

PEACEBUILDING, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXTS PROGRAMME



UNICEF State of Palestine

2014 Annual Report

Map of State of Palestine



Contents

Acronyms	1
Contribution Summary	2
Executive Summary	3
1. PBEA Programme Overview	4
2. Country Profile	5
2.1. Overview.....	5
2.2. Changes in the Country Context	6
3. Conflict Analysis	7
4. 2014 Results	9
4.1. Global Outcome 1 – Integrating peacebuilding and education	10
4.2. Global Outcome 2 – Building institutional capacities	11
4.3. Global Outcome 3 – Developing community and individual capacities	13
4.4. Global Outcome 4 – Increasing access to conflict-sensitive education.....	19
4.5. Global Outcome 5 – Generating evidence and knowledge.....	23
5. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	25
6. Partnerships	26
7. Programme Management	27
7.1. Staffing Changes and Variances in Programme Activities.....	27
7.2. Inter-sectoral Engagement.....	28
8. Challenges, Lessons Learned and Unintended Consequences	28
9. Outreach and Communications	29
10. Resources	29

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Acronyms

AAPC	Adolescents are Agents for Positive Change
BCC	Behavioural Change Communication
C4D	Communication for Development
ECD	early childhood development
ECRC	Early Childhood Resource Center
GBV	gender-based violence
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (survey)
L4D	Learning for Development
MA'AN	MA'AN Development Center
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MoRES	Monitoring Results for Equity System
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PaVision	Palestinian Vision Organization
PBEA	Peacebuilding Education and Advocacy programme
SitAn	Situation Analysis
SoP	State of Palestine
Tamer	Tamer Institute for Community Education
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNWRA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
YDD	Youth Development Department

Contribution Summary

Project Name	Peacebuilding, Education and Advocacy (PBEA) programme
Donor	Government of the Netherlands
Programme Country	0000 – 7050
Purpose of the Contribution	To strengthen the transformative potential of education in conflict-affected contexts to support cohesive societies and human security
Implementing Office	UNICEF State of Palestine
PBEA Programmable Contribution Amount (2014)	US\$1,558,100
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Executive Summary

For nearly 48 years, the civilian population in the State of Palestine (SoP) has suffered continued violence, displacement, dispossession and deprivation as a result of prolonged Israeli occupation and ongoing conflict. Despite efforts made by the international community to alleviate human suffering and meet the most urgent needs, the humanitarian situation for specific population groups in the SoP has continued to deteriorate in recent years, especially in the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and Area C of the West Bank, which are under both the military and administrative control of Israel.¹ In particular, Palestinian children have been heavily affected by the presence of Israeli occupation forces, settlers and checkpoints ever since the occupation began in 1967. The protracted occupation has posed daily challenges and threats to the fulfilment of children's rights, including their rights to survival, growth and development, as well as education.

The most recent example of the unrelenting predicament in the SoP is the Gaza War, which broke out on 7 July 2014. The scale of destruction, devastation and displacement was unprecedented in Gaza, since at least the start of the Israeli occupation. Children have been disproportionately represented among the numbers of civilian deaths. Of particular concern, however, is the lasting impact on children who have experienced losses and witnessed the violence. According to a situation report issued by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in July 2014, at least 116,000 children whose families had experienced death, injury or loss of homes were in need of specialized psychosocial support.

There has been a growing sense of powerlessness and hopelessness that has contributed to tension and insecurity, as well as to a rise in the number of intra-family conflicts, domestic violence, and school and community violence. With the passage of time, such violence and internal conflict have become accepted social norms within Palestinian society, resulting in a deterioration of social cohesion, which is the focus of the activities under the PBEA programme in the SoP since it began in 2013. To date, the results achieved through the implementation of activities under the PBEA programme are as follows:

Under **Country-level Outcome 1**, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and Situation Analysis (SitAn) of UNICEF SoP were developed and finalized, incorporating the view of conflict-sensitive analysis in 2013. Under **Country-level Outcome 2**, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) was successfully supported to nationally implement the Non-Violence in School policy, which was developed with support from UNICEF and launched in 2013. Nearly 700 school counsellors received training on peer mediation techniques, which were then passed on to targeted students in government schools. Correspondingly, more than 130 child-led initiatives were carried out to promote a zero tolerance of violence in school.

Through activities under **Country-level Outcome 3**, more than 2,000 adolescents have been equipped with the knowledge and skills to lead and participate in constructive community initiatives in marginalized areas such as East Jerusalem, Gaza and Hebron. Likewise, through activities under **Country-level Outcome 4**, more than 90 early learning teachers have increased skills in early childhood development (ECD) and supporting pro-social behaviour. Correspondingly, approximately 2,300 preschool-age children and about 1,300 first-grade children have increased access to pro-social and developmentally appropriate early learning opportunities.

¹ The 'Oslo II implementation agreements' of 1995 divided the West Bank – the largest part of Palestine – into three zones (Areas 'A', 'B' and 'C') with shared Palestinian-Israeli control in two of them, but with Israel remaining in total control of Area C. The latter comprises 60 per cent of the West Bank and is an arrangement still in place today. Some 350,000 Israeli settlers live in 135 settlements and 100 outposts in Area C, and 70 per cent of Area C territory has been allocated as land for their expansion. In all, less than 1 per cent of Area C is available for Palestinian Development (UNICEF State of Palestine, 'Situation Analysis of Palestinian Children in the State of Palestine 2013 (Draft)', December 2012).

An analysis of social cohesion in East Jerusalem was completed and finalized in 2013 under **Country-level Outcome 5**. To further strengthen the programme, a plan has been put in place to conduct a Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey in order to produce a national-level baseline for the future planning and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of UNICEF Learning for Development (L4D) projects, including the PBEA programme.

This annual report describes the results achieved under the PBEA programme in the SoP in 2014, along with the challenges encountered and lessons learned.

1. PBEA Programme Overview

The PBEA programme in the SoP began in 2013, after the original plan to start programme implementation was postponed due to escalating conflict in the Gaza Strip in December 2012. Within the UNICEF Country Programme in the SoP, PBEA is an integral part of the L4D section, which unifies Education and Adolescent programming under one umbrella. The programme's main objectives are to challenge and address the normalized culture of violence and internal conflict resulting from the protracted Israeli occupation since 1967 that has contributed to the deterioration of social cohesion within Palestinian society, and to preserve the right to education and its link to greater social cohesion.

The programme is informed by the UNDAF conflict analysis and the SitAn undertaken by UNICEF. A social cohesion and education analysis conducted for East Jerusalem in 2013 was also adopted to further inform programme responses. Based on the knowledge of the context derived from such analyses, UNICEF SoP focuses its PBEA activities on three strategic areas, including: (1) the constructive engagement of adolescents in society; (2) the Non-Violence in School policy; and (3) the promotion of pro-social behaviour² and environments in early learning and ECD interventions. By providing specific and practical alternatives to violence and feuding, these projects are expected to contribute to challenging the accepted social norms of violence within communities and societies where they are being implemented. The following theories of change serve as a foundation for the PBEA programme in the SoP:

Adolescents' constructive engagement in society:

If government and civil society provide civil and capacity development opportunities for adolescents, then adolescents will participate more effectively in their communities, thereby achieving a sustainable alternative to violence.

Non-violence in schools:

If schools provide a violence-free and child-friendly learning environment that reinforces and models positive and active learning, children will learn how to express themselves non-violently and violence will become less of a norm. The behaviours modelled and learned in school will in turn have some positive effect on students' behaviour outside of school.

Early learning:

If children learn non-violent methods of expressing themselves and interacting with others at an early age, they are more likely to apply these skills when they are older, especially if the skills are modelled by teachers and parents.

In 2014, the PBEA programme in SoP produced several significant results despite the delay in the implementation of some projects due to the most recent round of hostilities that broke out in the Gaza Strip in July 2014 and lasted for 51 days. For example, the MoEHE was

² Pro-social behaviour can be grouped into three distinct categories: sharing (dividing up or bestowing), helping (acts of kindness, rescuing, removing distress), and cooperation (working together to reach a goal) such as helping, sharing, donating, co-operating, and volunteering.

successfully supported to nationally implement the Non-Violence in School policy and nearly 700 school counsellors received training on peer mediation techniques, which were then passed on to targeted students in government schools. As a direct output of the training and skills transfer, more than 130 initiatives were carried out to promote a culture of non-violence in school led by students.

Capacity-building trainings were also carried out for more than 2,000 adolescents and youths with the aim of supporting them to become active agents of social transformation for advancing sustainable alternatives to social violence and discord. In turn, more than 50 youth-led community initiatives were delivered in marginalized areas of East Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank.

Moreover, in response to the social cohesion analysis findings – which identified the lack of ECD services in rural or vulnerable areas and the corresponding lack of public awareness on the value of ECD among the general public as a problem – more than 90 preschool and Grade 1 teachers were trained in ECD and pro-social behaviour support, and 24 preschool classes were opened in government schools in vulnerable areas of the occupied territory, thereby giving about 2,300 preschool-age children and some 1,300 Grade 1 children access to quality education and early learning environments that support pro-social behaviour. This was achieved using a range of quality developmentally appropriate ECD programmes that promote children’s care, protection and development, and social well-being, and which focus on activities that help children discover new knowledge and learn new skills as well as attitudes towards ‘others’. With an emphasis on the holistic development of the child, practitioners received training on ways to encourage children to use communication, social and problem-solving skills in different situations, and express values like tolerance and respect among themselves and towards others.

