



EXTERNAL EVALUATION:

“PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY”

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List of Acronyms

ACPP	Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz
PARC	Agricultural Development Association
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoL	Ministry of Labor
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
NIS	New Israeli Shekel
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations

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1. Executive Summary

Riyada Consulting was commissioned by Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz (ACPP) to conduct the external evaluation of the GVA 16 initiative "Promote Gender Equality and Socio-Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory". The evaluation took place between April – June 2019. This project was implemented jointly by the Spanish organization Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz (ACPP) and the Agricultural Development Association (PARC). The project was funded by Generalitat Valenciana (GVA) in Spain.

The GVA 16 initiative was designed to be carried out initially over a fifteen-month period and was then extended by an additional six months in order to provide the beneficiaries with enough time to fully develop their projects and cooperatives. Each project activity aimed to contribute to the improvement of Palestinian rural populations' living conditions by socio-economically empowering Palestinian rural women in five target locations (Deir Al asal, Al Khadar, Halhoul, Al Walajeh and Al Naqoura). The ultimate goal of the project is achieving socio-economic empowerment of rural Palestinian women through income generation projects or cooperatives. Specifically, the project's expected outcomes included the following:

1. The creation and support of five women's groups/cooperatives.
2. The provision of equipment, supplies and training (in technical and financial management, leadership, communication skills, networking and good governance, use and handling of equipment, or marketing) to launch income generating projects/cooperatives and are able to develop their activities.
3. Through the creation of an innovation fund, support two individual initiatives by women, who were provided with the necessary equipment and training.

The project's rationale is born out of a combination of ACPP's commitment to women's economic empowerment, PARC's years of experience in the field and the clear need for economic development in Palestine, as well as the initiative's alignment with the Generalitat Valenciana in Spain's strategic plan. Perhaps one of the most significant components of this design is its theory of change that is guided by PARC and ACPP women's empowerment approach, based on the notion that poverty and the marginalization faced by Palestinian communities cannot be tackled without addressing its root causes. Among these foundational causes that have been identified, the most relevant to the GVA 16 initiative is the exclusion of women from decision making on the household and community levels, as well as the lack of opportunities that exist for women to develop as economic actors outside the domestic sphere. By focusing on the socio-economic empowerment of women, this project and the approach that is foundational to its design, provide a key sustainability component in terms approaching the economic challenges facing the selected communities with a gendered lens and with the aim of promoting equality as an economic benefit.

The evaluation team has collected both quantitative and qualitative data, as well as conducted an in-depth desk review of relevant project documents. The results of which have been analyzed to provide not only an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation and management of the GVA 16 initiative, but also to highlight areas for future growth as this is a project that is part of a larger set of programming that seeks to continue to develop opportunities for socio-economic development for women. Furthermore, the methodology that the team has applied in this evaluation examines the implementation and management of the project in relation to the stated objectives, as well as explores the results of the project using economic, decision-

making and ownership, gender equality and access to market indicators to provide a holistic perspective designed to help guide future development of similar initiatives.

Key Findings:

Relevance (line-up and coherence): The overall relevance of the GVA 16 Initiative was a strength of the action in terms of being appropriate and encouraging engagement within the community. In all aspects of the design and early implementation, there was great care taken to empower women as decision-makers in the design of their projects. The process was inclusive, and the communities targeted, and local councils were consulted in order to ensure that the action was aligned with the larger community needs. One of the challenges faced in terms of relevancy was the high cost (relative to the income of the beneficiaries) of participation in the cooperatives, which delayed the start of the projects. Two of the projects initiated needed additional technical and market studies; namely Al Naqoura and Al Walajeh projects. An additional implementation plan was put in place to implement the required studies and interventions to fully operate the projects. This is an evidence of best practices and adaptability of the implementing partners ACP and PARC to the needs of the projects. Additionally, in terms of adaptability, the initiative did extend its overall timeline at the beginning of the project to accommodate the extra time needed to raise the start-up fees.

Efficiency: During the original period and the extension period of the project, PARC implemented all related activities with the groups. This included capacity building training sessions and equipping the shop with needed infrastructure in order for it to be operational. Additionally, PARC allocated a local coordinator which helped to provide needed making the project awareness campaign, application process, group formation and the implementation of the action plan easier and more efficient. In addition, local ministries, councils and cooperatives all worked together with PARC's team in all activities in terms of supervision and implementation. This open approach provided the opportunity to include professional and experienced members from all related stakeholders, who gave when possible effective suggestions and rich insights stemming from their different backgrounds working in the sector. This approach created confidence and strengthened trust between the beneficiary's groups and governmental and local institutions. The challenges faced included the delay in the start of the projects. Originally this project was designed to start on the 21st of March 2017 and end by the 21st of June 2018, with a total implementation period of 15 month. However, due to the time-consuming tasks of the application process and the collection of beneficiaries' contributions, the project planned activities were delayed. This resulted in a six-month extension. These delays at the beginning of the project had implications on the different projects. In Deir Al Asal, they lost the opportunity to set up their store in their preferred location as it was rented by the time the cooperative was operational. In Al Khader and Halhoul, the cooperatives missed grape seasons and only Halhoul was able to be in production during one season, while Al Khader has yet to begin their project in the next season. In Al Walajeh, the delay resulted in lack of forward progress during valuable tourist months and in Naqoura the project faced challenges with the equipment needed to fully operate the bakery.

Effectiveness: The planned activities were effectively implemented and fulfilled the project objectives. In particular, the cooperative groups were active and attended trainings and awareness raising sessions. The trainings were provided for both technical skills development based on the project of the cooperative, as well as provided to help develop basic management skills and increase understanding of the cooperative approach. The two sessions were 16 hours of instruction delivered over 4 days each. Additionally, the awareness raising sessions helped to empower women to have a voice and demand their rights like in the case of one of the

beneficiaries who took legal action against the male members of the family who did not want to give her rightful share of her inheritance. She won the case and got the assets.

Perhaps one of the most effective projects can be seen in Deir al Asal, where not only were the women able to serve the needs of their own community but also for that of the surrounding four communities. Additionally, although the project in Halhoul was delayed and run for one season only, it was a clear benefit to the community and the group made good net income from the projects and they are already thinking of other products they will make with additional crops. Finally, all of the beneficiaries are still in a learning by doing phase of their development and therefore will require focused training in certain topics which would affect the project positively such as accounting, procurement and marketing. On an institutional level the project was successful in its development of solid groups that have the capacity to work collectively.

The innovative grant recipients were less effective as there was not much support added for these beneficiaries. That said this is a new element in the initiative and these grantees were pilot projects. Therefore, their success was also an opportunity for learning within the implementing PARC team.

Impact: When assessing the impact of the GVA 16 Initiative, it is clear that the process of forming the groups and supporting the individual initiatives had a positive impact in that it created a foundation for future growth in communities that are highly vulnerable. The innovation grants provided examples for the communities to see female entrepreneurs which is powerful in terms of pushing against the social norms that restrict women in these areas, as well as opened other individuals within the community to consider how their talents could be marketable. The formation of the groups and the support provided also helped as the locations were remote and had limited community-based organizations and women organizations that could provide support to the women socially and economically. Thus, these projects were an innovation in terms of its specific focus on the socio-economic empowerment to women. In terms of economic empowerment, at this time it has yet to be realized in all of the projects; however, the three projects that were operational showed success in terms of generating income and the other two have the potential to do so once operational due to the viability of the project ideas and the need within the communities for these projects. The impact of the initiative is in the foundation that was created, and the relationships built within the community between relevant local councils and ministries and the cooperatives. The attention given to the development of the ideas set the groups up to be successful in the future, with additional support that will be elaborated in the analysis of each project.

Sustainability: In terms of sustainability, all of the projects are sustainable as a result of their designs being aligned with community needs. The strength of the projects is in this alignment, but there are challenges that still need additional work in terms of the projects continuing to hold the interest of the beneficiaries. In particular, in the case of the locations where the projects have yet to start due to suitability of equipment, missing the crop seasons and missing needed equipment, work will need to be done to re-engage the beneficiaries and help them begin their projects. Establishing new market linkages and marketing of their products in general remain a challenge for all the beneficiaries due to the remoteness of their location and lack of connection to the marketplace. Discussions with PARC show that special attention will be given to future capacity building sessions designed to address these issues. These will include a full package of

accounting and business management that is currently under design by PARC. As the project expands and as per the theory of change of PARC, a strategy needs to be put in place for a smooth transition from the formation/mobilization phase that was done through the GVA 16 project into organization and institutionalization. Additionally, the groups are in need of more advanced business training in order to improve their planning and strategic development. This is particularly significant due to the reality that all of these communities are highly vulnerable economically and politically due to where they are located. That said, these ideas are serving the community and clearly would potentially be able to provide income for the beneficiaries if support is continued.

