2030, regional and international strategies, sectoral and cross-sectoral change strategies, in bilateral projects especially partner strategies, internal analytical framework e.g. safeguards and gender⁴ • Orientation of the project design at the (national) objectives of Agenda 2030 • Project contribution to certain Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) • Explanation of a hierarchy of the different policies, priorities (especially in case of contradictions) 	The alignment of the project will be assessed against following policies and priorities: BMZ: Country Strategy, Concepts for the development of rural areas and contribution to food security, promotion of sustainable agriculture, Water – the source of development, Climate change adaptation policies, roadmap to gender equality State of Palestine and MoA: 2017-22 National Policy Agenda, Palestinian National Agricultural Sector Strategy and revised Update, incl. indicators SDG2, National Investment Plan Agriculture (NIP) 2020-2022, Agricultural Sector Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan, National water and wastewater strategy	Evaluation design: Comparative analysis between policies, project design and its understanding There is no reasonable alternative to this design. Empirical methods: Assessment of content of policy and strategy documents of the SoP/ MoA and BMZ/Germany in relation to the project's objectives, results matrix and conceptual approach. Supporting interviews with the representatives of MoA, PWA and EQA as well as with BMZ Supporting interviews and SWOT with implementation partners and national thinktanks on the selected project strategy in relation to the conflict context	BMZ Country Strategy BMZ Concept for rural development and contribution to food security BMZ Förderung einer nachhaltigen Landwirtschaft, Strategiepapier BMZ Water - the source of development BMZ Adaptation to climate change BMZ Stimulus for a green economy BMZ Road Map 2019 Development Policy Action Plan on Gender Equality National Policy Agenda 2017 - 2022 Security Sector Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022 National Agricultural Sector Strategy and Update National Investment Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture National Adaptation Plan to climate change Agricultural Sector Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan National Water and Wastewater Strategy for Palestine GIZ/SED Global Indicator Framework (SDG)	good data quality, but BMZ strategies were partly drafted some years ago, the Country Strategy for Palestine is outdated	good

					Documentation of semi-structured interviews		
and Fragility	To what extent was the (conflict) context of the project adequately analysed and considered for the project concept?	• Key documents: (Integrated) Peace and Conflict Assessment (I)PCA, Safeguard Conflict and Context Sensitivity documents	Conflict context: Germany: Guidelines on Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace, 2017. SoP: Strategic Framework & programme of executive action for area C GIZ: Integrated context and human rights analysis (iPCA)	as above, in addition: Supporting interviews with NGO / national thinktanks on the selected project strategy in relation to the conflict context	BMZ: Development for Peace and Security, Strategy Paper 2013 (I4) Strategic Framework & Program of Executive Action for Area C (K8) Politökonomische Kurzanalyse GIGA (I2) Integrated context and human rights analysis (C2) Documentation of semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions	good data quality,	good
and SV/GV	To what extent does the project complement bilateral or regional projects? To what extent does it complement other global projects?	• Please use CPE factsheet on SV / GV / IZR	as above				
and SV/GV	To what extent is the project geared towards solving a global challenge that cannot only be effectively addressed bilaterally/ regionally?	• Please use CPE factsheet on SV / GV / IZR	as above				

Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	Standard	To what extent are the intervention's objectives aligned with the development needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders involved (individuals, groups and organisations)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also: consideration of stakeholders such as civil society and private sector in the design of the measure 	Target groups of the project: Planners and advisors of the MoA/DoA and in NGOs are stakeholders targeted in Output A with needs to develop their planning, advisory and service delivery capacity to the rural agricultural households. Rural agricultural households are considered as target groups (Output B and C) with needs to develop their livelihoods sustainably in a fragile context with limited access to resources	Evaluation design: Comparison of the project design and studies (documents) with the expressed needs of the target groups and MoA advisors. Analytical questions of the evaluation matrix. Empirical methods: Semi-structured interviews, focus groups and SWOT analysis, triangulation between diverse expressed needs in interviews conducted during the evaluation	GIZ project study on socially inclusive promotion of resilient livelihoods in a fragile policy environment in Palestine (F1) GIZ project training needs assessment (F2) diverse documents on the situation of agriculture and water access. Documentation of semi-structured interviews, SWOT analysis and focus group discussions	good data quality	good
	and Fragility	How were deescalating factors/ connectors ⁶ /peace and human rights needs as well as escalating factors/ dividers ⁶ in the project context identified and considered for the project concept (please list the factors)? ⁷	• e.g. see column I, II and IV of the (Integrated) Peace and Conflict Assessment	Conflict context: Connectors and dividers in the national / local context and recommendations of the iPCA	as above, in addition: Supporting interviews with NGO / national thinktanks on the selected project strategy in relation to the conflict context	Documents I4, K2, K8, I2 and C2 (see line 5) Documentation of interviews, SWOT analysis and Focus group discussions	good data quality of the analysis, medium data quality expected in the interviews and focus groups	good
	and Fragility	To what extent were potential (security) risks for (GIZ) staff, partners, target groups/final beneficiaries identified and considered?		as above	as above, in addition: Supporting interviews with NGO / national thinktanks on the selected project strategy in relation to the conflict context	RMO information Documentation of semi-structured interviews	medium data quality so far	moderate
	Standard	To what extent are the intervention's objectives geared to the needs and capacities of particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups and organisations)? With respect to groups, a differentiation can be made by age, income, gender, ethnicity, etc. ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaching particularly disadvantaged groups (in terms of Leave No One Behind, LNOB) Consideration of potential for human rights and gender aspects Consideration of identified risks 	as above	as above, in addition: partners' reports and interviews, focus group discussion	Gender Analysis (C4), C2 and F1 Documentation of semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions	medium data quality expected	moderate
	Standard	To what extent is the intervention's design appropriate and realistic (in terms of technical, organisational and financial aspects)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realistic project goal from today's perspective and in view of the available resources (time, finances, partner capacities) Consideration of potential changes in the framework conditions Dealing with the complexity of framework conditions and strategic reference frameworks and 	Project design and theory of change (ToC) Analysis of the offer, ToC (results model) and hypothesis compared to the projects framework and resources as well as to living conditions / livelihoods in the intervention areas and the capacity to induce changes through the project (feasibility of the project design)	Evaluation design: Comparison of the design according to the offer and results model, partner structure, project budget, intervention modalities and areas. Empirical methods: Small workshops on understanding of the project design with project team (inception phase) and with partners during evaluation	Offer with results matrix (A2, A3) C2, F1 In depth environmental assessment (C3) Gender analysis (C4) Documentation of interviews, SWOT analysis and focus group discussions	good data quality expected	good