In response to the aforementioned Gaza crisis, the PBEA programme also contributed to emergency support in the area, with the aim to restore a sense of normalcy and hope and to strengthen children’s resilience, including in the provision of psychosocial support as well as recreational and stress relief activities to nearly 100,000 children and adolescents affected by the crisis.

The key themes presented under the PBEA programme – violence, social cohesion, pro-social behaviour, conflict sensitivity and constructive and civic engagement – are not only directly linked to the main areas of work within UNICEF SoP’s L4D programming, but also to priorities under Child Protection specifically in preventing and responding to violence, abuse, exploitation and the neglect of children.

2. Country Profile

2.1. Overview

Country Profile	
1. Full country name	State of Palestine
2. Area	6,020 km ² *
3. Population, male	2,242,939*
4. Population, female	2,177,610*
5. Life expectancy, male	71.5 years*
6. Life expectancy, female	74.4 years*
National Education Indicators	

7. Number per 100 population, mobile phones	74% of households*
8. Number per 100 population, Internet users	47% of households*
9. Pre-primary school participation, gross enrolment ratio (%), male	54.5%***
10. Pre-primary school participation, gross enrolment ratio (%), female	55.8%***
11. Primary school participation, gross enrolment ratio (%), male	94.2%***
12. Primary school participation, gross enrolment ratio (%), female	96.5%***
13. Primary school participation, net enrolment ratio (%), male	92.7%***
14. Primary school participation, net enrolment ratio (%), female	94.6%***
15. Primary school participation, net attendance ratio (%), male	93.4%*
16. Primary school participation, net attendance ratio (%), female	92.6%*
17. Secondary school participation, net enrolment ratio (%), male	59.3%***
18. Secondary school participation, net enrolment ratio (%), female	77.4%***
19. Secondary school participation, net attendance ratio (%), male	62.1%*
20. Secondary school participation, net attendance ratio (%), female	76.3%*
21. Number of out-of-school children and youth, male	72,473**
22. Number of out-of-school children and youth, female	58,386**
Conflict and disaster indicators (where applicable)	
23. Number of violent deaths	2,325****
24. Number of conflict incidents	4,664****
25. Number of natural disasters recorded (floods, earthquakes)	N/A
26. Number of internally displaced persons, male	N/A
27. Number of internally displaced persons, female	N/A
28. Number of refugees, male	1,037,070*****
29. Number of refugees, female	978,785*****

* Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics.

** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (UIS) 2013.

*** Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) 2013–2014.

**** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

***** United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA).

2.2. Changes in the Country Context

On 7 July 2014, the Israeli army launched a military operation in the Gaza Strip code-named 'Protective Edge', the third major military confrontation between Israel and Gaza in six years. The scale of destruction, devastation and displacement wreaked in the 51 days of conflict that ensued is unprecedented in Gaza, since at least the start of the Israeli occupation in 1967. The numbers of affected people and needs increased dramatically as the conflict continued, particularly after the start of the Israeli ground operation on 18 July 2014. This resulted in a very high level of civilian casualties, the widespread destruction of buildings and infrastructure and a steep rise in internally displaced persons.

Of particular concern, however, is that the violence has taken a shocking toll on children both physically and psychologically, with alarming consequences for future chances of peace, stability and understanding. According to a situation report on Gaza issued by OCHA on 21 July 2014, at least 116,000 children whose families had experienced death, injury or

loss of homes were in need of specialized psychosocial support.³ The report also revealed that the hostilities had impeded the movement of Child Protection staff and emergency psychosocial teams, which magnified the problem.

Moreover, children have been disproportionately represented among the numbers of civilian deaths. A rapid assessment carried out by OCHA in September 2014 indicated that 2,254 Palestinian were killed, of which 539 (24 per cent) were children; at least 10,224 were injured, including 3,374 (33 per cent) children; and 16,792 homes were destroyed, leaving 108,000 people homeless, including at least 54,000 (50 per cent) children.

With the announcement of an open-ended ceasefire on 26 August 2014, the majority of internally displaced persons returned home. At the end of November, however, there were still some 24,000 homeless internally displaced persons residing in 18 UNRWA schools until a transitional shelter solution can be identified. Thousands of explosive remnants of war remain in areas affected by the conflict and represent an increasing threat for civilians as well as for humanitarian workers. The recent crisis in Gaza, in fact, comes against a backdrop of heightened vulnerability and instability, as a result of the closure imposed on Gaza by Israeli security forces since 2007.

Due to this hostility, UNICEF SoP had to delay the implementation of several PBEA projects, as the agency's efforts were dedicated to implementing emergency relief in the area. In order to respond to the humanitarian needs of Gaza people, from July to October 2014, UNICEF SoP, together with partners, leveraged PBEA funds to provide stress-relief activities and psychological support to nearly 100,000 adolescent boys and girls to aid in their recovery and ability to cope with the emergency situation.

In 2015, UNICEF will further support national partners' efforts to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza by providing learning materials to students and teachers to strengthen their resilience and help them return to normalcy (Outcome 2); providing structure activities (including ECD kits) to preschool-age children affected by the crisis (Outcome 4); and also working with partners to build and expand on existing opportunities for youth volunteerism and to establish a national platform for adolescent civic engagement, which will provide a space for adolescents' positive participation in the reconstruction and improvement of their communities (Outcome 3).

3. Conflict Analysis

The context of the SoP is unique in that the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip continue to be under Israeli occupation, while the United Nations is committed to supporting a two-state solution to the long-standing conflict, which implies a reversal of the occupation and an end to the Gaza blockade imposed since 2007. The population in the SoP, especially children, have suffered continuing violence, displacement, dispossession and deprivation. In particular, the prolonged occupation has posed daily challenges and threats to the fulfilment of children's inherent rights, including their rights to survival, growth and development.

While the root cause of many of the manifestations of social fragmentation in the SoP can be traced back to the occupation, the protracted and complex conditions after nearly 48 years of Israeli occupation have also exposed dynamics within Palestinian society that have triggered fragmentation of the social fabric, be they issues concerning justice and security, politics and

³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, '2014 Humanitarian Needs Overview: Occupied Palestinian Territories', OCHA, November 2013, p. 11.

governance, economic development, social norms, and natural resources and the environment.

Movements of goods and people along with access to basic social services, such as education and health, within the occupied Palestinian territory is restricted by the Gaza blockade, and in the West Bank by a combination of physical obstacles such as checkpoints, roadblocks and gates, and bureaucratic constraints such as limited issuance of permits and access to restricted areas. As a result, there has been a growing sense of powerlessness and hopelessness that have contributed to tension and insecurity. Intra-family conflict, domestic violence, and school and community violence are also increasing. With the passage of time, such violence and internal conflict have become accepted social norms within Palestinian society, resulting in a deterioration of social cohesion that remains unaddressed while the occupation is presented as the primary cause of conflict. The main manifestations of the Israeli occupation across Palestine continued throughout the reporting period, and therefore the nature and scale of the needs of Palestinian children remained largely the same. Although it is beyond the scope of the PBEA programme to discuss peacebuilding within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as it is beyond the mandate of UNICEF to affect change in this situation, the programme remains committed to addressing the consequences of the conflict and preserving children's right to education and its link to greater social cohesion in the context of the intra-Palestinian conflict.

As such, the PBEA programmatic work in 2014 continued to be informed by the recognition that growing into adulthood within the context of a protracted occupation and its associated violence, along with rising poverty and division within their own communities, children and adolescents in Palestine represent an especially vulnerable group in need of care and opportunities to learn new skills and participate creatively in their communities and beyond.

The 2014 PBEA operational plan and programme implementation were further informed by the findings from the social cohesion and education analysis conducted for East Jerusalem in 2013, which revealed that education has the potential to be both a divider and a connector for peace within the SoP. Among the key issues noted as dividers pertaining to education include under-qualified or unqualified teachers with poor classroom management skills, overcrowded classrooms, poor infrastructure, distance and cost of transportation to and from schools, the use of corporal punishment to instil discipline, and the lack of safe space or play zones necessary for healthy mental and psychosocial development of children, particularly for girls. The analysis also found high dropout rates of students in East Jerusalem, reflecting the overall sense that education was irrelevant and did not contribute to social or economic advancement, nor did it serve much purpose in the real lives of Palestinians. This sense of hopelessness was reinforced by poor results in education attainment, and as Palestinian adolescents encountered discriminatory policies and barriers to employment.

Moreover, gender – specifically, gender inequality and gender-based violence (GBV) – has been recognized as one of the key factors contributing to the deterioration of the social fabric and community cohesion. The high rate of violence against women within households are manifestations of social norms and perceptions of gender roles that differentiate between the roles of men and women and see women as 'objects' owned by males in the family. Actions related to the policies and practices of the occupation, such as home demolitions and displacement, violence by settlers and Israeli security forces, loss of community and social networks, and increased poverty have all, to a greater or lesser extent, played a role in exacerbating GBV in all its forms. There is in fact strong research-based evidence that shows public and military violence and domestic violence against women and children are linked.⁴

⁴ For example, a study by UNIFEM in 2009 involving 1,100 women confirmed that there was an increase in the violence against the respondents in the aftermath of the war in Gaza from December 2008 to January 2009.

Girl children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the lack of opportunities to participate in activities outside their homes. Traditional family structures and gender roles, especially the dominance of the father or male family members, were seen as discouraging girls and women in the household from participating in organized activities and from making their voices heard on matters of direct concern to them. Mostly girl children do not feel encouraged to exercise their right to participate or to make their voices heard.