Conclusions:

The initiative focused on a group of **income generation projects/cooperatives** that were largely informal in their business practices, most were non-registered (4 out of the 5 are non-registered) with different levels of group cohesion. They were selected from communities characterized by high rates of poverty and vulnerability largely the result of limited access to economic development due to oppressive occupation policies. As these are communities that face many challenges, the short implementation time of the initiative was challenging, in particular with regard to collecting the participants monetary contribution to their cooperative. This requirement of the beneficiaries contribution does increase the level of commitment, but it should be anticipated in such low income communities that it will take time for the participants to raise this amount. Additionally, considering that this initiative targets beneficiaries and cooperatives in their early stages of development, time to learn and grow should be taken into account when creating an indicator to measure income generation. Therefore, expectations of income generation need to have multiple measurements such as break-even analysis and taking into account that the cooperative's need for developing their business models and systems, these could include pre and post assessments and a midterm review to assess progress and detect the challenges and issues at an early stage to allow for taking the necessary corrective measures during the implementation of the project in preparation for end of project evaluations. Furthermore, in terms of measuring the increase in income, due to the multiple factors that exist within such impoverished communities, made vulnerable under occupation, it would be best to set a percent change over time indicator, rather than a specific monetary amount designed to measure income generation.

The **individual initiatives/projects** represent an interesting aspect of this project design. This was an innovative approach to empowerment in that it focused on two inspired individuals and provided each with the resources needed to create their own initiative. One is a carpenter whose project is still operational and doing relatively well and one is an interior designer whose project is not fully operational yet.

The successful project's results were not only beneficial to the individual, but also provided the community an example of successful female entrepreneurship. This is a powerful impact, especially considering the context and challenges that exist not only for women but for the community as a whole. By sparking the entrepreneurial spirit of one individual there was a positive result throughout the community. Local councils and community members were able to look at

the possibilities that could be created when one individual is empowered to pursue their vision. However, such initiatives need a more structured and systematic approach starting from ensuring that the right expertise is part of the selection committee that would review proposed entrepreneurial project ideas, putting in place thorough assessment procedures that ensures not only the viability of the project idea, but also the capacity of the selected entrepreneur to establish and grow a business, ensuring a supportive ecosystem around the project that would include the technical expertise needed to accompany the different phases of the projects from establishment, launching, expanding and securing sustainable markets. All of this requires a business support model that goes beyond the project's timeframe.

The GVA 16 Initiative was an opportunity for beneficiaries to build their capacity and expand their horizons, as well as audiences within Valencia deepen their understanding of conditions in Palestine through an **exchange of experience**. Through a conference held in Palestine and a trip for selected beneficiaries to Valencia, participants were able to not only learn from one another, but also raise awareness among the Valencia audiences about the realities of life in Palestine. One component that could be improved in future initiatives would be to network and pair the cooperatives with business initiatives within Spain, either as potential trade partners, or in a mentoring role in order to continue the development and growth of the cooperatives and projects beyond the life of the project.

The foundational approach taken in this initiative promoted **gender equality and economic empowerment** as essential to the stabilization and strengthening of women. The approach was considerate of the nuances that exist within the selected communities for women, particularly in terms of the challenges they face due to the poverty and oppression as a result of the occupation that characterize their communities, as well as their own inexperience within the economic sphere. This attention to context is particularly apparent in the capacity building and training that took place, as well as the time taken by the project staff to ensure the initiatives were viable and representative of the women's choice. However, as these contexts were highly complex, there were still challenges to gender equality and economic empowerment that the project needed to overcome. Primarily, in terms of equality, this initiative did attempt to provide the tools through awareness raising and support of the female beneficiaries, however the level of success and support for their projects was still largely connected to the different levels of social acceptance of women in the economic sphere per community. This indicates that while this GVA 16 initiative was positive in its promotion of women, the rate of acceptance was determined mostly by the overall social expectations that existed before the project began. That said, the groups were for the most part supported by the local councils and it can be assumed with time as the cooperatives and projects begin to earn more income, this support will likely grow. Lastly, it is clear that the more that men and male youth can be involved and brought into the project, the more it will be possible to not only shift social expectations, but also potentially increase the economic benefit of the cooperatives and projects as men and male youth could help promote them in locations and social circles that might be currently closed to women.

Recommendations:

- The cooperatives need support with developing business systems and skills in order to further develop their initiatives.
- Innovative grant recipients needed additional support through specialized technical training relevant to their projects, mentoring and networking with other entrepreneurs in their field and need to be included in business training and strategy development.
- Special attention must be given to the specific infrastructure limitations within rural communities when purchasing equipment such as the high electricity costs.
- Individual projects should continue to be part of such initiatives only if they are provided with needed additional systematic support through mentors and networking with other entrepreneurs in their field and need to be included in business training and strategy development.
- Networking between groups should be encouraged, but consideration about the limited time available to the women should be taken into consideration.
- The current structure for the exchange provides excellent benefits for social and personal expansion for selected beneficiaries, but more attention could be given to economic networking that will help increase economic efforts.
- In addition to awareness raising, the exhibitions and exchange has the potential to link private investors and business leaders with the different groups, which would contribute to their overall development.
- The promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women within vulnerable communities must continue but should become increasingly inclusive of men and male youth as women have received these trainings previously.

Lessons Learned:

- The relationship with the cooperatives and projects must be carefully maintained in order to ensure future success.
- Innovation grants need their own matrix of activities in order to be successful as these individuals have different business needs and do not receive the same support at the cooperatives.
- Individual projects have a great impact on the views of the community and serve an added purpose in terms of advocating for women as economic actors.
- Business Strategy development is needed with all parties in order to better prepare them for the future and ensure sustainability of their projects.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background and Context

The Palestinian population is 4,781,248 persons; including 2,881,957 persons in the West Bank and 1,899,291 persons in Gaza Strip. 51% of the population are males and 49% are females. 77.1% of the total population are living in urban areas, 14.6% are living in rural areas, and 8.3% live in refugee camps. Around 45% of the population are under the age of 18 years old and thus it is a relatively young society. The average family size in Palestine is 5.1 persons¹. The percentage of women-headed households in Palestine was 11% (12% in the West Bank and 9% in Gaza Strip). Poverty is more widespread than previously believed; 29.2 percent of individuals were living below the poverty level in 2017. Poverty rates among individuals living in female-headed households stood at 30.6 percent compared to 29.2 percent between those living in male-headed households. About 20 percent of the individuals living in female-headed households suffer from deep poverty, unable to fulfill the minimum required for food, clothing and housing, compared to about 17 percent of the male-headed households². Women's participation in the labor force remains low at 21% with a wage gap of in the average daily wages between men and women of 92 NIS for women compared to 129 NIS for men³. Women's participation in public life remained limited compared with men, where 82% of judges were men, compared to 18% for women, while 73% of registered lawyers were men, compared to 27% for women and 80% of prosecutors were men, compared to 20% for women. Women represented 25% of registered engineers with the Union of Engineers while men represented 75%. On the other hand, in 2017, 31% of members of students' councils in the West Bank universities were females, compared to 69% for males. In the public sector, women represented 43% of the employees in civil public sector, compared to 57% for men. In the civil public sector, women represented 12% of the general directors and higher, compared to 88% for men in the same category⁴.

The West Bank, under the Oslo Accords, was divided into 3 zones: Area A, B and C. Area A, which is made up of the Palestinian city centres (excluding Hebron) is under Palestinian civil and security control. Area B, which is made up of the Palestinian built-up areas outside Area A, is under Palestinian civil control and joint Israeli and Palestinian security control, though Israel has exclusive right to enter Areas B to conduct "security operations" as it wishes. Area C, which makes up 61% of the West Bank, is under Israeli civil and security control. These area assignments were originally meant to be temporary, with the land being phased into total Palestinian control by the end of the five-year interim period as designated by the Oslo Accords, which was set to end with final status negotiations in 1999. Needless to say, this phasing out has been replaced with new

¹ PCBS. Census 2017.

² PCBS. Poverty Profile in Palestine. 2017.

³ PCBS. Annual Labor Force Survey. 2018.

⁴ PCBS. Press Release on the Occasion of International Women's Day. 2019.

and stricter policies designed to limit mobility, accessibility and break the any realization of a continuous and stabilized Palestinian State.