		with possible overloading • Strategic focusing	Spatial arrangement of the activities in the West Bank Territory	(interviews and SWOT analysis with partners)			
Standard	To what extent is the intervention's design sufficiently precise and plausible (in terms of the verifiability und traceability of the system of objectives and the underlying assumptions)?	Assessment of the (current) results model and results hypotheses (Theory of Change, ToC) of the actual project logic: • Adequacy of activities, instruments and outputs in relation to the project objective to be achieved • Plausibility of the underlying results hypotheses • Clear definition and plausibility of the selected system boundary (sphere of responsibility) • Appropriate consideration of potential influences of other donors/ organisations outside the project's sphere of responsibility • completeness and plausibility of assumptions and risks for the project results • How well is co-financing (if any) integrated into the overall concept of the project and what added value could be generated for the ToC/project design?	as above	as above	Documents A2, A3, Modification offer with results matrix (A5, A6), Results model A7 Updated results model during the inception phase (see figure 1 of the inception report) Training needs assessment (F2) Process Analysis MoA (F3)	good data quality	good
Standard	To what extent is the intervention's design based on a holistic approach to sustainable development (interaction of the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainability)?	• Presentation of the interactions (synergies/trade-offs) of the intervention with other sectors in the project design - also with regard to the sustainability dimensions in terms of Agenda 2030 (economic, ecological and social development)	as above	as above	Documents A2, A3, A5, A6, A7 and theory of change Baseline report (E1), F1,	good data quality	good

Adaptability – response to change	Standard	To what extent has the intervention responded to changes in the environment over time (risks and potentials)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reaction to changes during project including change offers (e.g. local, national, international, sectoral changes, including state-of-the-art sectoral know-how) 	Change offer in June 2020 in response to the COVID-19 related crisis	Evaluation design: Comparison between needs assessment at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis (FAO, PCBS) and response measures planned by the project Empirical methods:	Studies on COVID-19 impact on rural communities (national documents and FAO assessment) Market price developments (PCBS) Documentation of semi-structured interviews, focus groups and PRA-economic profile Analysis of documents Triangulation with focus group results at the level of target groups and representatives in the intervention areas	medium data quality	moderate
--	----------	---	--	--	--	--	---------------------	----------

(1) The 'time of the intervention design' is the point in time when the offer/most recent modification offer was approved .
(2) In relation to the current standards, knowledge and framework conditions.
(3) The design of an intervention is usually assessed by evaluating its intervention logic. The intervention logic depicts the system of objectives used by an intervention. It maps out the systematic relationships between the individual results levels. At the time an intervention is designed, the intervention logic, in the form of a logical model, is described in the offer for the intervention both as a narrative and generally also on the basis of a results framework. The model is reviewed at the start of an evaluation and adjusted to reflect current knowledge. Comprehensive (re)constructed intervention logics are also known as "theories of change". In GIZ the 'project design' encompasses project objective (outcome) and the respective theory of change (ToC) with outputs, activities, TC-instruments and especially the results hypotheses as well as the implementation strategy (e.g. methodological approach, Capacity Development (CD) strategy). In GIZ the Theory of Change is described by the GIZ results model as graphic illustration and the narrative results hypotheses.
(4) In the GIZ Safeguards and Gender system risks are assessed before project start regarding following aspects: gender, conflict, human rights, environment and climate. For the topics gender and human rights not only risks but also potentials are assessed. Before introducing the new safeguard system in 2016 GIZ used to examine these aspects in separate checks.
(5) Deescalating factors/connectors/peace needs: e.g. peace-promoting actors and institutions, structural changes, peace-promoting norms and behavior. For more details on 'connectors' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 55/135 and the iPCA Writing Template.
(6) Escalating factors/ dividers: e.g. destructive institutions, structures, norms and behavior. For more details on 'dividers' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 135 and the iPCA Writing Template.
(7) All projects in fragile contexts, projects with FS1 or FS2 markers and all transitional development assistance projects should weaken escalating factors/dividers and have to mitigate risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence (and human rights). Projects with FS1 or FS2 markers should also consider how to strengthen deescalating factors/ connectors and how to address peace needs in its project objective/sub-objective.

OECD-DAC Criterion Coherence - How well does the intervention fit? (max. 100 points)

This criterion refers to the intervention's compatibility with other interventions in a country, sector or institution as well as with international norms and standards. **Internal coherence** addresses the synergies and division of tasks between the intervention and other interventions of German development cooperation and also the intervention's consistency with the relevant international norms and standards to which German development cooperation adheres. **External coherence** considers the intervention's complementarity, harmonisation and coordination with the interventions of other partners, donors and international organisations. The "coherence" criterion relates both to the intervention's design as well as to the results it achieves.

Assessment dimensions	Filter - Project Type	Evaluation questions	Clarifications	Basis for Assessment / Evaluation indicators (e.g. module objective/programme indicators, selected hypotheses, or more generally a definition of the aspects to be used for evaluation)	Evaluation Design and empirical methods (Design: e.g. Contribution analysis, Follow-the-Money Approach) (Methods: e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, online survey, etc.)	Data sources (e.g. list of relevant documents, interviews with stakeholder category XY, specific data, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	Data Quality and limitations (Description of limitations, assessment of data quality: poor, moderate, good, strong)	Data Quality Assessment (weak, moderate, good, strong)
Internal coherence	Standard	Within German development cooperation, to what extent is the intervention designed and implemented (in a sector, country, region or globally) in a complementary manner, based on the division of tasks?	• Also analysis of whether the project takes the necessary steps to fully realize synergies within German development cooperation	Coherence with the SED Programme, its objectives, indicators and synergies, esp. the regional set-up of the project in relation to employment Coherence with other sectors of German Development Cooperation (Water, Governance, democracy and civil society)	Evaluation design: The analysis follows the analytical questions from the evaluation matrix). Empirical methods: Interviews with GIZ-SED-Programme and GIZ country representatives Analysis of GIZ programme documents (results matrixes, offers and reports of the SED Programme)	SED programme documents, interviews with SED programme and GIZ office Palestine,	Relevant documents are available and reliable.	good
	Standard	To what extent are the instruments of German development cooperation (Technical and Financial Cooperation) meaningfully interlinked within the intervention (in terms of both design and implementation)? Are synergies leveraged?	• if applicable, also take into account projects of different German ressorts/ministries		as above	as above	as above	moderate
	Standard	To what extent is the intervention consistent with international and national norms and standards to which German development cooperation is committed (e.g. human rights)?		Coherence with international and national norms on gender, environment and human rights as well as SDGs,	as above	as above, in addition safeguards and gender analysis	as above	good
External coherence	Standard	To what extent does the intervention complement and support the partner's own efforts (principle of subsidiarity)?		Assessment of complementarity with partner's efforts (subsidiarity) and contribution to the indicators in the National Agricultural Strategy / NIP	Evaluation design: The analysis follows the analytical questions from the evaluation matrix. Empirical methods: Interviews with MoA, and Steering Committee members Analysis of MoA, and other donor's documents	policy and strategy documents of MoA and interviews with MoA, steering committee	Documents on the national strategies are available and of good quality.	good