The same is also true in the context of education, where violence and social tension have different effects on girls' and boys' abilities to access education. Often, social pressures tend to drive adolescent girls throughout Palestine away from school. Girls are not always encouraged – and are often even discouraged – to take part in after-school activities because their mothers prefer them to stay at home to help with household chores. Early marriage is also relatively high, with about 1 in 10 Palestinian women between the ages of 15 and 19 years getting married in their teens. Some surveys suggest that the very difficult living conditions Palestinians face as a result of the occupation are leading communities to establish coping strategies which in some localities include marrying off daughters at a young age to manage household poverty.⁵

Despite the bleak picture, however, the analysis revealed that there are opportunities to strengthen the capacity of education to serve as a connector within Palestinian society, and to leverage cultural strengths to improve individual and collective futures for all Palestinian children. In a strong, family orientated Palestinian society, programming in the schools that involves parents and the community can lead to collective skills development, celebration of joint purpose, strengthening of institutions, and the development of social capital, as illustrated in Outcomes 2, 3 and 4 of the PBEA programme. The interconnected nature of Palestinian society means that collective planning and cooperation can be more easily facilitated. The joint cultural values, history and struggle for independence unite Palestinians, and help strengthen their capacity to identify options for increased social cohesiveness. This capacity can be leveraged to strengthen Palestinians' resilience and cultural values, reduce isolation and improve their quality of life.

4. 2014 Results

Since the beginning of the programme in 2013, PBEA has been integrated in UNICEF SoP's L4D programming in three main areas. These include:

- 1. Adolescent's constructive engagement in society:** Given its long-standing work in 'Adolescents for Development and Participation' in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Gaza, and the strong support and respect for this work at the community and national levels, UNICEF SoP has utilized its adolescent and education programming as an entry point for further work focusing on providing alternatives to violence and social discord through initiatives designed for and by adolescents, as illustrated in Outcome 3.
- 2. Non-violence in schools:** Under the framework of the Non-Violence in School policy developed by the MoEHE with support from UNICEF, UNICEF SoP has carried out upstream and downstream work under PBEA, as illustrated in Outcome 2, to challenge and address violence in schools, which it believes is a critical foundation for a broader contribution towards addressing social violence.

⁵ Medecins du Monde, 'Early Marriage in Palestine: Survey of the physical and psychological impact on girls subject to early marriage', March 2011.

3. Early learning: Building on the MoEHE's National Early Childhood Strategy, which promotes the inclusion of pro-social behaviour within formal education from an early age, UNICEF SoP has supported the MoEHE, in accordance with PBEA Outcome 4, in ensuring preschool-age children have increased access to pro-social and developmentally appropriate early learning opportunities by supporting capacity building of preschool and Grade 1 teachers and ECD supervisors, as well as the development of teaching/learning materials including conflict-sensitive curricula.

4.1. Global Outcome 1 – Integrating peacebuilding and education

Country Level Outcome 1: Increased inclusion of conflict sensitivity into UNDAF and UNICEF SitAn.

Output 1.1: Conflict sensitivity integrated into UNDAF and SitAn. The UNDAF and SitAn of UNICEF SoP were developed and finalized, incorporating the view of conflict-sensitive analysis in 2013. This means that the programme has now achieved the targets set under this country-level outcome, which aims to increase inclusion of conflict sensitivity in national analyses and strategy.

The first UNDAF for the SoP was developed and launched in August 2013, after a broad participatory consultation process among United Nations agencies and government and non-government partners, which was then validated through workshops and focus group discussions to identify priority areas and monitoring mechanisms for the strategic framework of the United Nations for the period 2014–2016. At the national level, the UNDAF has incorporated the conflict-sensitivity approach of 'Do Not Harm', which asserts that conflict-development assistance can never be neutral, and therefore should strive to use content and processes that strengthen connectors and weaken dividers.

Similarly, UNICEF SitAn has engaged the active participation of key stakeholders and incorporated a strong conflict-analysis methodology that includes: desk review of existing documents, focus group discussions with adults and adolescents, quantitative analysis using secondary data – namely, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and Palestinian Family Survey– two-day stakeholder consultations with government and non-governmental partners, and analysis according to the Monitoring Results for Equity System (MoRES) determinants framework. It is believed that the incorporation of conflict-analysis elements into a more strategic document will contribute to strengthening UNICEF's overall programming in the SoP. As an illustration of the project's achievement, the MoEHE, with support from UNICEF, has included Non-Violence in School policy in its Education Strategic Development Plan (EDSP) 2014–2019 as a strategic option with the aim to reduce the high rates of violence in schools, and hence to neutralize the culture of violence in the larger society.

In 2014, as a PBEA activity, UNICEF has also begun the development of a conflict-sensitivity checklist, based on the International Network for Education in Emergencies toolkit on conflict-sensitive education and the United States Agency for International Development's Checklist for Conflict Sensitivity in Education Programs. The checklist is expected to be finalized in 2015 and then used to explore the relationship between factors affecting social cohesion and violent/structural conflict in the country context, such as actors involved in the conflict, connectors and dividers of social cohesion, and potential ways that programming may exacerbate and/or mitigate conflict. The checklist will also help in the assessment of gender equality through and in education.

Once finalized, the checklist will be used to verify whether UNICEF's SitAn and UNDAF have indeed incorporated conflict-sensitive education and peacebuilding principles. The results of

the validation will then be shared and discussed internally within UNICEF, as well as with relevant partners, in order to improve future programming and particularly to ensure that education is delivered in a conflict-sensitive manner.

4.2. Global Outcome 2 – Building institutional capacities

Country-level Outcome 2: MoEHE and education stakeholder capacities are strengthened to institutionalize a culture of non-violence. Often, school-based violence, including GBV, is a manifestation of violence in the wider society. Hence, UNICEF SoP has been working for several years with the MoEHE on developing and piloting the Policy for Non-Violence and Discipline in Schools. In the context of the SoP, where Palestinian children have witnessed occupation-related violence on a daily basis – such as clashes with Israeli security forces, settler violence and harassment by Israeli security forces – the significance of challenging and addressing violence in schools is critical as a foundation for a broader contribution to addressing social violence.

In order to achieve its objective to strengthen the capacities of the MoEHE and education stakeholders to institutionalize a culture of non-violence and, correspondingly, to reduce the incidents of both physical and psychological violence in target schools, UNICEF has carried out and continues to carry out upstream work at the national level and facilitate its school-level operationalization.

At the national level, in 2013, the MoEHE officially launched the Non-Violence in School policy, to develop the school community as a safe learning environment. To support the implementation of the policy, a capacity-building workshop was held for relevant MoEHE staff at the directorate level on its implementation plan and procedures. In 2014, a total of 16 refreshment workshops were again carried out for 400 MoEHE staff. Thus far, 5,500 copies of the policy have been printed and distributed to schools to be used by teachers, supervisors and principals during the 2013–2014 school year. All school principals in the West Bank have also received sensitization sessions on the policy.

Through UNICEF's work to support the piloting of the Non-Violence in School policy, the results achieved per each activity output (Output 2.1 to 2.4) to date are as follow:

Output 2.1: School counsellors and other educational staff are better able to address violence issues as part of the MoEHE school referral system.

In 2014, more than 690 school counsellors were also trained on peer mediation techniques, which in turn allowed them to build the capacity of 15,750 students in 1,050 schools on peer mediation skills and conflict resolution. As a result, a conflict resolution committee was also formed in each of the 1,050 schools.

Output 2.2: School staff (teachers, supervisors and principals) have increased knowledge and skills on promoting non-violent and child-friendly learning environments.

Capacity-building trainings for a core team of teacher's trainers were conducted at the national level, wherein 30 participants, including school principals, educational supervisors and school health staff, received 72 hours of training on topics such as the theoretical framework on violence, the reality and roots of violence in Palestine, the mechanism to reduce and prevent violence, and methods to involve local communities in addressing violence in schools. Moreover, the issues of GBV were addressed under this activity, as topics on sexual abuse were incorporated into the training module at the request of the project's participant (a school counsellor), who noticed incidents of sexual abuses and misconduct against her students.

Output 2.3: Parents and teachers are able to undertake discussions and actions for promoting a non-violent learning environment.

In 2014, school counsellors and school health field employees were able to lead 160 local community activities that promote community participation on non-violence issues in 32 schools. Events include meetings with parents about school violence, workshops aimed at identifying roles in reducing school violence, participation with students in non-violence promoting activities, and exhibitions.

Output 2.4: Children participate in school initiatives that promote non-violence messages.

In terms of school-level projects, the programme has contributed to the implementation of child-led initiatives to promote non-violence 134 public schools, including in child-friendly schools and schools that exhibited higher rates of violence and low performance and were the least served. The initiatives not only sought to promote acceptance and tolerance of others, but also to encourage alternatives to violent behaviour among students, school staff, and in the overall dynamics of the school's learning environment.

The case of Tayaseer Boys School in Tubas, Northeastern West Bank, offers a good example of the positive impact of such school-based projects.

Non-Violence in School policy at the Tayaseer Boys School

The student population of Tayaseer Boys School is made up of Bedouin and Falaheen (peasants) children. The school is surrounded by Israeli military camps, and the area is a front-line of clashes between Palestinians and Israel Defense Force soldiers. To reach their school, students have to cross checkpoints on a daily basis.

Prior to the start of the initiative to promote non-violence in school, students from the Bedouin community had difficulty getting along with other children in the school, as they have different lifestyles and traditions. As a result, many Bedouin students were isolated and expressed violent behaviour towards others. They threw stones and often had fights with other children in the school. Other students had preconceived discriminatory views of Bedouin and Herder communities and used verbal violence towards them.