Today the humanitarian situation affecting the vulnerable rural communities selected for this project are directly related to their location in Area C or just behind the separation wall. Area C represents an area under Israeli military control, where the combination of a planning regime and restrictive zoning and settlement expansion and violence by Israeli settlers have created a situation of widespread insecurity and deteriorating living conditions. Area C is a region that is rich in its natural resources and contains about 60% of the agricultural lands in the West Bank. Some 300,000 Palestinians currently live in Area C, while the majority of Palestinians in the West Bank (some 2.3 Million) currently live in Areas A and B; both of which constitute 39% of the West Bank. Hence, Area C has the potential for significant urban expansion to accommodate Palestinian population growth and economic development needs. Furthermore, the area has many touristic and archaeological sites, water resources from water wells and springs, Dead Sea minerals and salts and Stone (including marble) deposits.

In spite of the acknowledged importance of Area C for sustainable development in Palestine and for the establishment of a sustainable Palestinian State, the Palestinian Authority has no security or administrative control over this area. Therefore, Palestinian development in Area C required approval by the Israeli Civil Administration (ICA). This restriction on growth is having a detrimental effect on rural communities as well as those that are located near the separation wall. These closest to the wall are suffering several problems that hinder agricultural production, such as restricting the use of arable land due to the effects of restrictions on movement and access imposed by the Israeli occupation, as well as the very presence of the separation wall which effectively fractures the landscape and livelihood of those living near it. The economic impact of the wall has resulted in unnatural routing for movement of the residents in the area, making access to water and other resources challenging and often times all together blocked. These communities lack of private investment, caused by high unemployment and lack of capital. Making the cycle of poverty increasingly difficult to break, often instead further deteriorating the fabric of the communities and their ability to maintain acceptable living standards. This has created a situation of growing food insecurity prompted by the drastic drop in purchasing power resulting from the conflict, which has forced people to resort to subsistence strategies and the decline of long term sustainable planning.

2.2 Project Background

The “Promote Gender Equality and Socio-Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory” is an initiative funded by the Generalitat Valenciana and implemented by the Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz (ACPP) and the Agricultural Development Association (PARC). The project aims to strengthen economic and social capacities of women members out of 5 cooperatives and 2 fair and equitable individual initiatives of rural women in the following communities:

Location	Population 2018
Al Naqoura	1805
Al Walajeh	2706
Al Khader	12116
Halhoul	27515
Deir Al Asal ⁵	3574
Total	47,716

Specifically, the project's expected outcomes included the following:

1. Strengthened capacities of 132 women in technical, productive and financial management, technical marketing for cooperatives and women leadership
2. Improved economic situation and quality of life of 132 women and their families, organized in 5 cooperatives (130 women) and 2 individual initiatives.
3. Promoted equality between men and women, and in particular the rights and role as a socio-economic agents of Palestinian women, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in Spain

The project worked with the following cooperatives, from which representatives were selected to participate in the exchange experience in Valencia:

- **Al Khader and Halhoul:** The cooperatives were engaged in the production and sale of grape molasses in their communities and in areas adjacent to them. These cooperatives aimed to address the current obstacles they face in accessing the marketplace in a cost efficient and timely manner in order to avoid spoilage of their crops. As a solution these groups opted to create produced from the grapes themselves in order to avoid this issue. This production allows the grapes to be processed as molasses and increases its ability to remain fresh for a longer period of time.
- **Deir Al 'Asal:** This cooperative developed a store that would address the needs of mothers and children interested in products such as clothing, toys and accessories in the four surrounding villages that make up the community of Deir Al Asal. By creating the store, it provided access for the community to these goods without having to travel to Hebron which was costly, time-consuming and carried risks due to roadblocks and the possibility of settler attacks.
- **Al Walajeh:** This cooperative is responsible for the organization, management and maintenance of a recreational area and kitchen established within the community. The function of this area is to allow Palestinian families a place in which to spend time outdoors

⁵ The population represents the 4 communities included in the project: Deir Al Asal Al Fouqa, Deir Al Asal At Tahta, Sikka and Al Majd.

and promote tourism in the area, providing a place to rest during the trip. This cooperative is located in a tourist area which highlights the existence of an ancient olive tree.

- **Al Naqoura:** The cooperative is responsible for the preparation of pastas and sweets more effectively and efficiently to increase productivity, in order to increase the income of women involved and their socioeconomic status. The project was built on an already established small bakery that was effective but needed expansion and resources to reach a wider customer base.

The project also worked to promote 2 individual microbusinesses. One of which was an interior designer that was provided with support and capacity building to established herself and further develop her business. The second was a carpenter who through the repurposing of discarded wood created product for purchase. She also received the support she needed to formalize her production and develop her business model. Lastly, this project is part of a wider strategy in which other public institutions have supported two more women and their innovative initiatives as individual entrepreneurs. The project is oriented to the processes carried out in the 2030 Agenda.

2.3 Objectives and Scope:

The goal of this assessment is to provide the Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz (ACPP) an external evaluation of the GVA 16 initiative. The overall objective of the evaluation is to get an external perspective on the process carried out by ACPP and PARC, as well as analyze the success and impact of the approach taken in the implementation of this initiative. Specifically, by focusing on the how the women's projects and cooperatives developed with the support of PARC, have worked as a means to strengthen the Palestinian civil society with a focus on women's groups. This evaluation was designed to provide an external and objective view of the project processes in order to draw meaningful conclusions and provide recommendations and lessons learned. This information was used to not only highlight the strengths and weaknesses specific to the GVA 16 initiative, but also explore the approach taken as it relates to the implementation and improvement of similar projects in the future. This evaluation has been done according the rules of the Generalitat Valenciana.

To meet these objectives, Riyadh Consulting was commissioned by ACPP and PARC to conduct the assignment. The data collection and the field work for Mid-March to Mid-May 2019.

The Scope of the evaluation and the analysis done was guided by the following key elements:

- **Relevance (line-up and coherence):**
 - **Adaptability:** Whether the project is adapted or not to the context in which it was to be developed and to the target group.
 - **Appropriation/engagement:** The evaluation will seek communication and involvement of all stakeholders from the beginning and be understood as an opportunity to facilitate a learning culture and sharing of results among all interested parties. Through the appropriation/engagement criterion we want to inquire about the democratic participation of the rights-holders in relation to the strategy and objectives of the project, as well as to the values and principles from a rights-based perspective.

- Efficiency,
- Efficacy / Social impact,
- Coverage,
- Sustainability.

Additionally, as the foundational theory of change is one that connects the economic empowerment of women as an essential mechanism for addressing gender equality and the improvement of social and economic stability of society, it is essential that the evaluation be conducted through a gendered lens. This is in order to examine not only the dynamics of the project implementation and design, but also help assess the initiatives impact on the socio-economic empowerment of women.

Furthermore, as the goals of the initiative are based on economic empowerment, our business specialist explored the project from an economic, profitability and sustainability perspective, as this initiative is seeking to also cultivate generative business models.

Some of the key aspects that were measured included:

- Analysis of the achievement of the objectives of the project: in short-term and in long-term.
- Evaluate the strengths of cooperatives and see how we can continue to support them.
- Have a specific section of learned lessons.
- Analyze the leadership in cooperatives: Is the leadership shared? How?
- Evaluate if there are any alternative work mechanisms to improve profit, such as, for example, the configuration of a second level cooperative association for the commercialization of the products.
- Analyze the difficulties during the project and in general to: involve men in the activities and therefore in the changes that can happen at a structural level.
- Analyze the difficulties that women face in the family sphere to participate in the project and to work.
- Analyze the sustainability of Cooperatives.
- Analyze the support to the individual initiatives and if they are sustainable in the time.
- Impact in the cooperative sector.
- How to improve relations with the Valencian cooperative sector after the participation of the Valencian experts.
- Gender aspects:
 - The role of the women in their community and if this role has changed.
 - If the women have more capacities to participate and what is the acceptance of this by the community, in general and in particular within their households.
 - Who decides how the money is used in the family? Men or women? If are the women, how they manage their money? And where they keep their money?

3. Methodology

3.1 Preparatory Discussions:

As part of the preparatory phase, ACPP and PARC representatives and Riyadh's project teams held a kickoff meeting to discuss and prepare for this external project evaluation on March 7, 2019. During the preparatory discussions, the expectations from the evaluation were confirmed, the key stakeholders to be involved were jointly identified and a comprehensive overview of the implemented projects was provided to the evaluation team by ACPP and PARC staff. The meeting was concluded with listing the key documents to be provided to the evaluation team and it was agreed that the timing for the GVA external evaluation would be from March – May 2019.