	Standard	To what extent has the intervention's design and implementation been coordinated with other donors' activities?	• Also: To what extent could synergies be achieved through co-financing (where available) with other bilateral and multilateral donors and organizations and how did co-financing contribute to improved donor coordination?	Coherence with the ROF and coordination with other donors, in particular with FAO and EU and bilateral cooperation partners Synergies with other donors' interventions, esp. on value chain promotion	as above	donor common framework documents (ROF) interviews with Spanish cooperation, FAO and UN-OCHA	Documents from EU and FAO are available and of good quality.	good
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention's design been designed to use existing systems and structures (of partners/other donors/international organisations) for implementing its activities? To what extent are these systems and structures used?	• Also analysis of whether the project is taking the necessary steps to fully realize synergies with interventions of other donors at the impact level		as above	as above, in addition: national investment plan	Difficulty to find other bilateral partners with similar projects to compare interventions such as value chain promotion	good
	Standard	To what extent are common systems (together with partners/other donors/international organisations) used for M&E, learning and accountability?		Utilisation of partner system and structures	as above	ROF framework documents,	documents of sector working groups not available (e.g. minutes)	moderate

OECD-DAC Criterion Effectiveness - Is the intervention achieving its objectives? (max. 100 points)

'Effectiveness' refers to the extent to which the intervention has achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives (at outcome level), including any differential results across beneficiary and stakeholder groups. It examines the achievement of objectives in terms of the direct, short-term and medium term results.

Assessment dimensions	Filter - Project Type	Evaluation questions	Clarifications	Basis for Assessment / Evaluation indicators (e.g. module objective/programme indicators, selected hypotheses, or more generally a definition of the aspects to be used for evaluation)	Evaluation Design and empirical methods (Design: e.g. Contribution analysis, Follow-the-Money Approach) (Methods: e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, online survey, etc.)	Data sources (e.g. list of relevant documents, interviews with stakeholder category XY, specific data, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	Data Quality and limitations (Description of limitations, assessment of data quality: poor, moderate, good, strong)	Data Quality Assessment (weak, moderate, good, strong)
-----------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	----------------	--	--	---	--	---

Achievement of the (intended) objectives ¹	Standard	To what extent has the intervention achieved, or is the intervention expected to achieve, the (intended) objectives as originally planned (or as modified to cater for changes in the environment)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment based on the project objective indicators (agreed with BMZ)• Check whether more specific or additional indicators are needed to adequately reflect the project objective	Assessment of the indicators at outcome level: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I1: Self-evaluation of livelihood improvements according to 5 dimensions• I2: Yield increase of 10% for supported farmers compared to reference areas• I3: Self-evaluation of economic prospects SMART-Criteria* have almost been met, except M= measurable and T=time bound The capacity development dimension at MoA level (output A) is not reflected in the outcome indicators.	Evaluation design: Comparison of baseline and endline data (quantitative) and with field assessment, consideration of secondary data and plausibility analysis of the data Empirical methods (4 steps): <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Comparison of baseline and endline on the outcome indicators (quantitative surveys of external consultant)- Retrospective qualitative compare-son by target groups (women, farmers, herders...) through focus groups and interviews- Collecting secondary data on the development of target groups livelihoods (DoA, local governments...)- Statistical data on yields and income (PCBS) Triangulation of the four types of sources and their results for the different target groups There is no alternative design to the comparison of the initial situation with the present situation at the end of the project.	Baaseline and endline for outcome indicators and for output indicators (AVRAD 2020 and 2021a-d, project data and reports, focus groups and interviews, SWOT analysis, iPCA, gender analysis,	Quantitative data (baseline and endline) were available, high interference with COVID-19 crisis, attribution of results difficult The quality of quantitative data of the baseline and of the endline were reduced through data collection via phone under lockdown conditions in a culture that favours positive reporting (validity). Comprehensive analysis (full data set) in the baseline, presentation of selected results in the endline Qualitative data was partly incomplete (limited time) Evidence and validity of the baseline data was limited because of external influences in 2020 (see below). Statistics on agricultural yields and data on rainfall to compare agricultural yields between the years were not available.	good
	and Fragility	For projects with FS1 or FS2 markers: To what extent was the project able to strengthen deescalating factors/ connectors/ capacities of peace ^{2, 4}		impact hypotheses E, F, G	as above	as above	as above, critical analysis during virtual interviews was difficult	moderate

