

The Palestinian Area



 Norwegian development cooperation aims to promote state building as part of a peace process leading to a two-state solution. As leader of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee for Assistance to the Palestinian People (AHLC), Norway has a special responsibility for coordinating international aid in this process. In 2007, the international donor community promised USD 7.7 billion in support to the Palestinians over a three-year period. Budget support to the Palestinian Authority has become an important aspect of Norwegian development assistance. Overall Norwegian assistance provided through bilateral and multilateral channels was at its highest ever level in 2007.

Governance

 Palestinian authorities drew up a reform and development plan for 2008-2010. Work on the plan was partially financed by Norway's support to the PLO's Economic Affairs Department and to a secretariat responsible for donor coordination. Norway supported the development of good public institutions and civil society organisations that play a watchdog role in

anti-corruption and human rights work. Since a substantial proportion of children and young people in the population lack representation in political bodies, funding the establishment of a youth parliament is an important democracy initiative.


Budget support

 Budget support is designed to maintain important public services such as health and education and to prevent economic and political collapse. The Israeli closure regime places severe constraints on the private sector and local value creation. In Gaza, small industry has shut down due to the absence of import and export opportunities. In this situation, public sector salaries have helped to sustain economic life in the Palestinian Area. However, local value creation needs to be stimulated and a sustainable budget must be developed. Norway is working within the framework of the AHLC to improve economic conditions and to pressure Israel to dismantle the closure regime and facilitate trade.

Education

 The most important outcome of Norway's effort was a national strategy for teacher training which covers both primary and secondary education. Six schools were renovated and expanded, including 39 new classrooms, laboratories, administration rooms and toilets. Five schools and the Department of Education in Gaza were repaired after being damaged by Israeli air attacks. The first intake of girls was enrolled at a Norwegian-financed vocational college in Tulkarem.

Energy

 All villages in the West Bank are now on mains electricity, thanks in part to Norwegian development assistance. A Norwegian-financed pilot project for pre-paid electricity meters was completed. Work on preparations to connect the Palestinian electricity grid to the regional Arab grid in Jordan was brought to completion.

Women and gender equality

 With a view to promoting the integration of women in society, Norway supported the information and lobby work done by an umbrella body for Palestinian women's organisations. Training programmes organised through women's organisations have given women a greater opportunity to participate in political life than was previously the case, and improved secondary education facilities at the local level enable more women to embark on secondary education. Funding was also provided for the training of women recently elected onto municipal councils in the West Bank and for four day-centres for women in Gaza.

Culture

Through the support provided to a cultural fund under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture, 29 Palestinian organisations received funding for cultural activities targeting children and young people. The first Palestinian cultural centre is under construction in East Jerusalem, funded by Norway. Norway is also financing a museum at the Bethle-

Bilateral assistance¹ for the Palestinian Area, by partners, 2007

Development cooperation partners	NOK 1000	Per cent
Government-to-government, etc. ²	316 772	50,9
International NGOs	3 368	0,5
Local NGOs	23 194	3,7
Norwegian NGOs	139 594	22,4
Regional NGOs	1 500	0,2
Nordic research institutions/foundations	178	0,0
Multilateral organisations ³	137 310	22,1
Totalt	621 916	100,0

1) Includes multi-bilateral assistance

2) Including public institutions, ministries, consultants, the private sector, etc.

3) Earmarked assistance channelled through multilateral organisations (multi-bilateral)

Bilateral assistance¹ for the Palestinian Area, by sector, 2007


Sectors	NOK 1000	Prosent
Economic development and trade	221 706	35,6
Emergency relief and other unspecified assistance	146 583	23,6
Environment and energy	20 670	3,3
Good governance	155 924	25,1
Health, education and other social sector areas	77 033	12,4
Totalt	621 916	100,0

1) Includes multi-bilateral assistance




hem Peace Centre which aims to strengthen Palestinians' cultural identity.

Humanitarian assistance

 A lasting humanitarian crisis afflicts the Palestinian Area and emergency relief is imperative in order to avoid further deterioration, particularly in Gaza. Norway opted to channel emergency relief through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and strengthened Palestinian health institutions such as the cancer hospital in East Jerusalem, midwifery services in the West Bank and medical emergency relief for hospitals in Gaza. Another project designed to improve reproductive health targets young mothers.

Petroleum

 Under the Oil for Development programme, Norwegian experts held a basic course in petroleum management for Palestinian institutions involved in the gas sector.

Anti-corruption activities

Norway supported the Coalition for Accountability and Integrity (AMAN), an anti-corruption alliance comprising six Palestinian NGOs. The alliance collaborates with the private and public sectors to combat corruption through education.

Facts

Estimated population (2006): 3.8 million
Gross national income per capita (2006): USD 1,230
Average annual economic growth (GDP) (2000-2006): -2.2%
Economic structure: percentage of GDP by sector: Unavailable
Malnutrition among children under 5 years of age (2006): 3%
Human Development Index (HDI) Level (2005): 0.731. A country with an HDI level between 0.500 and 0.800 is regarded as having a medium quality of life.
Child mortality rate per 1000 (2006): 22.
Change 2000-2006: -5
Maternal mortality rate per 1000 births (2000): 1
HIV infection rate, 15-49 age group: Unavailable
Children in primary education (2006): 80%
Illiteracy rate 15-24 age group (2007): 0.8%
Ratio of girls to 100 boys in primary/secondary/tertiary education (2006): 100/106/122
Percentage of women in parliament: Unavailable
Estimated pay for women as percentage of men's pay in the formal sector: Unavailable
Forested area (change (1990-2005), negative numbers indicate deforestation as a percentage): Unavailable
Area protected to conserve biological diversity (2005): Unavailable
Percentage of population with access to safe drinking water (2006): 89%
Percentage of urban population living in slums (2001): 60%
Corruption Perception Index (TI) (2006): Unavailable
Fragile state, according to OECD/DAC (2006): No
Defence spending as a percentage of GDP (2005): 3%
Aid per capita (2005): USD 304
Aid as a percentage of GDP: 25%



Norwegian People's Aid in cooperation with the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions supported a training of trainers programme: 160 women were trained to teach women from remote villages to take political responsibility. Many of these women were later elected to leading positions in local political parties. A programme aimed at Palestinian youth shows increased participation and influence in public life, including the establishment of a Parliament for youth in Bethlehem and Nablus.
 Photo: Petter Bauck