3.2 Document Review:

Riyada consultants thoroughly reviewed a number of relevant project documents in order to gain a solid understanding of the project's expected results and activities, as well as the overall context of the beneficiaries and their needs. Project documentation reviewed included the following:

- Baseline Report GVA 16
- Final evaluation indicators
- Logistical framework
- Project activities
- PARC Final Report for the project.
- Project Proposal / Document inclusive of the project rationale and justifications, specific activities, final implementation plan and list of any modifications
- Selection criteria of the innovative initiatives and the full application of the two that were supported by the project.
- Manual of procedures for procurement or guidelines that were applied during the project.
- Training materials and reports, if there are any pre and post training assessments, please make sure they are included.
- All promotional material or plans for the awareness campaigns that were conducted.

The preparatory meeting and discussions with ACPP and PARC, as well as the document review informed the development of the assessment tools that are listed in Annex 1.

3.3 Finalization and Assigning the Research Team:

Based on the discussions with ACPP and PARC, Riyadh Consulting finalized the evaluation team to be assigned for the GVA 16 external evaluation. The final team included the following:

- 1) Shuaa Marrar, Senior Researcher and Team Leader,
- 2) Elaine Moller, Project Officer / Researcher,
- 3) Sabeeh Qarban, Business Consultant,
- 4) Sireen Huso, Gender Specialist,
- 5) Nayif Abed, Statistician,

6) Samira Al Jundi, Field Researcher.

3.4 Qualitative Research:

3.4.1 Interviews:

The following guiding principles were applied when conducting the interviews:

1. The district offices interviews included only the manager and the in-charge staff relevant to the project.
2. The one-on-one interviews were scheduled to last from 30 - 60 minutes.
3. Whenever possible the consulting team worked in parallel and conducted interviews with different individuals at the same time in order to increase time efficiency.

The following stakeholders were identified and were interviewed:

Table 1: Key Informant Interviews with Project Partners (ACPP and PARC):				
Name	Title	Location	Date	Researcher
Rafael Palomino de la Torre	ACPP Middle East Representative	Ramallah	11 April 2019	Shuaa
Victor Martinez	ACPP Middle East Representative	Ramallah	11 April 2019	Shuaa
Amaia Camacho	ACPP Middle East Coordinator	Via Skype	17 April 2019	Elaine
Silvia Tusón Fuentes	ACPP País Valencià	Via Skype	17 April 2019	Elaine
Isabel Torres	Marketing Trainer in Palestine	Email	2 May 2019	ACPP sent email and translated response
Regina Campos	Congress Participant	Email	2 May 2019	ACPP sent email and translated response
Izzat Zeidan	Programs and Project Director	PARC office - Ramallah	12 May 2019	Evaluation Team
Ruba Daas	Project Coordinator	PARC office - Ramallah	12 May 2019	Evaluation Team

Organization	Name / Title	Location	Date
Director General of Ministry of Agriculture Directorate in South Hebron	Ms. Samah Abu Haikal	Hebron	14 April 2019
Ministry of Labor / Directorate of Cooperatives in Hebron	Mr. Sami Al Darabei	Hebron	16 April 2019
Director of Ministry of Agriculture Directorate in North Hebron	Ms. Sahar Sharawi	Hebron	16 April 2019
Ministry of Labor / Directorate of Cooperatives in Bethlehem	Mr. Ehab Ayoub	Bethlehem	14 April 2019
Deputy Head of Joint Service Council	Mr. Mohammad Al Shahateet	Deir Al Asal	10 April 2019
Public Relations Department at Halhoul Municipality	Ms. Maha Al Badawi	Hebron	10 April 2019
Head of Local Council	Mr. Ahmad Abu Hasheesh	Nablus	2 May 2019

Cooperative	Focal Point Name / Title	Location	Date
Deir Al Asal	Ms. Amneh Abu Jwied	Deir Al Asal - Hebron	10 April 2019
Halhoul	Ms. Yosra Shaheen	Halhoul – Hebron	16 April 2019
Al Khader	Ms. Adla Taha	Al Khader – Bethlehem	14 April 2019
Al Walajeh	Ms. Samia	Al Walajeh – Bethlehem	14 April 2019
Al Naqura	Ms. Shadia Abu Hasheesh	Al Naqura – Nablus	23 April 2019

3.4.2 Focus Groups / Group Interviews:

The following guiding principles were applied when conducting the focus groups:

1. The participants of the women group will include both the members and the managing members of the group/ cooperative (at least (10-12 participants)
2. The focus group and group meetings were scheduled to last 60-90 minutes.
3. In order to gain a perspective on the impact of the trip to Valencia, selected members of the beneficiaries who traveled there and participated in the conference were met/interviewed in three locations.

Table 4: Focus groups schedule per location:

Location	Number of Attendants	Date
Halhoul - Hebron	18	16 April 2019
Deir Al Asal – Hebron	12	10 April 2019
Al- Khader – Bethlehem	11	14 April 2019
Al Walajeh – Bethlehem	5 ⁶	14 April 2019
Al- Naqura – Nablus	16	23 April 2019
TOTAL	62	

3.5 Quantitative Research-Beneficiary Impact Survey for Project Direct Beneficiaries

The quantitative survey targeted on the project’s direct beneficiaries and **a total sample of (100) direct beneficiaries** will fill the beneficiary impact assessment tool. This provided the basic profiling as well as key socio-economic empowerment indicators relevant to the project interventions. The quantitative data aimed to identify the impact of the project on the following aspects

- Demographic information: age, marital status, education, size of household etc
- Economic indicators: household income, ownership of income generation projects, income from the cooperative, etc
- Ownership of assets: land, home, other assets,
- Decision making over assets, inside and outside the household,
- Access and mobility: role in marketing, access to markets, to educational and capacity building activities etc.
- Results of the training and capacity building.

3.6 Data Analysis and Reporting:

After all quantitative data was collected, Riyadh Consulting entered and processed it into SPSS format. The complete data set was entered, cleaned, checked, and coded during double-entry data processing. The accompanying documentation, including code key, were included along with the *complete data sets when submitted to ACPP/PARC*. Accompanying documentation includes a roster of all survey beneficiaries, and indicates rates and reasons for non-response, and if an interview was conducted. After the data collection was completed, the research team analyzed all information collected according to the research objectives and indicators ensuring the triangulation of the data from the different sources.

⁶ The low attendance was due to the women being too busy to attend due to work and events happening both in and out of the village. However, it is important to note that the meeting time was arranged according to their input and selection of the day and time was based on their choice.

Qualitative data collected from the key informant interviews, small group interviews, focus groups, and the detailed document review was thoroughly analyzed in the form of detailed field reports. The quantitative data was analyzed with SPSS software. After data has been entered and cleaned, the general results were generated and then used to construct the key sections of the assessment report according to the specified categories. Our research team further analyzed the data according to the analysis levels that will be agreed upon with ACPP/PARC. These will initially include: disaggregated data by gender, location, age, and relation to project activities.

After entering, processing, and cleaning all data, the consultant submitted the draft evaluation report for review and feedback from ACPP. The consultants will address all comments received and will submit the final evaluation report. The final report format which was agreed upon with ACPP/PARC.

3.7 Challenges and Limitations:

- **Lack of available and/or reliable data** -- The groups were largely informal in their formation and as a result the record keeping and understanding of larger principles of business are limited. This created challenges in terms of fully evaluating profit/loss and potential for future growth. Additionally, as it took so long for the cooperatives to begin their projects due to the how long it took them to raise the 2000 NIS membership fee and that many of the initiatives have not successfully started their project's profit making action, there was no real income to be evaluated. The average monthly income was not calculated for any other groups, other than for Halhul. This created some confusion around how to measure the income generation both in the present and the potential of it in the future. It should be noted, that PARC has taken practical steps towards establishing simplified financial record keeping for the cooperatives and the ones supported by the project will benefit from the additional capacity building that will be provided in this area.
- **Measure used to collect the data** -- The focus of the inquiry was on the direct beneficiaries of the project due to the fact that all supported projects were start up projects and it would be too early to measure wider impacts on the community beyond the direct beneficiaries. This has resulted in the fact that most of the evaluation respondents are the members of the cooperatives, which were 100% females. While men's perspective on the project were taken into account in the qualitative interviews with the main stakeholders that included local council members, representatives of relevant national institutions and some male relatives of the beneficiaries who were present at the time of the interviews or focus groups, there is a limitation in terms of capturing the attitudes of the men in the community. In the future, it is suggested that more resources are allocated for a community survey of perceptions and attitudes that is inclusive of the community as a whole in order to truly reflect the income of the initiative.
- **Self-reported data** -- Self-reported data can contain several potential sources of bias that the evaluation team is on alert for and note as a limitation. These biases became apparent through the field visits, focus groups and interviews as compared to the literature review. These are: (1) **selective memory** [remembering or not remembering experiences or events that occurred at some point in the past]; (2) **attribution** [the act of attributing