Contribution to achievement of objectives	Standard	To what extent have the intervention's outputs been delivered as originally planned (or as modified to cater for changes in the environment)?		HA: Output A: 5 – 6: Transfer of knowledge on climate change adaptation from trainers to advisors to farmers HB: Output B: 11 – 12 – 13: Water infrastructure and the application of improved water management methods improve water efficiency and availability. HC: Output C: 21 – 19 – C: VSLA access finance and training and improve their economic situation. HE: 22 – D: Influence and mitigation of impact of COVID-19 on rural households	Evaluation design: Contribution analysis: the specific contribution of the project was measured in 3 very relevant areas: - Knowledge transfer capacity of the MoA / DoA to farmers (also in replacement of missing outcome indicator) - Access and availability of water as crucial sustainable production and livelihood factor - Women support and joint networking for rural finance and income - (Assessment of external influence of COVID-19 on the data) Empirical methods: Interviews with DoA, focus groups, economic and vulnerability profiles, analysis of other sources for external factors (rainfall, impact of COVID-19), analysis of monitoring results and partner reports Triangulation of data	as above	See above Impact of COVID-19 is very complex, but rapidly changing since March 2020, most sources refer to 2020 only and are not disaggregated according to population groups (e.g. farmers)	good
	Standard	To what extent have the delivered outputs and increased capacities been used and equal access (e.g. in terms of physical, non-discriminatory and affordable access) guaranteed?		as above	as above	as above	as above	good
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention contributed to the achievement of objectives?	• Assessment based on the activities, TC-instruments and outputs of the project (contribution-analysis as focus of this assessment dimension and minimum standard, see annotatted reports) • What would have happened without the project? (usually qualitative reflection)	as above	as above	as above	as above	good
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention contributed to the achievement of objectives at the level of the intended beneficiaries?		as above	as above	as above	as above	good

	Standard	To what extent has the intervention contributed to the achievement of objectives at the level of particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders? (These may be broken down by age, income, gender, ethnicity, etc.)?		as above	as above	as above	as above	moderate
	Standard	<i>Which internal factors (technical, organisational or financial) were decisive for achievement/non-achievement of the intervention's intended objectives?</i>	• Internal factors = within the project's sphere of responsibility / system boundary. The project is implemented jointly by GIZ and the official partner(s).	as above	as above	as above	as above	good
	Standard	<i>Which external factors were decisive for achievement/non-achievement of the intervention's intended objectives (taking into account the anticipated risks)?</i>	• External factors = outside the project's sphere of responsibility / system boundary. The project is implemented jointly by GIZ and the official partner(s).	as above	as above	as above	as above	moderate
Quality of implementation	Standard	<p>What assessment can be made of the quality of steering and implementation of the intervention in terms of the achievement of objectives?</p> <p>What assessment can be made of the quality of steering and implementation of, and participation in, the intervention by the partner/executing agency?</p>	<p>Capacity Works considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Results-oriented monitoring (RoM / WoM) is established and used, e.g. for evidence-based decisions, risk management. Data are disaggregated by gender and marginalized groups. unintended positive and negative results are monitored. Conflict-sensitive monitoring and explicit risk-safety monitoring are particularly important for projects in fragile contexts. - A bindingly communicated strategy agreed with the partners is pursued - Involvement and cooperation of all relevant actors (including partners, civil society, private sector) - Steering: decisions influencing the projects's results are made in time and evidence-informed. 	<p>Assessment of processes, monitoring and steering quality, analysis of outputs</p> <p>Analysis of success factors and challenges</p> <p>HG: Assessment of the quality of cooperation among actors at field level, in particular MoA/DoA and NGOs / CBO in Area C.</p> <p>MoA as a new partner</p> <p>The project indicators do not take cooperation quality aspects into account.</p>	<p>Evaluation design: Capacity works and cooperation Analysis</p> <p>Empirical methods: SWOT analysis with different organisational units, DoA and NGOs</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Analysis of project reports of implementing partners</p> <p>Analysis of the application of selected capacity works tools</p> <p>Triangulation of information</p>	<p>as above</p> <p>in addition: capacity works related documentation</p>	<p>There is no document available that describes the cooperation qualities. The stakeholder map is rather descriptive (list of actors) but does not include an analysis of relations and cooperation. Interviews at partner level with limited time and partly with other representatives (not directly included in the project) did not allow in-depth assessments (e.g., SWOT analysis as initially planned).</p>	moderate

			<p>Decision processes are transparent.</p> <p>- Processes: Relevant change processes are anchored in the cooperation system; project-internal processes are established and regularly reflected and optimised.</p> <p>- Learning and innovation: There is a learning and innovation-friendly work culture that promotes the exchange of experience; learning processes are established; context-specific adjustments are possible</p>					
Unintended results	Standard	To what extent can unintended positive/negative direct results (social, economic, environmental and among vulnerable beneficiary groups) be observed/anticipated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The focus is on the outcome level, but for the analysis the unintended effects can also be included on the output level 	Analysis of the social and political context and its evolution during the project term as well as of other crosscutting issues on the basis of project documents on safeguards and gender interviews with project and partner staff as well as other sources, e.g., thinktanks Assessment of the unplanned contribution to the cluster plans as a result of the policy changes in Pales-tine during the project term.	Evaluation design: Observation of crosscutting issues, in particular gender, climate change, conflict sensitivity, human rights, and socio-political context throughout the evaluation Empirical methods: Interviews with project stakeholders SWOT-analysis with implementing partners Comparison of safeguards analysis with observations along the evaluation process	as above	There are no direct/specific data on unintended results available. The safeguards & gender documents are of good quality. Data on societal context are too broad and not specific to the project.	moderate
	and Fragility	To what extent was the project able to ensure that escalating factors/dividers ³ have not been strengthened (indirectly) by the project ⁴ ? Has the project unintentionally (indirectly) supported violent or 'destructive' actors (also in regard to human rights violations)?		as above	as above	as above	as above	moderate
	Standard	What potential benefits/risks arise from the positive/negative unintended results? What assessment can be made of them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> also check whether the risks were already mentioned and monitored in the design phase 	as above	as above	as above	as above	moderate

	and Fragility	To what extent have risks and unintended-negative results in the context of conflict, fragility and violence ⁵ been monitored (context and/or conflict-sensitive monitoring) in a systematic way?		as above	as above	as above	as above	moderate
	Standard	How has the intervention responded to the potential benefits/risks of the positive/negative unintended results?	• Check if positive results at the outcome level have been monitored and set in value	as above	as above	as above	as above	moderate

- (1) The first and second assessment dimensions are interrelated: If the project's contribution to achieving the objective is small (2nd assessment dimension), this must also be taken into account when evaluating the first assessment dimension.
- (2) Deescalating factors/ connectors/ peace needs: e.g. peace-promoting actors and institutions, structural changes, peace-promoting norms and behavior. For more details on 'connectors' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 55/135 and the iPCA Writing Template.
- (3) Escalating factors/ dividers: e.g. destructive institutions, structures, norms and behavior. For more details on 'dividers' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 135.
- (4) All projects in fragile contexts, projects with FS1 or FS2 markers and all transitional development assistance projects should weaken escalating factors/dividers and have to mitigate risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence (and human rights). Projects with FS1 or FS2 markers should also consider how to strengthen deescalating factors/ connectors and how to address peace needs in its project objective/sub-objective.
- (5) Risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence: e.g. contextual (e.g. political instability, violence, economic crises, migration/refugee flows, drought, etc.), institutional (e.g. weak partner capacity, fiduciary risks, corruption, staff turnover, investment risks) and personnel (murder, robbery, kidnapping, medical care, etc.). For more details see: GIZ (2014): 'Context- and conflict-sensitive results-based monitoring system (RBM). Supplement to: The 'Guidelines on designing and using a results-based monitoring system (RBM) system.', p.27 and 28.