To address this problem, students, school counsellors and teachers who had received training on non-violence in schools established a Theatre Club for students, with the aim to break the social and psychological barriers between Bedouin children and other children, as well as to promote understanding, respect and tolerance among them. Isolated Bedouin students were encouraged to join the club, whereby they would learn about non-violence, non-discrimination and tolerance through school activities. Through their participation in the club, Bedouin students were also given the opportunity to introduce their way of life and traditions, and in turn were made to feel a part of the school and the student community.

Since the establishment of the Theatre Club, the number of violent incidents in the school has decreased. One student who used to be very violent changed his behaviour after joining, and was able to make friends in the club. Bedouin students who used to run away from school after the first class are now staying throughout the day and mingling with Falaheen students.

Most of the students are proud of being part of the club. They feel they have contributed to reducing violence in their school, by teaching others about non-violence, anti-discrimination and diversity through their skits. One student said that through the activity,

he learned the importance of dialogue and communication, and now understands that dialogue is the only way to resolve conflict.

Based on the above, it can be construed that the Non-Violence in School policy truly has the potential not only to contribute towards peacebuilding outcomes, but also towards educational outcomes. As the case of the Bedouin children illustrated, instead of being out of school, the initiative to promote non-violence in school has allowed them to attend school, enjoy their classes, learn better and stay in school through graduation. It is also noteworthy that such outcomes are in line with UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2014–2017, which highlights inclusive education as one of its key strategic areas.

In addition, in response to the Gaza crisis, UNICEF has also planned to carry out relief activity for affected teachers and students as an additional output in 2015.

Output 2.5: Teachers and students are better prepared to return to a sense of normalcy and recovery in the new school year in the aftermath of the Gaza crisis.

This activity was added to the 2014 operation plan in response to the latest Israeli military offensive against the Gaza Strip. UNICEF planned to provide learning materials to 130,000 affected students and 11,000 teachers to aid in their recovery and resilience. However, the activities under this output were postponed to 2015 because there was a delay in receiving approval to re-programme.

Output 2.6: Schools have increased capacity to provide safe after-school extracurricular activities.

Acknowledging the need to create spaces where students, parents, teachers and community members can gather and engage in activities that enhance the social fabric, in 2014 UNICEF SoP began the development of a plan to support schools to offer safe spaces for after-school extracurricular activities. Along with this, UNICEF also planned to support teachers' training in the use of drama as a method to widen students' horizons and positive self-expression and interaction, which in turn will help the students – girls and boys – better cope with stress and conflict.

It is also expected that this activity will serve to address the issues of gender inequality and GBV, as it was planned under the recognition that by giving girls a safe space in school, they can be protected from harm, while also having an alternative space to come together to play, socialize, learn and spend time during out-of-school hours, rather than being confined at home. This in turn can help reduce dropout rates among girls – especially adolescent girls – who tend to leave school when they must travel outside of their immediate communities, which is a distinctly common situation at the secondary school level.

Due to the crisis in Gaza, the implementation of the planned activities had to be postponed to 2015, as resources and time had to be reallocated to address the emergency situation and the humanitarian consequences that followed.

4.3. Global Outcome 3 – Developing community and individual capacities

Country-level Outcome 3: Adolescents constructively engage in their societies as agents of social transformation for advancing sustainable alternatives to social violence and discord.

Together with its strategic partners – namely, MA'AN Development Center (MA'AN), Youth Development Department (YDD) and Palestinian Vision Organization (PaVision) – UNICEF has implemented several projects to support capacity building of adolescents to serve as

agents for positive change in their communities. In 2014, the projects carried out included Adolescents are Agents for Positive Change (AAPC) with MA'AN; Adolescents Speak Up with YDD; and Harnessing the Potential of Youth in Marginalized West Bank Communities with PalVision.

Such partnerships have allowed UNICEF to reach children and youths in different geographical areas, as the three organizations have long-standing presence, resources and credible reputations in the targeted communities – that is, MA'AN in the Gaza Strip, YDD in East Jerusalem and Hebron (H2 area), and PalVision in the West Bank and Jerusalem.

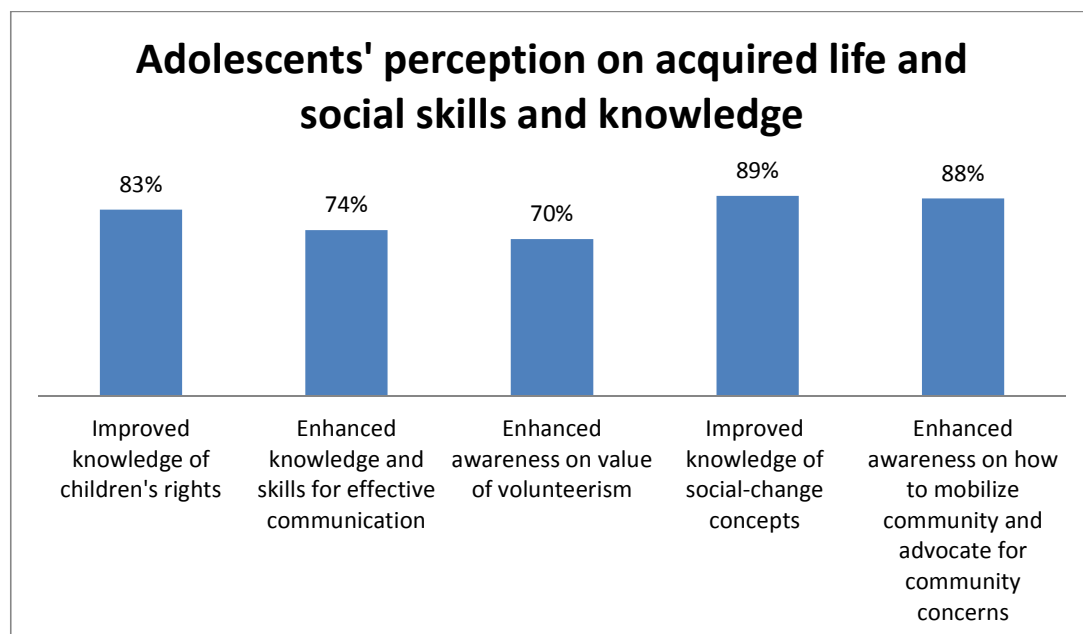
Thus far, the results achieved per each activity output are as follows:

Output 3.1: Adolescents have increased knowledge and skills to lead and participate in constructive initiatives in marginalized areas such as East Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank.

Through the Project Cooperation Agreement between UNICEF and MA'AN, the AAPC project was initiated in May 2014 with the aim to open the space for adolescents in the Gaza Strip to actively participate in changing their realities through civic engagement. Specifically, the project aims to empower its participants with different skills and resources that will enable them to participate in community (re)building; work towards social change; apply their leadership skills; and concurrently gain access to support services and opportunities that will allow for their personal development.

As part of the activity to increase adolescents' capacity and knowledge on life skills, child rights, gender-related concepts, and community social mobilization, 21 training hours have been delivered to 835 adolescents (437 females and 398 males) in Gaza. Four hundred adolescents (181 females and 219 males) have also participated in discussions to stimulate their critical thinking and analytical skills. Also, 320 adolescents (145 females and 175 males) have participated in 43 discussion sessions covering stories about the experiences of renowned figures in the social change process.

Findings from the post-project evaluation conducted with participants have revealed very positive results, as illustrated in the chart below.



Moreover, 30 adolescents (7 females and 23 males) have received 40 hours of training on basic media skills; 10 adolescents (5 males and 5 females) have received 50 hours of training on short film production and photography; and 30 adolescents (23 males and 7 females) have been involved in a magazine management and production project, whereby they were given the opportunity to provide information and content for the magazine. Again, the participants' feedback on these trainings and activities under the AAPC project is very positive: 90 per cent of the adolescents reported having improved writing skills and enhanced ability to address the negative influence of the violated scenes on TV and their indirect impact; and 70 per cent reported improved knowledge and skills in developing messages using social media.

In addition, 80 youth volunteers (40 males and 40 females) aged 19–26 years old from eight community-based organizations participated in 24 hours of training on active citizenship moduled, which took place in three different areas. As a result, these youth volunteers were able to pass on their newly acquired skills to support their peers and communities in developing community initiatives to promote social learning and social cohesion.

It is also crucial to note that the participant selection process for this project was carefully carried out to ensure that the most vulnerable adolescents were reached, especially those from marginalized groups such as youths with disabilities, those from refugee camps, child labourers and school dropouts – with an equal ratio of males and females. As such, the project can be expected to contribute to enabling greater social cohesion change in the most vulnerable communities.

Likewise, the Adolescents Speak Up project implemented in partnership with YDD in East Jerusalem and Hebron beginning in June 2013 also achieved great successes. At the close of the project in December 2014, a total of 128 adolescents, considered as the direct beneficiaries of the project, were reached. Of those, 80 were involved in both media and community trainings in 2014, while 48 were involved in presenting their films produced in 2013 in 20 schools and youth clubs. As a result of the training received, the adolescents were able to implement eight community initiatives on issues such as smoking inside schools, violence inside schools (bullying), positive youth participation, early marriage, food inside schools, transportation, lack of green areas, and industrial/vocational education.