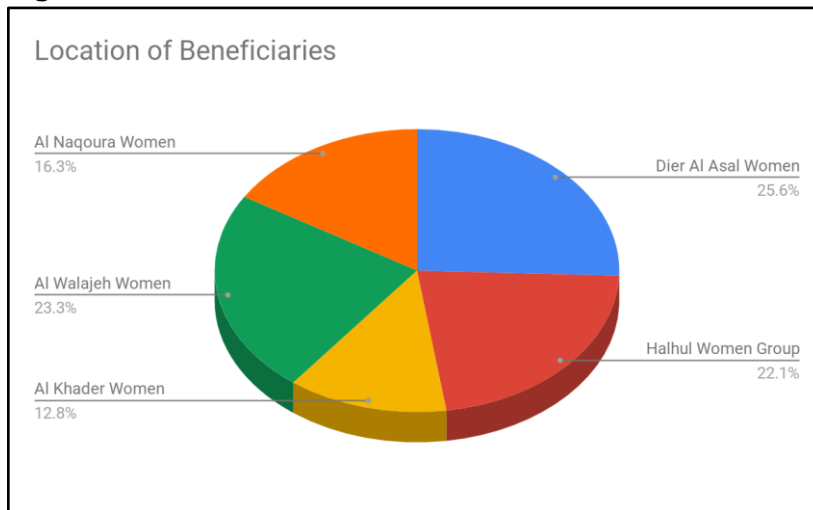
positive events and outcomes to one's own agency, but attributing negative events and outcomes to external forces]; and, (3) **exaggeration** [the act of representing outcomes or embellishing events as more significant than is actually suggested from other data]. To mitigate these biases, the evaluation team collected primary qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources that was not limited to one category. The analysis included in this report include the findings from extensive desk review, interviews with ACPP, PARC, stakeholders and direct beneficiaries and triangulation and comparison of the data was conducted continuously. Where there was contradictions of perspectives around certain findings, the evaluation team validated these by conducting additional research and discussions with the different parties and included the validated results.

5. Findings and Data Analysis:

5.1 General Overview of the Beneficiaries:

As this initiative took place across several locations, therefore it is important to understand the level of input provided from each location in order to ensure a clear perspective on where the information provided is coming from. As seen in Figure 1, the largest group 25.6% was Dier Asal Women's Group, second was 23.3% from Al Walajeh, third was 22.1% from the Halhul Women's Group, fourth was 16.3% from the Al Naqoura Women's Group and last was Al Khader Women's Group.

Figure 1: Location of Beneficiaries



As can be seen in Table 5, the data collected provided by the leadership, board members and management of the cooperatives was entirely provided by women (100%). Which indicates that these cooperatives and activities achieved their goal of empowering and focusing on women within these vulnerable communities.

Table 5: The relationship/role to the project/cooperative by Gender

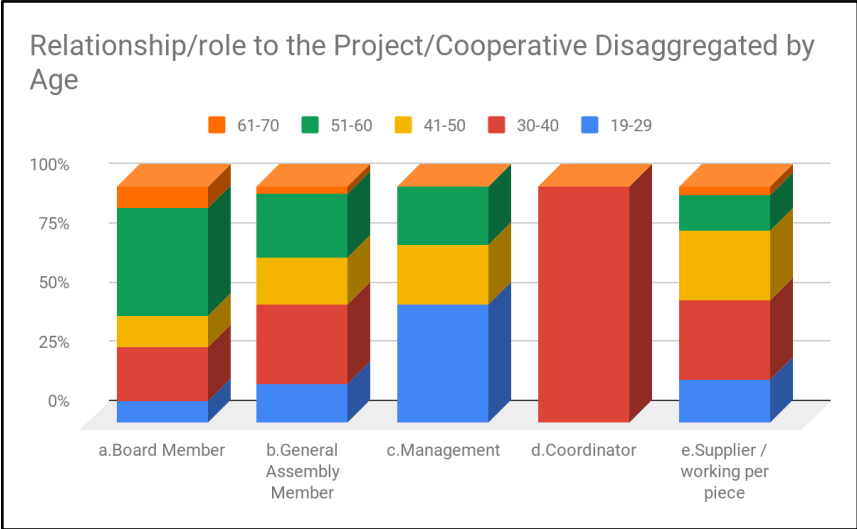
What is your relationship/role to the project/cooperative?	Number
Board Member	25
General Assembly Member	29
Management	4

Coordinator	1
Supplier / working per piece	27
Total	86

Given the goal of the project being primarily focused on women’s empowerment, it is promising to see the strong representation of women, it does not account for how the cooperatives are functioning in relationship to the male community members and other organizations within the community with largely male leadership.

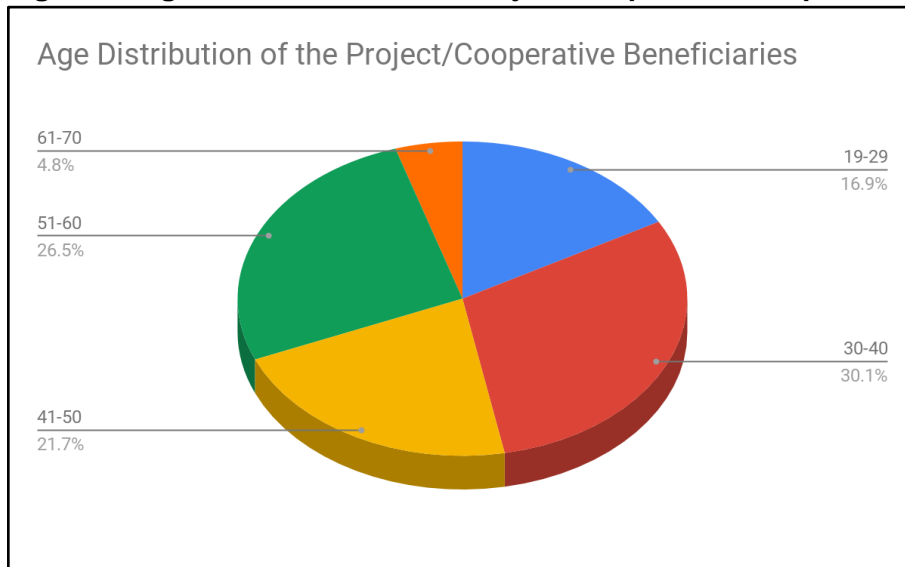
As seen in Figure 2, when examining the relationship/role to the project/cooperative disaggregated by age it is clear that the roles are there throughout the different projects and cooperatives there are opportunities for women of all ages in as board members, general assembly members, management as well as those who were working as suppliers and working on individual pieces. Additionally, youth were also direct beneficiaries as all of the individuals in the coordinator role are between the ages of 30 to 40 years of age.

Figure 2: Relationship/role to the Project/Cooperative Disaggregated by Age



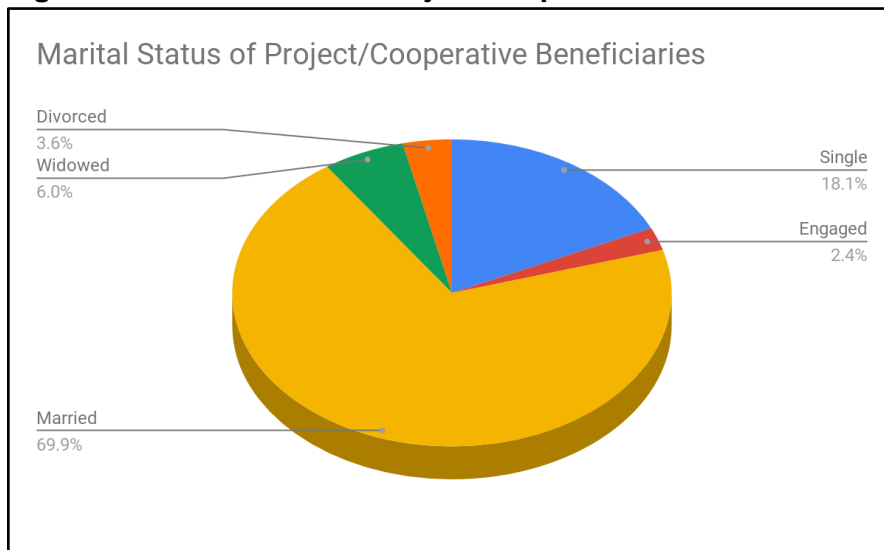
When considering the age distribution across all of the roles, as seen in Figure 3, it is clear that 30-40 year old represent the largest percentage with 30.1%, second largest representation are 51-60 year old with 26.5% and the third largest are 41-50 year old with 21.7% representation. This indicates that the majority of the projects are inclusive of adult women. Young women 19-29 years old represent 16.9%, while elderly women 61-70 years old represent only 4.9%.