OECD-DAC Criterion Impact (higher-level development results) - What difference does the intervention make? (max. 100 points)

Based on recognisable higher-level development changes (at impact level), the criterion of "higher level development results (at impact level)" relates to the extent to which the intervention has already produced significant positive or negative, intended or unintended results at the overarching level (contributions to the observed changes), or is expected to do so in the future. This includes any differential results across different stakeholders and beneficiaries. This criterion refers to the results of the development intervention.

Assessment dimensions	Filter - Project Type	Evaluation questions	Clarifications	Basis for Assessment / Evaluation indicators (e.g. module objective/programme indicators, selected hypotheses, or more generally a definition of the aspects to be used for evaluation)	Evaluation Design and empirical methods (Design: e.g. Contribution analysis, Follow-the-Money Approach) (Methods: e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, online survey, etc.)	Data sources (e.g. list of relevant documents, interviews with stakeholder category XY, specific data, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	Data Quality and limitations (Description of limitations, assessment of data quality: poor, moderate, good, strong)	Data Quality Assessment (weak, moderate, good, strong)
-----------------------	-----------------------	----------------------	----------------	--	--	---	--	---

Higher-level (intended) development changes ¹	Standard	To what extent can the higher-level development changes (social, economic and environmental dimensions and the interactions between them) to which the intervention will/is designed to contribute be identified/foreseen? (Specify time frame where possible.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider module proposal for suggested impact and program objective indicators (program proposal), if it is not an individual measure Potential basis for assessment: program objective indicators, identifiers, connection to the national strategy for implementing 2030 Agenda, connection to SDGs 	Project description according to results model <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food security is strengthened / SDG 2. Further fragmentation of agricultural lands (Area C) is prevented. Rural – urban migration is slowed down / SDG 1. Contribution to the SED programme results: indicators on employment and income Additional results at impact level (inception mission and offer): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to sustainable and climate-smart (SDG 13) management of natural resources is improved with better access to irrigation water (SDG 6) and reduced desertification processes. Rural women and youth are empowered / SDG 5. Social cohesion and participation are enhanced. Contributions to the SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 13 are expected.	Evaluation design: There was no basis of comparison available in the baseline that focusses on impact level (no indicators). Therefore, a retrospective perspective (as baseline) and a prospective perspective (on expectations towards the future) was applied. The assessment was also based on plausibility Empirical methods: 'The evaluation design used qualitative and participatory methods to describe the changes at impact level. 'Interviews and focus groups included a description of the current situation and tracking of changes according to the impact dimensions (see left column). 'The endline report, implementing partners' and project reports served to filter indications on impact.	Project planning data, analysis and reports, SED programme reports, implementation partner reports, focus groups, interviews at field level	There are no reliable sources on the impact of the project, it is even still too early to assess and provide evidence on impact. Data on SED indicators are available, but do not always reflect the impact dimension (partly output or outcome level). The collected data include potential perspectives on impact rather than substantially evident contributions. Only qualitative data were collected. The contribution to sustainable impact will be limited because of the generally unsustainable livelihoods in the fragile political context (risk of loss of land and water access). 'Difficulty to assess cooperation among actors in virtual settings (difficulties might not have clearly been addressed).	moderate
	IZR	To what extent have the IZR criteria contributed to strengthening overarching development results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please use CPE factsheet on SV / GV / IZR 				as above	
	Standard	To what extent can the higher-level development changes (social, economic, environmental dimensions and the interactions between them) be identified/foreseen at the level of the intended beneficiaries? (Specify time frame where possible.)		see above	see above	as above	as above	moderate
	Standard	To what extent can higher-level development changes to which the intervention will/is designed to contribute be identified/foreseen at the level of particularly disadvantaged/vulnerable groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders? (These may be broken down by age, income, gender, ethnicity, etc.) (Specify time frame where possible.)		see above	see above	as above	as above	good

Contribution to higher-level (intended) development changes	Standard	To what extent has the intervention actually contributed to the identified and/or foreseeable higher level development changes (social, economic, environmental dimensions and their interactions, taking into account political stability) that it was designed to bring about?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution analysis (evaluation design) as minimum standard and focus of this assessment dimension, further approaches are possible and welcome, see also annotated reports • Evaluation of the project's contribution to impacts based on an analysis of the results hypotheses from outcome to impact level 	HE: Rural women are empowered. 'HF: Social cohesion and participation is enhanced. 'HG: CSO and DoA/MoA cooperate well in strengthening the livelihoods of the agricultural population.	Evaluation design: The evaluation of the impact will be based on the contribution analysis. Empirical methods: The evaluation will include participatory methods to assess impacts (focus groups, interviews, SWOT analysis)	as above	The same limitations of data as described above 'The deeper insight into the hypotheses allowed a better distinction of expected impacts in relation to external factors (COVID-19). Good indication on developing impact were found in the focus group discussions, but still no evidence.	good
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention achieved its intended (original and, where applicable, revised) development objectives?	• This question can already be assessed in Dimension 1 Question 1, the contribution to impact is assessed in Dimension 2, Question 1	see above	as above	as above	as above	good
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention achieved its (original and, where applicable, revised) development objectives at the level of the intended beneficiaries?		see above	as above	as above	as above	good
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention contributed to higher-level development changes/changes in the lives of particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders that it was designed to bring about? (These may be broken down by age, income, gender, ethnicity, etc.).		see above	as above	as above	as above	good
	Standard	<i>Which internal factors (technical, organisational or financial) were decisive for achievement/non-achievement of the intervention's intended development objectives?</i>	• Internal factors = within the project's sphere of responsibility / system boundary. The project is implemented jointly by GLZ and the official partner(s)	see above	as above	as above	as above	good
	Standard	<i>Which external factors were decisive for the achievement/non-achievement of the intervention's intended development objectives?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External factors = outside the project's sphere of responsibility / system boundary. The project is implemented jointly by GLZ and the official partner(s). • Take into account the activities of other actors or other policies, framework conditions, other policy areas, strategies or interests 	see above	as above	as above	as above	moderate