Similar to the results of the survey conducted with participants of the AAPC project, findings from a follow-up perception survey conducted with the 80 adolescents who received training under Adolescents Speak Up in 2014 (43 from East Jerusalem, of which 22 were males and 21 were females; and 37 from Hebron, of which 19 were males and 18 were females) were very positive, as the participants reported that they felt proud to be part of the project and that they had benefited a lot from participating. Moreover, the findings revealed interesting insights about the impacts of the project on the participants' social cohesion 'scores' – which were measured based on their attitude towards violence; individual skills and coping strategies in times of stress or shock; participation in public activities; sense of belonging and inclusion within a wider community; and tolerance and respect for diversity – as well as domains where improvements could be made. Overall, there are three key lessons from the survey, including:

1. The social cohesion scores of adolescent boys and girls are generally consistent. On average, they have the same social cohesion 'score' of 2.7 based on a scale of 1–4, where 1 indicates the lowest level and 4 indicates the highest level (of tolerance, sense of belonging and participation in one's community, for instance).
2. Variations are seen more across geographical areas, with the East Jerusalem adolescents reporting the lowest social cohesion scores, and across different types of schools, with students in private schools reporting the lowest social cohesion

scores. This illustrates the need to further explore the role of geography and the sense of community that is upheld in various places in order to understand the nuances behind the responses, including the close proximity with the occupation forces.

3. There is a need to engage community members. This is due to an overall perception among the respondents of unfair treatment by other communities. Given that such perception has the potential to impact the promotion of social cohesion across different groups and increase youth participation in key processes of peacebuilding, more inclusive programming that connects youths and stakeholders around them, particularly adults, should therefore be considered.

It is also noteworthy that youths in both East Jerusalem and Hebron felt that they are enjoying a level of participation within their communities. This may partly be attributable to the participation-oriented Adolescents Speak Up activities that have enabled youths to reflect on the various social issues around them and take the lead in designing interventions to effect social change.

Moreover, the programme has contributed towards empowering girls to voice their concerns on issues relevant to them. For example, one youth group from Hebron chose early marriage as a topic of their initiative, since one of their classmates had left school because she got married. As a result of trainings received, they were able to raise awareness about the risks and consequences of early marriage, in particular the impact on girls, through the production of a radio episode covering the real-life story of a girl who got married when she was only 14. They also created and distributed posters with the message that it is too early to get

"I enjoyed the community training [provided by the Youth Development Department. We got to talk about the problems in our community and share each other's ideas on how to solve them."

"I learned that I can bring change within my community and school through the films I make and stories I tell."

Adolescents Speak Up participants

married under the age of 18, and created a Facebook page to further highlight the issue among young people.

The above results and findings offer strong evidence that the project has contributed to strengthening adolescents' capacity and skills to become active agents of change and to participate meaningfully in their communities. Such results can also be expected to continue beyond the project's life, as YDD is committed to providing continual support, including self-financing, to activities initiated under the project.

Consistent with the results of the AAPC and Adolescents Speak Up projects, the activity under the partnership between UNICEF and PalVision, scheduled to run from March 2014 to March 2015, has also achieved satisfactory results to date. Thirty hours of Training of Trainers sessions have been carried out with 27 youth mobilizers and, correspondingly, 21 community groups have been formed, with each comprising at least 20 adolescents. In total, 461 adolescent boys and girls have received training on relevant topics including communication, leadership, teamwork, creative thinking and critical thinking skills, as well as democracy and citizenship – which are necessary to enable them to become positive actors for change in their communities.

In their responses to the periodic monitoring and episode evaluation carried out by PalVision, the youth mobilizers have reported changes in the attitude and confidence of the participating adolescents as a result of the training and coaching sessions. They noted that while the adolescents were initially introverted and shy, and had limited communication and self-expression skills, the training and coaching sessions served to harness their skills and abilities to express themselves in a healthy manner, which is a clear demonstration of the abilities and prospects they possess.

Output 3.2: Community members and decision makers have increased awareness on issues affecting social cohesion.

In accordance with results achieved under Output 3.1, the adolescents who received capacity development and skill training under the AAPC project, Adolescents Speak Up project and the UNICEF-PalVision project were able to initiate and lead several community initiatives to promote social cohesion and positive change in their communities.

For example, the youths who took part in the UNICEF-PalVision project have been able to develop and implement 21 outreach initiatives, mainly covering issues of concern within their communities, including psychological health, people with disabilities, tourism, culture and heritage, and improving social services and the environment. Moreover, nine meetings between adolescents and relevant community leaders and decision makers have been held, providing the adolescents with a platform to share and discuss their ideas with experienced personnel who are aware of the needs and challenges facing the targeted communities. These meetings were also covered by various media outlets and online platforms including, for instance, the national TV station and social networking sites such as YouTube and Facebook (*links are provided in the Annex attached to this report*).

Similarly, many events were organized to promote the adolescent-led activities under the Adolescents Speak Up project, reaching approximately 7,400 community members. The events included:

- Two debates/workshops covering two topics: one in Hebron to discuss the lack of playing spaces of children, and one in Jerusalem to discuss the industrial/vocational education in Palestine.
- Two meetings with decision makers: one with the MoEHE to deliver students' positive module suggestions on healthy food systems inside schools, and one with the Ministry of Transportation in Hebron to deliver adolescents' demands on developing the transportation system to be more economically suitable for children.
- Two radio interviews to raise awareness on the issues of smoking among students in Jerusalem and early marriage in Hebron.
- Some 20 film screenings at youth centres and schools, for the short films produced in 2013 by the 50 direct beneficiaries. The films were viewed by at least 400 adolescents.
- Screening of eight short films that captured important issues related to adolescents' lives and the educational environment. The screening was carried out in two ceremonies – one in Hebron and one in Jerusalem – and was attended by 400 adolescents, community members and other stakeholders. Following each ceremony, a discussion was also conducted, whereby the adolescents and community members were able to jointly develop solutions and recommendations to address the needs of their communities.

In addition to these events, eight online platforms (e.g., Facebook pages) have been created to raise awareness on topics related to the youth initiatives, and are being followed by hundreds of adolescents and community members. Eight photo stories have also been produced and posted on the adolescents' online pages, and more than 10,000 posters have been produced and consequently displayed throughout Hebron and Jerusalem to raise awareness of the adolescents' projects.

Furthermore, PalVision implemented 14 zero-budget activities during the holy month of Ramadan and within the activities of International Youth Day in October 2014, which provide the adolescents with a platform to put into practice acquired knowledge and skills. These activities also helped in the assessment of the adolescents' abilities to implement community

initiatives, and presented an opportunity for them to seek guidance and support to optimize the implementation of their community initiatives, which will in turn help them to adequately address the needs of their communities in various dimensions.

Overall, the activities implemented as part of the three aforementioned projects have had an impact on social cohesion in the target communities where the youth-led initiatives have been implemented. A key lesson learned from the implementation of the projects is that meaningful dialogue and conversation among young people and their communities can have significant implications for the achievement of the project's objective to contribute towards positive social change. Another key lesson is with regard to the involvement of parents and families in the planned activities. It was found, for example, that gender gaps could be bridged when parents of female adolescents are also engaged, as they would become more open to allowing their daughters to take part in the activities.

According to the progress report submitted by PalVision to UNICEF, the interaction between the adolescents of the same community and later between adolescents at the governorate level has promoted social cohesion within a context where the adolescents came from different social backgrounds and lived under different circumstances. The report maintains that the adolescents' ability to agree on a common issue to address and develop a unified discourse to present to community leaders and decision makers is a clear reflection of their unity and cohesion.

The activities under this Country-level Outcome were also designed to target boys and girls, and male and female teachers, equally, based on their specific needs, and provide equal opportunities to benefit from the activities. Through projects such as Adolescents Speak Up and AAPC, male and female youths were not only reached mostly equally, but they were also largely equally empowered to constructively participate as active members of their communities, and to be able to raise awareness on issues affecting them and their communities.

The key implementation challenge for the three projects was indeed the Gaza crisis, which broke out in July, causing some delays and postponement to the projects' activities that required mid-course corrective actions to be taken (*see Output 3.3 below*).

Output 3.3: Adolescents provided with recreational and stress relief activities to provide psychosocial support, and will contribute to healing and strengthening the resilience of adolescents.

The activities listed below were supported by the funds received under the PBEA programme in addition to other funding sources.

In order to respond to the needs of children and adolescents – boys and girls – who have been affected by the Gaza crisis of July 2014, UNICEF SoP, through its implementation partners – namely MA'AN and the Tamer Institute for Community Education (Tamer) – has delivered stress-relief activities and psychosocial support to adolescents aged 10 to 18 years old to aid in their recovery and resilience.

UNICEF, in partnership with MA'AN, has provided stress relief and psychological support to 38,028 unique adolescents (20,531 males and 17,497 females), through recreational activities implemented by MA'AN, including sport activities, exercises for relief, exercises for relaxation and self-expressing activities, which were running five days a week for five hours per day. In support of this work, MA'AN also built on its in-house expertise to provide a three-hour orientation session on child protection indicators to 11 shelter management teams, covering a total of 57 management team members as well as 84 young volunteers (50 per cent girls). The young volunteers were engaged in constructive and positive

initiatives, including co-facilitation of activities for younger children, thereby contributing to reducing stress, anger and violence, while simultaneously strengthening their resilience and self-confidence.

Likewise, the cooperation between UNICEF and Tamer aimed to carry out immediate emergency interventions in five schools, providing support to displaced children who were suffering from trauma and loss for a period of three months between August and October 2014. As a result, 49,893 children and adolescents (22,073 males and 27,820 females) were given psychosocial support and stress relief through play and learning, specifically storytelling, drama and sport activities. The facilitators hired to support the activities in the shelters were from both sexes, which enabled the female facilitators to provide life skills sessions to girls (above 12 years) and the male facilitators to provide sports and recreational activities to boys and adolescents of older ages. This helped to overcome any challenges concerning conservative tradition that may disapprove mixing between the sexes. The fact that these interventions have reached adolescents males and females in nearly equal numbers is also a reflection of the great sense of vigilance towards gender equity that UNICEF has endeavoured to uphold.