Figure 3: Age Distribution of the Project/Cooperative Respondents



This is an interesting distribution because it points to women who are likely to have children as also participating in the project/cooperatives and therefore the role of these initiatives should be taken into consideration with the status of these women and the amount of responsibilities they are balancing with the work of their project/cooperative. Further illustrating this, Figure 4 shows the vast majority of women are married 69.9%, 18.1% single, 6% widowed, 3.6% divorced and 2.4% engaged.

Figure 4: Marital Status of Project/Cooperative Beneficiaries



As seen in Table 6, there is a wide variety of education levels represented across the different roles in the project/cooperatives. For those with no education, 3.6% participate as general assembly members and 7.7% participate as suppliers/working by piece. In total only 3.7% of the participants have no formal education, which indicates that the majority are educated. For those

with basic school (up to 10th grade) education, 21.7% participate as board members, 21.4% as general assembly members and 38.5% as suppliers/working by piece. In total those with basic education represent 25.6% of beneficiaries. The majority of participants 50% have a secondary education; 56.5% are Board Members, 46.4% are General Assembly Members, 75% are Management and 46.2% are Suppliers/working per piece. This indicates that the overall capacity of the project/cooperatives are relatively educated and therefore contributes to these initiatives ability to learn, develop and plan for the future. Overall, 20.7% of the project/cooperative participants have their Bachelor's degree. These higher educated individuals are working across all of the roles and taking on a variety of responsibilities. 21.7% are Board members, 28.6% are General Assembly Members, 25% are Managers, 7.7% are suppliers/working per piece. Interestingly enough 100% of all of the coordinators for the project/cooperatives have their Bachelor's degrees. This could be seen as a promising indicator in terms of the level of education of the coordinators and the likelihood that they would be able to rely on their educational background to help support the proper development of their project/cooperatives.

Table 6: Relationship/Role to the Project/Cooperative Disaggregated by Highest Level of Education:

What is your relationship/role to the project/cooperative?	What is your highest level of education?			
	No formal education	Basic school (up to 10th grade)	Secondary school	Bachelor's
a. Board Member		21.7%	56.5%	21.7%
b. General Assembly Member	3.6%	21.4%	46.4%	28.6%
c. Management			75.0%	25.0%
d. Coordinator				100.0%
e. Supplier / working per piece	7.7%	38.5%	46.2%	7.7%
Total	3.7%	25.6%	50.0%	20.7%

In Figure 5, the relationship to the head of household is illustrated. From the data collected it is clear that the majority of beneficiaries are married to the head of household 68.8%. This is not surprising as the majority of the beneficiaries are married and women, as well as when taking into consideration the cultural context in which men are commonly considered the head of the household. 20% are the son/daughter and 2.5% are the father/mother of the head of household, which from other indicators is likely to mean that the son is the head of the household and the respondent is the mother. Finally, only 3.8% of beneficiaries indicated that they are the head of household, which again is not too surprising considering the overwhelming number of married women that are working within these project/cooperatives.

Figure 5: Relationship to the head of household

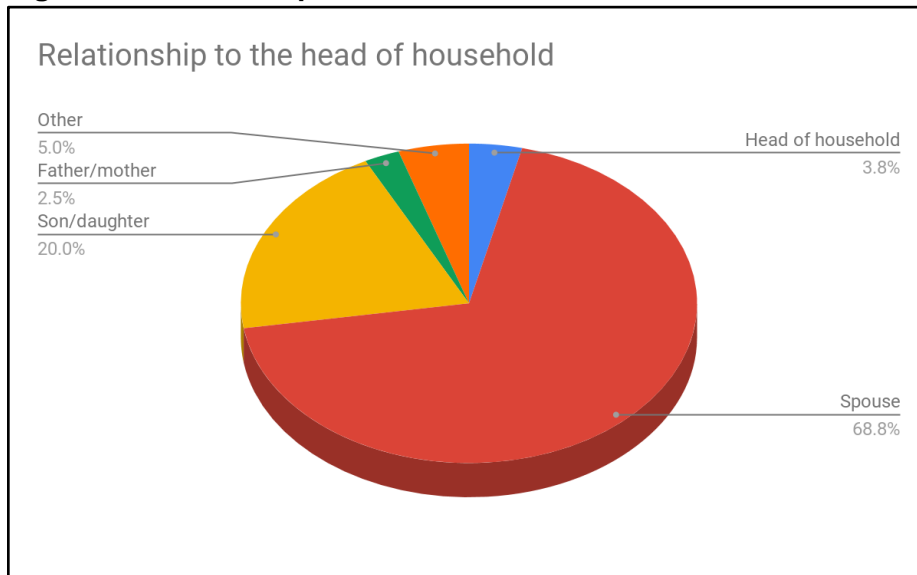


Table 7 explores the connection between the relationship/role to the project/cooperative and the relationship to the head of household. Interestingly enough, the majority of the Board Members 4.3% are also the head of their households, 3.8% were General Assembly Members and 3.8% were suppliers/working per piece. As the vast majority of women involved are married it is clear that then also the majority of relationship/role to the project/cooperative would also be represented as the spouse to the head of the household. 73.9% of Board Members, 53.8% of General Assembly Members, 75% of Management, 100% of coordinators and 76.9% of suppliers/working per piece are spouses to the head of household. Additionally, 13% of Board Members, 30.8% of General Assembly Members, 25% of Management and 15.4% are the son or daughter of the head of household. Lastly, a smaller number of individuals are the parents of the head of household, 4.3% of Board Members and 3.8% of General Assembly Members.

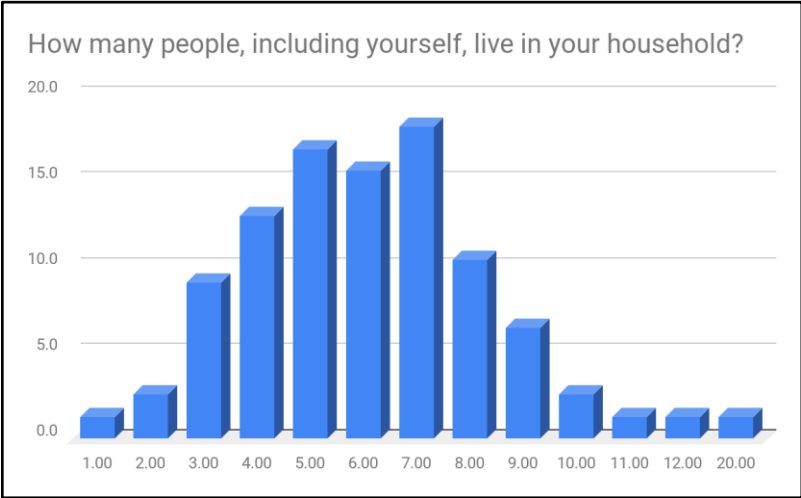
Table 7: Relationship/Role to the Project/Cooperative Disaggregated by Relationship to the Head of Household:

What is your relationship/role to the project/cooperative?	Relationship to the head of household:				
	1. Head of household	2- spouse	3- son / daughter	4- father / mother	5- other
a. Board Member	4.3%	73.9%	13.0%	4.3%	4.3%
b. General Assembly Member	3.8%	53.8%	30.8%	3.8%	7.7%
c. Management		75.0%	25.0%		
d. Coordinator		100.0%			

e. Supplier / working per piece	3.8%	76.9%	15.4%		3.8%
Total	3.8%	68.8%	20.0%	2.5%	5.0%

Again, the fact that the majority of women being married is significant when also taking into consideration the size of the people in each household. **As the women are culturally and traditionally seen as responsible for the domestic sphere, large family size does factor into how much these women will be able to contribute to the project/cooperatives, as well as should be taken into consideration in order to not over burden them.** The Figure below illustrates that the majority of households are between 5 to 7 members. **This point not only to a great deal of responsibility of the women in these households, but also the importance of the economic programming to be realistic and sustainable as it affects several individuals within the home.**