			(German ministries, bilateral and multilateral development partners)					
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention achieved structural or institutional changes (e.g. for organisations, systems and regulations)?		see above	as above	as above	as above	moderate
	Standard	To what extent did the intervention serve as a model and/or achieve broad-based impact?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scaling-up is a consciously designed process to anchor changes in organisations and cooperation systems (e.g. concepts, approaches, methods) to generate broad impact • There is vertical scaling-up, horizontal scaling-up, functional scaling-up or a combination of these² • also analyse possible potential and reasons for not exploiting it 	see above	as above	as above	as above	good
	IZR	To what extent has the project made an innovative contribution (or a contribution to innovation)? Which innovations have been tested in different regional contexts? How are the innovations evaluated by which partners?	• Please use CPE factsheet on SV / GV / IZR	Contributions to the SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 and 13 are expected.				
	Standard	<i>How would the situation have developed without the intervention?</i>	• usually qualitative reflection, quantitative approaches welcome	see above	as above	as above	as above	weak
Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development changes	Standard	To what extent can higher-level, unintended development changes (social, economic and environmental dimensions and their interactions, taking into account political stability) be identified/foreseen? (Specify time frame where possible.)		Unexpected and undesired impacts might refer to the repressions of the Israeli Government, e.g., the demolition of the water infrastructure supported by the project. Safeguards and gender analysis	Evaluation design: Analysis of overall risks (social/environment/context) 'Assessment of demolition and displacement in the target communities Empirical methods: Interviews with DoA, project team, beneficiaries and implementing partners Assessment of UN-OCHA reports on demolition and displacement	Project planning data, analysis and reports, SED programme reports, implementation partner reports, focus groups, interviews at field level, UN-OCHA reports	The safeguards and gender analysis provided a good assessment grid on potential unintended results. The accuracy of the monthly UN-OCHA reports on demolitions and displacement is high and includes donor funded aid infrastructures and stop-work orders related to international aid infrastructures. Summary	good

						reports were not found. It would have been a high work load to analyse all the monthly reports over the project duration.	
and Fragility	To what extent did the project have (unintended) negative or escalating effects on the conflict, context of fragility or human rights (e.g. conflict dynamics, violence, legitimacy of state and non-state actors/institutions)? To what extent did the project have positive or deescalating effects on the conflict, context of fragility or human rights (e.g. conflict dynamics, violence, legitimacy of state and non-state actors/institutions)?		see above	as above		as above	moderate
Standard	To what extent has the intervention brought about foreseeable/identifiable unintended (positive and/or negative) higher-level development results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse whether the risks were already known in the design phase • Check how the assessment of risks in connection with (unintended) negative or (not formally agreed) positive results at the impact level in the monitoring system has been carried out (e.g. use of 'compass') • measures taken to avoid or counteract the risks/ negative effects/ trade-offs³ • Determine relevant framework conditions for negative results and the project's reaction to them • Examine to what extent potential (not formally agreed) positive results and synergies between the ecological, economic and social development dimensions have been monitored and exploited 	see above	as above		as above	weak

	Standard	To what extent has the intervention contributed to foreseeable/identifiable unintended (positive and/or negative) higher-level development results at the level of particularly disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of beneficiaries and stakeholders? (These may be broken down by age, income, gender, ethnicity, etc.)		see above	as above		as above	weak
--	----------	--	--	-----------	----------	--	----------	------

(1) The first and second assessment dimensions are interrelated: If the project's contribution to achieving the objective is small (2nd assessment dimension), this must also be taken into account when evaluating the first assessment dimension.

(2) See GLZ 2016 'Guidelines on scaling-up for programme managers (AV) and planning officers'

(3) Risks, negative effects and trade-offs are separate aspects that should be discussed individually at this point.

OECD-DAC Criterion Efficiency - How well are resources being used? (max. 100 points)

This criterion describes the extent to which the intervention delivers results in an economic and timely way (relationship between input and output, outcome and impact level). The evaluation dimension "production efficiency" refers to the appropriateness of the relationship between inputs and outputs. The evaluation dimension "allocation efficiency" refers to the appropriateness of the relationship between the inputs and the results achieved (project/development objective; outcome/impact level) by the intervention. The "efficiency" criterion relates both to the intervention's design and implementation and to the results it achieves.

Assessment dimensions	Filter - Project Type	Evaluation questions	Clarifications	Basis for Assessment / Evaluation indicators (e.g. module objective/programme indicators, selected hypotheses, or more generally a definition of the aspects to be used for evaluation)	Evaluation Design and empirical methods (Design: e.g. Contribution analysis, Follow-the-Money Approach) (Methods: e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, online survey, etc.)	Data sources (e.g. list of relevant documents, interviews with stakeholder category XY, specific data, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	Data Quality and limitations (Description of limitations, assessment of data quality: poor, moderate, good, strong)	Data Quality Assessment (weak, moderate, good, strong)
Production efficiency	Standard	How are the intervention's inputs (financial, human and material resources) distributed (e.g. by instruments, sectors, sub-interventions, taking into account the cost contributions of partners/executing agencies/other beneficiaries and stakeholders etc.)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the data: Costs per output, type of costs, agreed and provided partner contributions Description of the deviations between original planned costs and actual costs (with comprehensible justification, changes are certainly desirable for increased efficiency) 	The analysis of this assessment dimension is based on the efficiency tool in which costs are retrospectively assigned to outputs according to the "follow the money" approach. Benchmarks were not available. The assessment also includes the timely completion of activities/outputs according to plans and potential budget deviations from plans.	<p>Evaluation design: As the use of the efficiency tool is mandatory, there was no alternative evaluation design. It represents the "follow-the-money" approach.</p> <p>Empirical methods: Analysis of the efficiency tool Comparison between costs and benefits Interviews and SWOT analysis of NGO related activities as well as with other DC partners will take efficiency aspects into</p>	efficiency tool and additional information (some details related to output and COVID-19 response budget	Data to feed in the efficiency tool are available (Kostenträger-Obligo-Berichte). Data in these reports are not sufficiently specified to compare different types of activities, e.g., output A and output C. Suitable benchmarks, e.g., for the rehabilitation of irrigation systems were not available.	good