Output 3.4: A national volunteer platform established to promote adolescent participation and promote social cohesion.

In 2015, UNICEF has a plan in place to work with partners to build and expand on existing opportunities for youth volunteerism and establish a national platform for adolescent civic engagement, which will provide a space for adolescents' positive participation in the reconstruction and improvement of their communities.

4.4. Global Outcome 4 – Increasing access to conflict-sensitive education

Country-level Outcome 4: Preschool-age children have increased access to pro-social and developmentally appropriate early learning opportunities.

The activities under this outcome were developed with the aim to provide preschool-age children with access to child-friendly environments and pro-social and developmentally appropriate early learning opportunities. The intervention was also planned in response to the findings from the conflict-sensitive analysis for the UNICEF SoP's SitAn, which identified the lack of ECD services in rural and vulnerable areas as a problem, coupled with the lack of public awareness about the value of ECD in school readiness and developing resilience and pro-social behaviour that will benefit the child throughout her or his life.

Thus far, the results achieved per each activity output are as follows:

Output 4.1: Early learning teachers (preschool and Grade 1) have increased skills in ECD and supporting pro-social behaviour.

Beginning in July 2014, UNICEF, together with the Early Childhood Resource Center (ECRC) and the MoEHE, have been collaborating on the development and implementation of a project to provide preschool-age/kindergarten children and first-grade children with a child-friendly learning environment – that is, safe and developmentally appropriate – as well as to positively address the children's developmental needs and demands through teacher and parental training. This project runs in two phases: the first phase took place from July to December 2014, while the second phase will run from January to December 2015 for further training and follow-up visits.

The objectives of the project are that by the year 2015: (1) 3,600 preschool children and first-grade children in the most disadvantaged areas of Gaza and the West Bank will have

increased access to appropriate early learning opportunities; (2) 92 preschool teachers, 46 first-grade teachers, 46 principals and 20 ECD supervisors will be equipped with skills in ECD and in supporting pro-social behaviour; (3) 1,500 parents will be skilled in better parenting techniques and benefit from awareness sessions on ECD; and (4) an ECD draft framework of guidelines/standards will be developed for teachers and parents. It is believed that since gender norms are created and perpetuated from birth onward by families, communities, schools and other social institutions, UNICEF has endeavoured to work with women and men, in particular, (e.g., fathers and teachers) in order to change the way in which girls and boys experience childhood and grow into adulthood, thereby ensuring they are able to equally enjoy their rights regardless of their gender.

As the project covers a large geographic area in four different regions of Hebron, Jenin, Nablus and Ramallah, reaching all of the areas has its adversities not only due to the distance, but also to the volatile political situation in these areas. However, to minimize the impact of any possible implementation constraints, necessary procedures have been established to help ensure the project runs smoothly and progresses according to the workplans, schedules and budget set. Such procedures include weekly meetings with the MoEHE supervisors engaged in the project; monthly meetings between ECRC trainers and MoEHE supervisors in each geographic location where the project is being implemented; and joint development of training-session plans between ECRC trainers and the Ministry of Education supervisors, for instance. Upon completion of the first phase of project, was found that constant communication and knowledge sharing among all key partners – MoEHE, ECRC and UNICEF – have been crucial for efficiency, good human relations and unity of direction, contributing to the project's success and progress. Key activities carried out, along with their corresponding results, are described below.

Teacher group training

The main element of this activity is to conduct and implement training for teachers working in the kindergartens annexed to the governmental schools, as well as for teachers working in private kindergartens. The training sessions were carried out through a participatory approach and covered subjects such as language readiness in terms of its components, competencies and skills; producing and functioning classroom displays; educational games and puppets; logic mathematical experiences; nature; and drama, arts and storytelling techniques.

By December 2014, a total of 92 teachers (who were divided into four regional groups comprising 23 participants each in Hebron, Jenin, Nablus and Ramallah) had participated in 10 joint training sessions – consisting of 13 training workshops – each for five hours long.

The participant teachers (all females) reported that they felt empowered because they had learned new knowledge, skills and behaviours. The teachers also expressed how grateful they were to be part of the project and how the training activities genuinely affected their work environment in a most constructive and progressive way. Moreover, they reported that the training affected them in all aspects of their lives, not only professionally but also at a personal level. The training helped the teachers change the way they ran their classrooms, deal with students and handle their personal affairs.

Individual on-site training

The on-site trainings consist of five field visits by the trainers, with each visit lasting approximately three hours. The on-site trainings were attended by kindergarten teachers, elementary school teachers and, in many cases, the school's principal from each kindergarten. The main objective of the trainings is to meet the individual needs of each site and to transfer the theoretical educational aspects that were given in the teacher group

training to practice. In effect, the on-site trainings also aim to enable the teachers who had participated in the group training sessions to transfer what they had learned into the classrooms.

Two main themes were addressed, conducted and implemented during the on-site trainings, including organizing the physical and educational environment of the kindergarten to meet children's developmental needs and rights, and also how to plan, activate and integrate language competencies and skills of preschool children in the daily kindergarten's programme and enrich the kindergarten with activities that support children's language acquisition.

By the end of December 2014, 182 out of the 184 on-site training sessions planned were completed, thus creating a total completion percentage rate of 98.9 per cent. The two missed sessions were not fulfilled due to harsh weather conditions and transportation difficulties. However, they are planned to be completed in January 2015.

According to the assessment made during site visits by the Project Manager and Project Coordinator from ECRC, it was noticed that engaging elementary school teachers was particularly beneficial, as it allowed them to exchange experiences and ideas. Working together, the teachers produced learning materials, toys, games and classroom displays for their students. The teachers themselves also reported that the trainings were useful to them.

Principals' training and consultancy

Two training and consultancy workshops (each lasting two days) were carried out with principals (50 per cent males and females) whose kindergartens were part of the project. The first workshop was held in September 2014, while the second workshop took place in December 2014. At the first workshop, a total of 61 participants were involved, including 24 governmental school principals (10 males and 14 females), ECRC trainers, the Project Manager and Coordinator, the MoEHE Preschool Head Supervisor and Preschool Supervisors. UNICEF staff members also attended the workshop to show their support and participate in the discussions. The presence of UNICEF was, in fact, noted to have a positive effect on both of the workshops, as it showed UNICEF's commitment and encouragement in all aspects of the project.

During the first workshop, a group work session was carried out, whereby the main objective was for the groups – comprising the principals, MoEHE supervisors and the ECRC trainers – to participate in activities that are normally done in kindergarten classes, such as painting and creating clay. The aim was also for the principals to be in the seat of the child to show them how important the teachers' interactions with the child are and that they should not favour one child over another. Crucially, at the end of the first workshop, the principals and representatives of the MoEHE and ECRC signed a Memorandum of Understanding showing their support and cooperation in the project's fulfilment.

During the second workshop, the principals were given opportunities to reflect on the impact of the project on their schools, and to share their stories about lessons learned, challenges and hopes for the future. A list of suggestions was also made as a result of the workshop including, for instance, the need to have an assistant teacher in the kindergarten class; for the kindergarten teacher to be from the same area as the kindergarten to save transportation time and expenses; for the kindergarten teacher to have a background in ECD; for similar trainings to continue in their schools even after the project has ended; and for new kindergartens to be accepted into the project so that they won't feel excluded, especially if they need help. It was also suggested that what is expected of the kindergarten students when they go to the first grade should be made clear, and that parents should be aware of what is going on with their children in the classroom so that they can provide support.

An indication that the project has had positive effects in the implementation regions came from the principals' feedback, as they reported that the project had not only benefited the schools, but supported the local community as well, and that parents were also more engaged and concerned about their child's future. The principals also noted that women were given an opportunity to work; since most women are not usually allowed to travel to other areas outside their community, having a kindergarten in their own village gave them an opportunity to achieve something for themselves and at the same time help their own community.

Parents' training

This activity was planned with the aim to encourage parents to become actively involved in their children's development and to improve their interaction with the school environment and their skills in ECD, as well as to create consistency between practices at home and in school. Through their participation in the training, it is hoped that parents will be supported and empowered to design activities that will foster their child's cognitive development. The target was to reach 92 groups of parents, made up of 16 to 17 parents each; thereby 23–46 school family meetings were to be carried out each month during the project's first phase (July–December 2014). In accordance with the plan, training kits were designed and developed, including books and CDs, to support parents with their child's learning process. The kits were handed out during the first parent-awareness session in August 2014.

By the end of December 2014, a total 173 out of the planned 184 parent-awareness sessions were completed, creating a total completion percentage rate of 94 per cent. The participants were mostly mothers, as fathers were usually at work when the sessions were held, reflecting the traditional family structures where men are the breadwinners and women are the homemakers.

The 11 missed sessions are scheduled to be completed during the project's second phase in 2015. The delay was due to the fact that July was the holy month of Ramadan, which made it hard to make necessary coordination arrangements with the MoEHE, and that it was still school summer break. Further causing the delay was, indeed, the Gaza crisis. Initially, 23 kindergartens in Gaza were supposed to be taken into consideration to take part in the project; however, this had to be postponed due to the crisis. Kindergartens from the Jenin district were included instead, as the region was also deemed underprivileged and overlooked. By the time approval was given to take these kindergartens in Jenin, almost a month had passed from the start of the project.