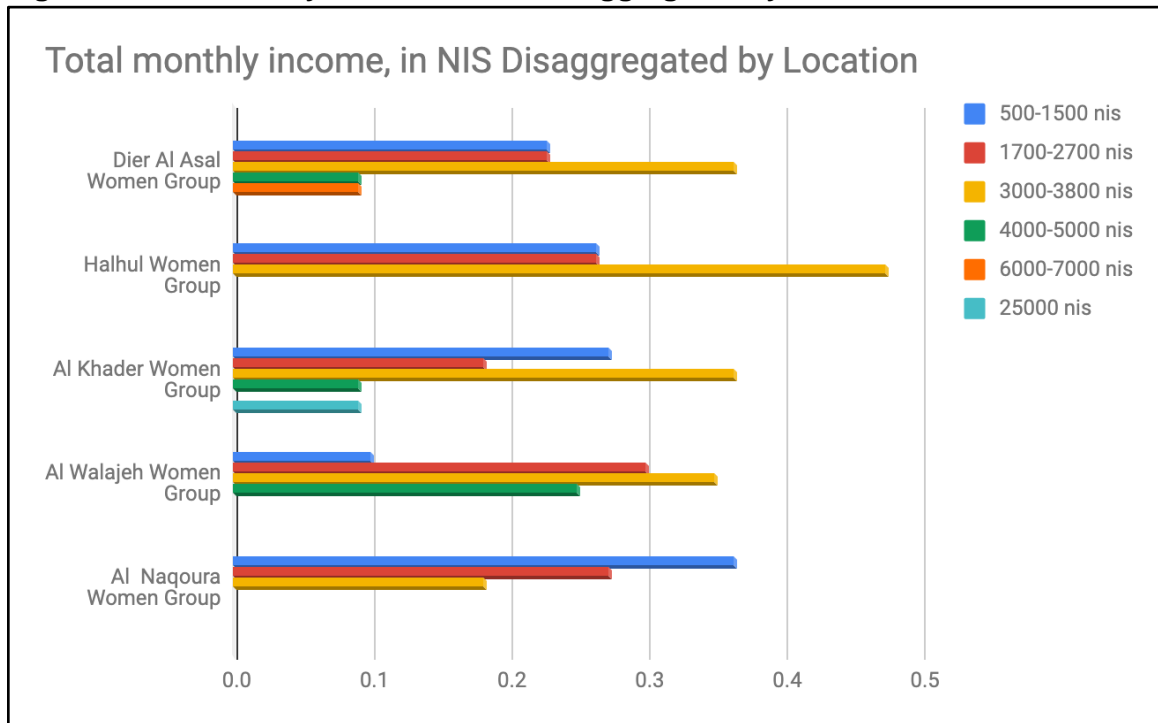
Figure 6: How many people, including yourself, live in your household?



5.2 Economic Indicators:

As the GVA 16 initiative is a socio-economic empowerment project that aims at empowering the beneficiaries to develop their skills, projects and cooperatives, as well as make money and improve their economic status. As seen in the Figure below that illustrates the total monthly income in NIS disaggregated by location, the majority of beneficiary households across all of the locations have an average monthly income of 3000-3800 NIS. When taking into consideration that most homes have 5 to 7 people, the economic realities of the beneficiaries in all locations becomes more obvious.

Figure 7 Total monthly income, in NIS disaggregated by location



30% or 40 women beneficiaries generated NIS 4000 from their participation in the project. The current evaluation shows the following status of generating income from the projects supported by the project:

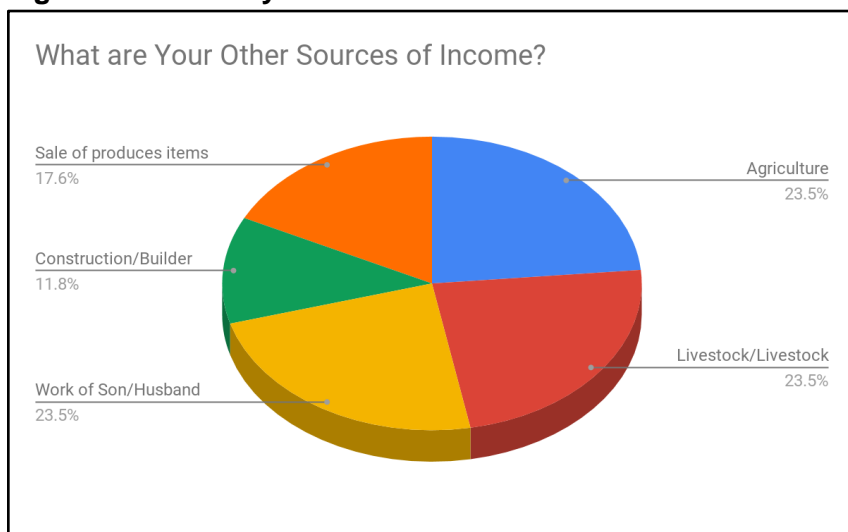
- Al Khader: NIS 4000/each. There are 20 members, so we can assume a total of NIS 80,000 net income from the project. Each individual group member kept their received 4000 NIS for themselves. Some of them stated that they have used this money to support their families and for paying for their children's education costs.
- Halhoul: NIS 4000/each. Similar to the above of Al Khader. There are 20 members, so we can assume a total of NIS 80,000 net income from the project. Each individual group member kept their received 4000 NIS for themselves. Some of them stated that they have used this money to support their families and for paying for their children's education costs.
- Deir Al Asal: Net NIS 15,000 that was not distributed and kept in the project. So, here as well we can assume 0 income for the individual women from the project.
- Al Walajeh: net income could not be calculated as there was only 3 orders. The income was only sufficient to cover costs of production. So, we can assume 0 income here.
- Naqoura: 0 income as the project was not operational.

Considering the average monthly income is around 3000-3800 NIS monthly, it is clear that the cooperatives even at their best are still not very profitable at this time. It is important to recognize that the project/cooperatives included within the GVA 16 initiative are still forming and have many stages of development to go before they are sustainable income generators.

In order to gain an understanding of the other sources of income that the beneficiaries rely on, the Figure below illustrates that the main sources of other income come from 23.5% work of the

son or husband, 23.5% Livestock, 23.5% Agriculture. Across the cooperative activities, the additional areas of income include 17.6% sale of produced items and 11.8% construction/builder, however these percentages are representative of the personal resources that the participants have in addition to the project and not directly related to the cooperatives. That said in one of the target areas, Halhoul, the provided tools and support for the cooperative did enable them to produce more grapes last season and generate more income for their families. The project elevated and enhanced their level of production and income that they produced within their homes by creating the cooperative and more advanced equipment that they can all use outside of the home.

Figure 9 What are your other sources of income?



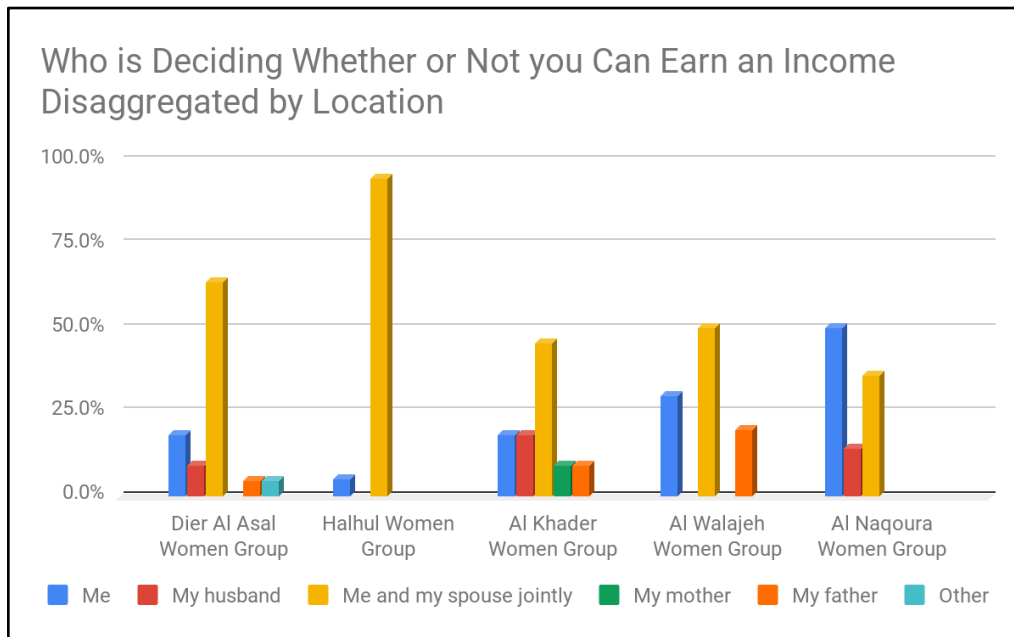
From these results it is clear that the projects/cooperatives are presenting a needed diversity to the economy which is highly dependent on agriculture at this time. While considering the context of such a heavy reliance on natural resources would be present in a rural community, it does point to the fragility these communities are facing in light of the restrictions placed on access and ownership of these resources within Area C.