					account, especially when conducting similar projects with alternative options.			
	Standard	To what extent have the intervention's inputs (financial, human and material resources) been used economically in relation to the outputs delivered (products, investment goods and services)? If possible, refer to data from other evaluations in a region or sector, for instance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of 'Efficiency tool' including instructions and use of the follow-the-money approach as evaluation design (may be combined with other high-quality approaches) • Output level: Analysis of approaches and activities as well as TC instruments (personnel instruments, financing, materials and equipment)¹ compared to possible alternatives with a focus on the minimum principle (use of comparative data if available) • The project is oriented on internal or external benchmarks in order to achieve its effects economically • Regular reflection of the resources used by the project with focus on economically use of resources and cost risks • The overarching costs of the project are in an appropriate proportion to the costs of the outputs 	as above	as above	see above	No reference data and benchmarks available	moderate

		Standard	<p>To what extent could the intervention's outputs (products, investment goods and services) have been increased through the alternative use of inputs (financial, human and material resources)? If possible, refer to data from other evaluations of a region or sector, for instance. (If applicable, this question adds a complementary perspective*)</p> <p>* This case is always applicable in the technical cooperation (TC), please answer the question bindingly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of 'Efficiency tool' including instructions and use of the follow-the-money approach as evaluation design (may be combined with other high-quality approaches) • Output level: Analysis of approaches and activities as well as TC instruments (personnel instruments, financing, materials and equipment)¹ compared to possible alternatives with focus on output maximization (use of comparative data if available) • Analysis of alternative options for allocating resources and shifts between outputs for output maximisation • saved resources can and should be used to maximise outputs • Reflection of the resources during the design phase and regularly during the implementation of the project with focus on output maximisation (with comprehensible justification, changes are certainly desirable for increased efficiency) • 'maximising outputs' means with the same resources, under the same conditions and with the same or better quality 	as above	as above	see above	Interviews with implementing partners did not provide any useful information in this regard	weak
		Standard	Were the outputs (products, investment goods and services) produced on time and within the planned time frame?		as above	as above	see above		weak
	Allocation efficiency	Standard	<i>By what other means and at what cost could the results achieved (higher-level project objective) have been attained?</i>		The analysis of this dimension is based on the efficiency tool in which costs are retrospectively assigned to results as specified in the results matrix. The analysis of alternative strategies with either reduced costs or increased benefits is also part of this assessment.	Evaluation design: As the use of the efficiency tool is mandatory, there is no alternative evaluation design. It represents the "value for money" approach (cost-effectiveness). Empirical methods: The efficiency tool will be completed with estimates on	see above	(see description under production efficiency) Data on economic benefits partly had an accuracy of educated guesses and projections since the efficiency tool provided summary data	weak

				the monetary benefits of the applied strategies and activities in output A, B and C.			
Standard	To what extent – compared with alternative designs for the intervention – could the results have been attained more cost-effectively?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome level: Analysis of approaches and activities as well as TC-instruments in comparison to possible alternatives with focus on minimum principle (use of comparative data if available) • Regular reflection in the project of the input-outcome relation and alternatives as well as cost risks • The partner contributions are proportionate to the costs for the outcome of the project 	as above		see above	Qualitative estimations by the evaluation team in the absence of useful results from interviews	moderate
Standard	<p>To what extent – compared with alternative designs for the intervention – could the positive results have been increased using the existing resources? (If applicable, this question adds a complementary perspective*)</p> <p>* This case is always applicable in the technical cooperation (TC), please answer the question bindingly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome level: Analysis of applied approaches and activities as well as TC-instruments compared to possible alternatives with focus on maximizing the outcome (real comparison if available) • The project manages its resources between the outputs in such a way that the maximum effects in terms of the module objective are achieved • Regular reflection in the project of the input-outcome relation and alternatives • Reflection and realization of possibilities for scaling-up • If additional funds (e.g. co-financing) have been raised: Effects on input-outcome ratio (e.g. via economies of scale) and the ratio of administrative costs to total costs • Losses in efficiency due to insufficient coordination and complementarity within 	as above		see above	see above, educated guess	weak

		German DC are sufficiently avoided					
--	--	------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--

(1) see GIZ 2015: 'Integration of TC Instruments – Key Elements', based on BMZ 2014: Handbuch der bilateralen TZ Verfahrensinformation Nr. VI0362014 'Eckpunkte zur Instrumentenintegration'

OECD-DAC Criterion Sustainability - Will the benefits last? (max. 100 points)

The 'sustainability' criterion relates to continued long-term benefits (at the outcome and impact level) or the probability of continued long-term benefits – taking into account observed or foreseeable risks – over time, particularly after assistance has ended.

Assessment dimensions	Filter - Project Type	Evaluation questions	Clarifications	Basis for Assessment / Evaluation indicators (e.g. module objective/programme indicators, selected hypotheses, or more generally a definition of the aspects to be used for evaluation)	Evaluation Design and empirical methods (Design: e.g. Contribution analysis, Follow-the-Money Approach) (Methods: e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, online survey, etc.)	Data sources (e.g. list of relevant documents, interviews with stakeholder category XY, specific data, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	Data Quality and limitations (Description of limitations, assessment of data quality: poor, moderate, good, strong)	Data Quality Assessment (weak, moderate, good, strong)
Capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	Standard	To what extent do the beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups and organisations, partners and executing agencies) have the institutional, human and financial resources as well as the willingness (ownership) required to sustain the positive results of the intervention over time (once assistance has drawn to a close)?	• Transitional Development Assistance (TDA) projects primarily address final beneficiaries, whose resilience to crises and recurring shocks is to be strengthened. The focus for TDA projects is thus often on the resilience of final beneficiaries and/or at least the continuity of the measure (see explanation in dimension 3) (clarification in the inception phase of the evaluation).	The identified changes at the level of outcome and impact (higher level development results) constituted central elements of the sustainability analysis. The basis of the assessment included social, economic, environmental and institutional aspects as well as their interaction.	Evaluation design: The analysis follows the analytical questions from the evaluation matrix which will be integrated into the overall evaluation design of the contribution analysis. 'Empirical methods: Sustainability aspects were included into all methods applied during the evaluation, in particular the SWOT analysis and interviews with partners.	General project documents, interviews with relevant stakeholders	Documents which describe sustainability aspects were not (yet) available. The project proposal as well as the gender analysis and safeguards were considered as "baseline". However, these documents did not fully serve the purpose, as they are not sufficiently specific in relation to the local conditions of the activities. Unforeseen external influences became central elements for sustainability, though, data had to be collected during the mission	moderate