Follow-up visits by the MoEHE Supervisors to participating kindergartens

During the month of September 2014, follow-up visits were carried out by the Project Manager and Coordinator and the MoEHE Supervisors. In fact, follow-up visits were also conducted by the MoEHE Supervisors to each teacher group training session. The purpose of such visits was to observe the teachers' interpretations of the skills acquired during the training, and for the MoEHE to better understand the importance of a well-organized school environment, give ideas on how to improve the classrooms, and work on the development and planning of the ECD curriculum. The subjects covered during the follow-up visits include activities relating to language, nature, art movement and storytelling.

By the end of December 2014, a total of 161 follow-up sessions were completed, which exceeded the expected target, creating a total completion percentage rate of 115 per cent. The additional follow-up sessions were carried out because the MoEHE Supervisors saw the need to constantly make the visits in order to ensure that the teachers were applying what

they had learned in their classrooms, and to provide additional on-site coaching and mentoring as needed.

According to the progress report submitted by ECRC to UNICEF in December 2014, upon completion of the aforementioned activities, approximately 2,300 kindergarten children in 92 kindergartens (on average 25 pupils in each) had received appropriate early learning opportunities. In addition, about 1,300 first-grade pupils had benefited from the project.

In 2015, apart from ongoing training activities, exchange visits are planned for the principals and kindergarten teachers in the targeted schools to allow them to share ideas and learn from one another's experiences. ECRC staff will also be conducting additional follow-up visits in order to build on existing achievements. For the second phase, the project intends to increase connections between kindergarten teachers and first-grade teachers in order to help facilitate the children's transition from kindergarten into elementary school and ensure a smooth passage. In addition, a study is planned to assess the project's impact by comparing the performance of children who participated in the project with those who did not as they transfer into first grade. In the end, a draft teachers' guideline will be developed, incorporating all of the contents, methodologies and practices carried out under the duration of the project, so that more teachers can utilize it in future activities.

Output 4.2: Guidelines/standards for pro-social early learning standards developed.

In 2014, several consultative meetings and workshops were held to develop effective early learning standards that give emphasis to all domains of development and learning, including gender roles. Stakeholders agreed that early learning standards must address a wide range of domains – cognitive, social, emotional, physical and language development; motivation and approaches to learning; as well as discipline-specific domains and that young children's development is strongly interconnected, with positive outcomes in one area relying on development in other domains. It is anticipated that by 2015, early learning standards will be developed and endorsed by all stakeholders.

Output 4.3: Preschool children participate in structured activities aimed at restoring a sense of normalcy and hope to aid in their recovery.

In 2015, UNICEF will further support the efforts of national partners to respond to the humanitarian situation in Gaza by providing structure activities (including ECD kits) to preschool children affected by the crisis, with the aim to restore a sense of normalcy and hope to aid in their resilience and recovery.

4.5. Global Outcome 5 – Generating evidence and knowledge

Country-level Outcome 5: UNICEF and relevant education stakeholders gain knowledge on the relationship between education, violence and social cohesion.

Output 5.1: Analysis of social cohesion and education in East Jerusalem completed.

In 2013, UNICEF SoP supported and led an analysis of social cohesion and education in East Jerusalem, exploring the impact of the Israeli occupation on Palestinian society, along with factors affecting social cohesion. In particular, the study looked at the role of education and its impact on the social fabric and vice versa. This analysis resulted in four main recommendations that were used to inform the workplan of the PBEA programme in the SoP in 2014, including 1) to develop and design activities that unite and bring together Palestinians across the various geographical locations in and out of East Jerusalem; 2) to increase programming that addresses families as a whole; 3) to strengthen coordination

among education providers in the formal and non-formal sectors; and 4) to empower local communities to take control over their lives.

UNICEF also studied the likely impact of no investment in the public education system based on evidence from Gaza. The final report (for internal use only at this stage) called up the international donor community to provide additional investment for public education in Gaza, contending that the school-related causes of weak learning achievement in Gaza were largely consequences of restricted instructional time imposed by double-shift school systems, a fragmented curriculum, ineffective teaching methods and the lack of parental support. The report argued that such shortcomings could effectively be addressed with sufficient cost-effective interventions to improve the overall quality of basic education in the region – which will enrol children regardless of their refugee status and with gender parity – thereby allowing the region to fully realize the benefits of economic and social growth. The report further noted that the benefits of having a well-educated population could potentially have implications for social cohesion, as it found that well-educated people are more likely to participate in civil life and influence decisions that may affect their lives.

Output 5.2: Baseline KAP final report is produced and shared with national partners for discussion on results and next steps.

In recognition of the need to strengthen existing efforts to measure and track programme results, UNICEF SoP will develop and conduct a KAP survey in cooperation with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative in 2015, with the aim to construct national-level baselines for situational monitoring as well as measure for social cohesion and resilience through process outcome monitoring. This will be accomplished through desk reviews, national-level data collection, focus-group discussions, data analysis and application that are streamlined with existing UNICEF systems and platforms. The findings from the KAP survey will then serve as a baseline for the future planning and M&E of UNICEF SoP's L4D programming, including the PBEA programme. Specifically, UNICEF SoP aims to establish a baseline of social cohesion among adolescents (aged 10–19 years) and to generate and document evidence on existing knowledge, attitudes and practices in parenting and nurturing among parents of preschool children and ECD practitioners through the KAP survey and follow-up focus groups, also exploring the impact on girls and boys as well as male and female beneficiaries.

Output 5.3: Behavioural Change Communication (BCC) strategy developed.

The outputs from the KAP assessments (completed under Output 5.2) are also expected to inform the systematic development and roll-out of a country-level BCC strategy, which is necessary for the scale-up of the Country Office's social cohesion programming in the adolescent and ECD sectors (and potentially others), and to optimize the impact of its programme intervention.

It is important to highlight that the BCC strategy – which is normally conducted for the health sector – is a new initiative for education, particularly education for peacebuilding. There is indeed evidence that shows social science is about behaviour changes that are heavily influenced by basic communication. For example, it has been demonstrated that the stabilization of the Ebola outbreak was a result of behavioural change around avoiding touching patients, washing hands and so on, as a result of community-level communication imparting correct information and knowledge. It is hoped, therefore, that the resulting communication strategy, to be completed in 2015, would likewise lead to the desirable behaviour and attitudinal changes that will help address the acceptance of violence as a social norm within the Palestinian community.

5. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

In early 2014, an M&E Operationalization Plan for the PBEA programme in the SoP was developed and finalized with support from the M&E Specialist from the PBEA Programme Management Team in New York headquarters. At the beginning of 2014, a PBEA Officer was also recruited to support all M&E activities linked to the programme, and tasked with analysing the collective contribution of the projects, for the ultimate result of challenging and addressing the increasing acceptance of violence and social disruption as a norm.

The M&E Operationalization Plan – which specified the technical elements needed in translating the M&E requirements into action, including the details of who does what, when, where and how – was integrated into the 2014 workplans of UNICEF signed with respective ministries, while the indicators, baselines, targets and means of verification were also subjected to review by both UNICEF SoP's M&E and Programme Planning staff, as well as the counterpart ministry staff. This plan was also used to guide M&E personnel to plan relevant M&E activities, but it was not fully utilized, as it was not modified/updated as the programme evolved due to changing circumstances including the emergency situation in Gaza.

Similar to 2013, projects that are part of Project Cooperation Agreements funded under the PBEA programme were monitored in three ways. First, each project commenced with a pre-project assessment on opinions and behaviours of stakeholders and ended with end-of-project or post-assessment, measuring the impact of the project on the knowledge, skills and behaviour of the different stakeholders. Second, monthly monitoring visits were carried out by UNICEF staff in the L4D section to follow up on the quality and progress of the project. Third, a more qualitative method of monitoring was conducted to see whether the project consisted of training sessions, specifically through the assessment of training reports written by both trainers and attendees.

In 2014, two pre-project perception surveys and one post-project perception survey were carried out by UNICEF's implementing partners: MA'AN, PalVision and YDD. The surveys helped generate better understanding about the perceptions of targeted adolescents and the impact of the projects on participants. Based on the findings from those surveys, the UNICEF SoP Adolescent Development and Participation section has further sought to develop baseline analysis and monitoring assessment tools along with questionnaires that can be used in all adolescent projects, beyond those under the PBEA programme, for better planning, implementation and monitoring of its programme interventions. Two case studies were also developed on the Adolescents Speak Up and Non-Violence in School projects, attached to this report as annexes. The case study of Adolescents Speak Up focused on the impact of the project on adolescents' behaviour and perception, while the Non-Violence in School case study highlighted the project implementation processes from the national/governmental level down to the school/community level, as well as the impact of such processes on participants.

As noted under Outcome 5 in the previous section, in 2015 UNICEF SoP will develop and conduct a KAP survey in cooperation with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative in order to construct national-level baselines for the future planning and M&E of UNICEF SoP's L4D projects, including the PBEA programme. Specifically, UNICEF SoP aims to establish a baseline of social cohesion among adolescents (aged 10–19 years) and to generate and document evidence on existing knowledge, attitudes and practices in parenting and nurturing among parents of preschool children and ECD practitioners through the KAP survey and follow-up focus groups. The results from the KAP survey will then be used to inform the development of the BCC strategy, which is expected to support the scale-up of the Country

Office's social cohesion programming in the adolescent and ECD sectors (and potentially others), as well as to optimize the impact of its programme intervention.

6. Partnerships

All throughout the PBEA programme implementation, partnerships have enabled UNICEF to reach beneficiaries in marginalized communities in various geographical areas; exchange and learn new knowledge and trends; and become able to facilitate activities and carry out constructive dialogues with key stakeholders from the national to the community levels.

Strategic partnerships with members of the United Nations and civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations have played a central role in advancing results for children with equity under the PBEA programme. From the onset of the programme, as well as during the reporting period, the MoEHE has been a key strategic partner of UNICEF's in the development and implementation of the Non-Violence in School policy and ECD projects, in particular at the national level. In fact, UNICEF has developed a highly regarded partnership with the Palestinian Authority and a broad spectrum of local partners through Project Cooperation Agreements. Both the Palestinian Authority and the civil society in the SoP are widely recognized for their high levels of emerging capacities in programme implementation. With the current momentum related to state building, the interventions under the PBEA programme that strategically provide and support alternatives to violence through strengthening positive engagement in society are timely and are a natural progression for the workplans and agreements that are the normal modalities for UNICEF's programmatic work in the SoP.

At the local/district level, UNICEF has been working closely with local non-governmental partners in the SoP, such as the ECRC, MA'AN, PalVision, Tamer and YDD, particularly in the implementation of its PBEA programme interventions to support youths and preschool-age children, as noted in the previous section. Such partnerships have allowed UNICEF to gain access to its targeted beneficiary populations that it may otherwise not have been able to reach. Through its partners' capacity, expertise and experience and understanding of the local culture, opportunities and constraints, UNICEF has also been able to encourage the participation of local communities and meet the unique challenges facing children and adolescents in different localities.

For instance, in the project carried out in partnership with PalVision aimed at empowering youths in marginalized West Bank communities, representatives and influencers from the local community were sought to help with coordinating the project. This, in turn, effectively resonated the project among the locals, facilitated the implementation of planned activities, provided momentum as well as contributed to the project's sustainability, along with its results. The involvement of youth mobilizers from the local community was indeed one of the key strengths of the project, as it provided youths with role models with whom they could identify, thus inspiring them to actively participate in the community activities.

Moreover, the partnership with PalVision has contributed to the empowerment of adolescent girls, as the organization was committed to presenting females with the opportunity to be active members of society. Such efforts were evident in the attempts of the project's Programme Manager in explaining the objectives of the project and the importance of youth participation in order to achieve social change and address the needs of their communities to the girls' parents, families and/or caregivers. Similarly, the involvement of parents in the Adolescents Speak Up project, under UNICEF's partnership with YDD, was a crucial factor that helped certain social norms and traditional barriers limiting girls and boys to act equally

as agents of change be overcome in conservative communities such as Hebron and Jerusalem.

The importance of such partnerships was clearly visible in the response to the Gaza crisis of July 2014. Through its collaboration with MA'AN and Tamer, UNICEF was able to provide emergency relief support and respond to the immediate needs of nearly 100,000 children and adolescents affected by the crisis. MA'AN was able to bring in more than 100 pre-qualified volunteers, as well as youth groups and adolescents already engaged in its programme, to support the emergency intervention. Moreover, the organization was able to leverage on its in-house expertise and experience in working at times of emergency to provide three-hour orientation sessions for shelter management teams, facilitators and young volunteers on child protection concerns and mechanisms.

Given the value of such partnerships that was evident throughout 2014, UNICEF will endeavour to continue its long-standing practice of building capacity through partnerships with national and local governments, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector, thereby reducing the dependence of governments and other actors on development assistance over time.

In addition, entering the final year of the PBEA programme in 2015, UNICEF recognizes the need to develop and strengthen innovative M&E systems that can track and measure programme results at the outcome and impact levels, and even go beyond the life of the programme to measure long-term change. Accordingly, UNICEF has formed a partnership with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, a university-wide centre, with the objective to promote evidence-based approaches to humanitarian assistance, and conduct a KAP survey of its programmes to inform and improve its future work to promote social cohesion through its education programming and beyond (*as elaborated under Section 6 above*).

7. Programme Management

7.1. Staffing Changes and Variances in Programme Activities

In 2014, changes within the staffing structure of the L4D section in UNICEF SoP left some gaps affecting the management and implementation of the Country Office's PBEA programme, first with the departure of the Section Chief in March, then with the departure of the staff member with 50 per cent time allocation to provide technical and partner support to the PBEA (and 50 per cent time allocation as Education Cluster Coordinator), followed by the departure later in the year of the staff member responsible for M&E and programme documentation. To address such gaps, the Education Specialist has served as Officer in Charge, and taken on the lead role in overseeing the overall programmatic work under the PBEA programme. A United Nations Volunteer Programme Officer has also been recruited to provide support, focusing on the adolescents' portfolio.

In addition, the L4D section has begun the recruitment process for an International Consultant to provide full-time technical assistance to the implementation and monitoring of the PBEA programme, and to develop a comprehensive and evidence-based communication strategy for the programme to address the underlying issues contributing to the normalization of violence within Palestinian society. The recruitment of this International Consultant is expected to strengthen the Communication for Development (C4D) technical capacity of the L4D section, which will in turn enable the team to support partners in reviewing the KAP survey data, planned for 2015 in order to establish a baseline for future programming. The additional capacity for C4D will also address a crucial technical gap within UNICEF SoP, as the office does not have a C4D Technical Officer.

As noted elsewhere in this report, the Gaza crisis, which broke out in July 2014, caused some delays in the implementation of planned PBEA activities and created new priorities that required mid-course corrective actions for UNICEF to meet the needs of children and youth – boys and girls – affected by the crisis. Mainly, new activities to provide relief and recreational support were carried out, which also required UNICEF to amend its Project Cooperation Agreements with key implementing partners MA'AN and Tamer.

7.2. Inter-sectoral Engagement

Within the UNICEF Country Programme in the SoP, the PBEA programme is an integral part of the L4D section, comprising two programmatic sections: Basic and Girls' Education and Adolescent Development and Participation. The programme has therefore been able to deliver life-cycle intervention from early childhood to secondary education. As noted, themes presented under the PBEA programme – violence, social cohesion, pro-social behaviour, conflict and constructive engagement in society – are not only directly linked to the main areas of work within UNICEF's Education and Adolescent programming under the L4D umbrella, but also to priorities under Child Protection in preventing and responding to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect of children. Specifically, the implementation of the Non-Violence in School policy will be closely linked with the referral system established by the Child Protection section. Moreover, the PBEA work is cross-sectoral and has engaged, for instance, the Social Policy section in the review of the SitAn and UNDAF documents for conflict sensitivity; the M&E focal point in monitoring and evaluation of the programme; and the Communication section in the development of the BCC strategy mentioned in the previous section.

8. Challenges, Lessons Learned and Unintended Consequences

During the reporting period, there was no significant implementation constraint beyond those described in the preceding sections. The most immediately obvious challenge the programme encountered was the Gaza crisis. Nonetheless, the following lessons learned are notable:

The consequence of adolescents' psychological distress: After the end of the crisis in Gaza, trauma symptoms were evident in adolescents affected by the crisis. According to a report submitted to UNICEF by MA'AN, the consequence of youth's psychological distress was a challenge for volunteers working to provide relief support, affecting both their commitment as well as motivation. However, once the volunteers were oriented and instructed on how to properly deal with traumatized adolescents, they were able to support their peers in the shelters and schools, and help them cope with the situation to overcome this challenge.

Involving parents to bridge the gender gaps: One of the key challenges that occurred in nearly all of the projects aimed at empowering youths was in overcoming differences in community cultures. In particular, the main obstacle often faced was in bringing boys and girls to work together in a mixed group, or in merely involving girls in the projects. However, it was found that when parents of girls and female adolescents were informed and engaged – be it through meetings or participating in organized activities – they became more open to allowing their daughters to take part in the projects. As such, a crucial lesson learned here is that more inclusive programming that involves not only children but also their parents and families can have the potential to bridge gender gaps, especially in communities where gender disparities are distinct.

Communication and knowledge sharing: Working in partnership, communication and knowledge sharing are crucial in order to avoid misunderstanding and ensure smooth collaboration. As different organizations tend to have different outlooks and perspectives, it is important to understand how each partner thinks. The significance of constant contact and communication can be seen, for instance, in the adolescent empowerment projects between UNICEF and its partners – namely, MA'AN, PalVision and YDD – wherein adolescent-led initiatives were promoted and sustained through constant interactions between the adolescents and civil society/community-based organizations and regular visits to community leaders in their localities, which helped set the platform for future meetings with key stakeholders and relevant decision makers. Such meetings in turn enabled the adolescents to develop, design and implement initiatives that were relevant to the needs of their communities.

9. Outreach and Communications

In 2014, activities under the PBEA programme, especially those involving adolescents' skills development projects (Outcome 3), had received enormous media coverage be it through national television, radio programmes, newspaper or online platforms such as Facebook and YouTube. The majority of the media content aimed at creating awareness – for example, short films, radio recordings and photo stories – was produced by the youths themselves. Besides media coverage, several events, meetings and workshops were organized to raise awareness about the programme and the youth-led projects in particular, including film screening events, school open days, community workshops and project graduation ceremonies. A full list of media outlets, including links to online pages covering the programme activities, are attached in a separate document annexed to this report.

10. Resources

Programme resource allocation by year

Category	2012	2013	2014
Total PBEA funds allocated	US\$326,875	N/A	US\$1,558,100
Total PBEA funds utilized	US\$14,015	US\$653,417	US\$804,164