							and attribution to be verified to the extent possible (with inaccuracies)	
	Standard	To what extent do the beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups and organisations, partners and executing agencies) have the resilience to overcome future risks that could jeopardise the intervention's results?		Regarding the resilience, the capacities of specific target groups and stakeholders to apply and adapt acquired competencies in their working context was assessed, in particular the interaction with external influences and the fragile socio-political and economic context. The basis of the assessment included social, economic, environmental and institutional aspects as well as their interaction.	see above	see above	see above	
Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities	Standard	To what extent has the intervention contributed to the beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups and organisations, partners and executing agencies) having the institutional, human and financial resources as well as the willingness (ownership) required to sustain the intervention's positive results over time and to limit the impact of any negative results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the preparation and documentation of learning experiences • Description of the anchoring of contents, approaches, methods and concepts in the partner system • Reference to exit strategy of the project • If there is a follow-on project, check to what extent the results of the evaluated project are taken up; the anchoring of the effects in the partner's organisation should be pursued independently of a follow-on project, since sustainability should be achieved even without donor funds • Transitional Development Assistance (TDA) projects primarily address final beneficiaries, whose resilience to crises and recurring shocks is to be 	<p>The capacity development matrix served as basis of the assessment for output A.</p> <p>The evaluation of output indicators A2, B1, C1 and C2 focussing on capacities were considered as auxiliary indications at the "adoption level" to describe the sustainability of the changes (see adoption risk in the project proposal). COVID-19 was considered as a "stress-test" for sustainability</p>	<p>Evaluation design: The same evaluation design as described above applied here too.</p> <p>Empirical methods: Capacity aspects focussed on the SWOT analysis with implementing partners and o the focus groups at target group level</p>	see above, in addition: endlines on indicators by AWRAD, reports of implementing partners	<p>Endline on indicators A2, B1 and C1 available in good quality, provided indications, mainly on usefulness as proxy for adoption</p> <p>Documents that describe the changes at the capacity level and their sustainability as well as an exit strategy were not (yet) available. Participants of the trainings for MoA (strategic management, livelihood analysis) were not available (except main actors).</p>	good

			strengthened. The focus for TDA projects is thus often on the resilience of final beneficiaries and/or at least the continuity of the measure (see explanation in dimension 3) (clarification in the inception phase of the evaluation).					
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention contributed to strengthening the resilience of the beneficiaries and stakeholders (individuals, groups and organisations, partners and executing agencies)?		see above	see above	see above, in particular focus groups and MoA	see above	moderate
	Standard	To what extent has the intervention contributed to strengthening the resilience of particularly disadvantaged groups? (These may be broken down by age, income, gender, ethnicity, etc.)		see above	see above	see above, in particular focus groups with women and local council	The uncertain evolution of the overall political context (that is well described by international organisations and think tanks) will limit the validity of the analysis.	good
Durability of results over time	Standard	How stable is the context in which the intervention operates?		The risk analysis of the present and the follow-on project proposals and safeguards (environment, iPCA, gender) served as basis for the analysis of the durability of results. The impacts of the COVID-19 crisis were also considered (hypothesis D). Hypothesis G on the cooperation among actors will serve as a basis to assess follow-up potential in the future.	Evaluation design: The same evaluation design as described above applied. Empirical methods: Analysis of the assumptions and risks in the proposals and the iPCA. Detailed assessment of "threats" of the SWOT analysis with implementing partners and of specific questions in the FGD supported the evaluation of durability of results over time.	see above, in particular: iPCA, in addition: UN-OCHA-Reports	Documents describing the risks were available and of reasonable quality (but not sufficiently detailed). The uncertain evolution of the overall political context limited the validity of the analysis. The evaluation of the COVID-19 impact and support measures was difficult (evolution over time and interference with other economic external factors).	good
	Standard	To what extent is the durability of the intervention's positive results influenced by the context?	• Consideration of risks and potentials for the long-term stability of the results and description of the reaction of the project to these	see above	see above	see above	see above	good

		Standard	To what extent can the positive (and any negative) results of the intervention be deemed durable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of the extent to which continued use of the results by partners and beneficiaries can be foreseen • Reference to conditions and their influence on the durability, longevity and resilience of the effects (outcome and impact) • In the case of projects in the field of Transitional Development Assistance (TDA), at least the continuity of the measure must be examined: To what extent will services or results be continued in future projects (of GIZ or other donors/organizations) or their sustainability ensured? (Clarification in the inception phase) 	see above	see above	see above	see above	good



Photo credits and sources

© GIZ: Ranak Martin, Carlos Alba, Dirk Ostermeier, Ala Kheir

Disclaimer:

This publication contains links to external websites. Responsibility for the content of the listed external sites always lies with their respective publishers. When the links to these sites were first posted, GIZ checked the third-party content to establish whether it could give rise to civil or criminal liability. However, the constant review of the links to external sites cannot reasonably be expected without concrete indication of a violation of rights. If GIZ itself becomes aware or is notified by a third party that an external site it has provided a link to gives rise to civil or criminal liability, it will remove the link to this site immediately. GIZ expressly dissociates itself from such content.

Maps:

The maps printed here are intended only for information purposes and in no way constitute recognition under international law of boundaries and territories. GIZ accepts no responsibility for these maps being entirely up to date, correct or complete. All liability for any damage, direct or indirect, resulting from their use is excluded.



Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices
Bonn and Eschborn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36
53113 Bonn, Germany
T: +49 228 44 60-0
F: +49 228 44 60-17 66

Dag-Hammarskjöld-Weg 1–5
65760 Eschborn, Germany
T: +49 6196 79-0
F: +49 6196 79-11 15

E: info@giz.de
I: www.giz.de