5.3 Decision-Making and Ownership of Assets Indicators:

This is an empowerment project that has the aim of increasing the capacity of women to make their own decisions and have ownership of their assets. Keeping in mind the results of the baseline study, it is important to point out that a very low percentage of women held important roles within their communities prior to this initiative. In the 5 targeted communities, among the participant women only in two of them were members in their village councils, and only 12 women were members in the five local councils. Only 9 of the participant women are members in cooperatives (12.8%) and the number of women in societies or committees are 26 (37.1%), which points to how through the formation of these groups and support of these projects created a space for women to begin to take on more leadership roles and make decisions beyond the domestic sphere. Therefore, the result illustrated in the figure below can be seen as a positive sign that the

majority of beneficiaries' report that the decision as to whether they can work is one that is shared. While it might be tempting to push for the beneficiaries to be empowered to make these decisions alone, considering the larger percentage of married beneficiaries and the large sizes of the families, it seems that this is indicating that decisions are shared, which is logical given the circumstances. Any family managing the responsibilities of feeding many would need to think through the choice to work together in order to ensure stability within the home. However, it is important to keep in mind that the respondents were almost entirely women, so these results do not necessarily represent how the men in the community view decision making.

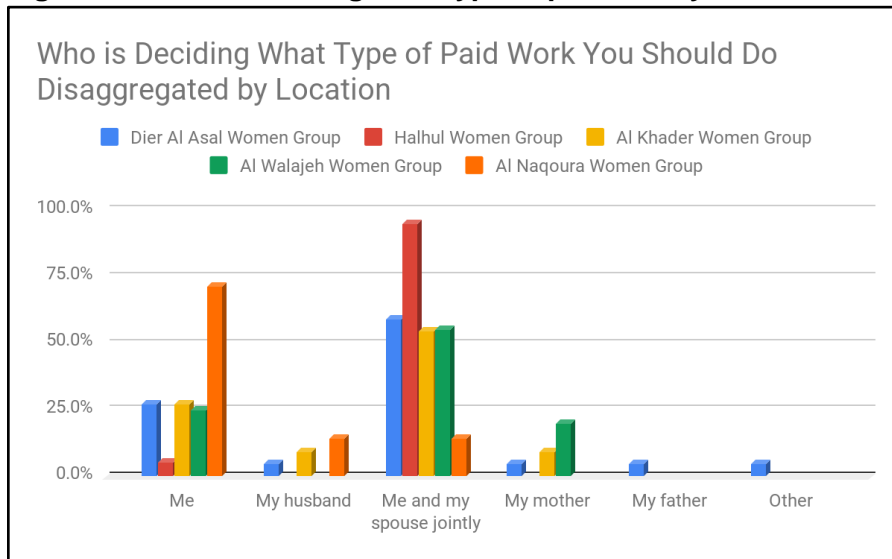
Figure 10: Who is deciding whether or not you can earn an income disaggregated by location⁷



Exploring further into the level of decision-making women are able to participate reveals in the figure below that also in the choice of the type of paid work an individual should work, beneficiaries are reporting that it is a shared decision.

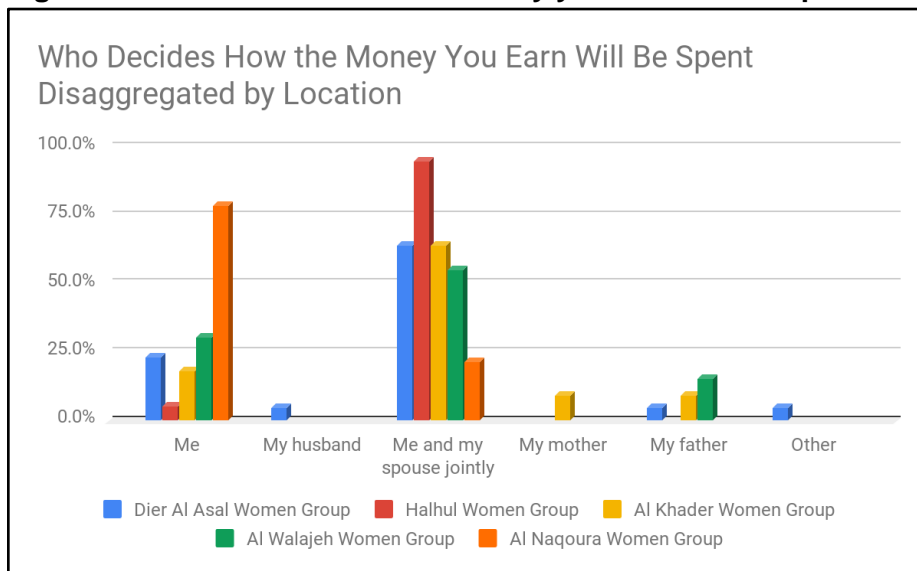
⁷ 'Other' refers to other family relationships such as uncle, aunt, sister, brother, as well as father and mother in-law.

Figure 11 Who is deciding what type of paid work you should do disaggregated by location



As seen in the figure below, it is clear that the decision of how money earned will be spent is seen as a shared one by the beneficiaries. The positive here is that the women who answered the do see their role in the decision-making process and feel empowered to the extent that they are part of the conversation. Additionally, there is a much higher percentage of beneficiaries that answered themselves as the one making this decision. While only a few are referring to their husbands or parents to guide this decision. The representation of the parents here may also be the result of some of the younger members of the project as well.

Figure 12 Who decides how the money you earn will be spent disaggregated by location



Additionally, as important as who is empowered to determine how earned money can be spent, is the choice of how one spends their free time. As seen in the table below, this question have positive results, with 54.2% stating that they get to choose this on their own. This is a positive

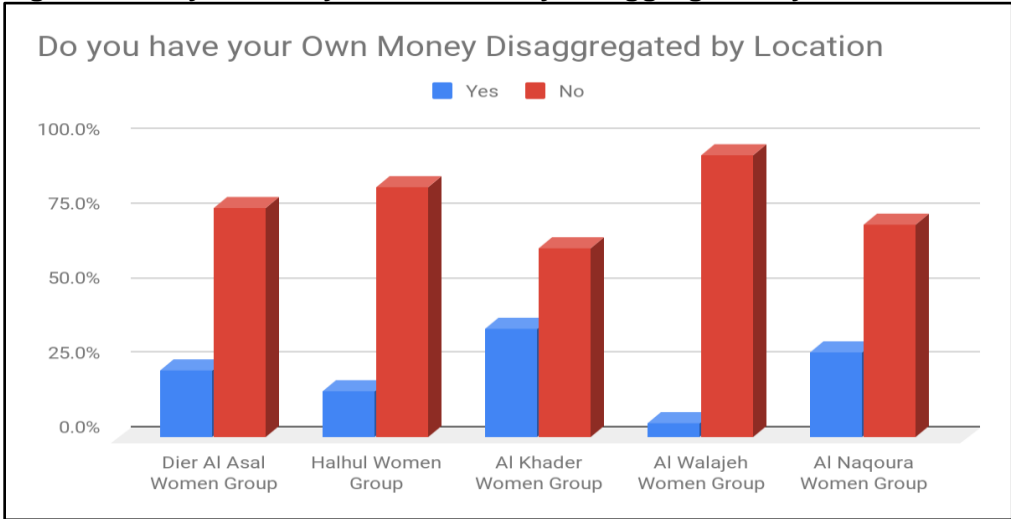
indicator because lack of freedom of movement is a common challenge for women in cultures that associate family honor with the behavior of the women. Although it is clear that there are still a significant number that are sharing this decision with their spouse 37.7%, this is more likely an indicator of the shared responsibilities that factor into individuals lives when they are married and in particular have children. Additionally, it is also positive that only 7.2% are having to refer to their husbands or fathers in determining how they spend their free time.

Table 8: Who Decides How you Spend your Free Time Disaggregated by Location

Where do you live?	Me	My husband	Me and my spouse jointly	My father	Other
Dier Al Asal Women Group	38.1%		52.4%	4.8%	4.8%
Halhul Women Group	50.0%	11.1%	38.9%		
Al Khader Women Group	27.3%		63.6%	9.1%	
Al Walajeh Women Group	65.0%		25.0%	10.0%	
Al Naqoura Women Group	92.3%		7.7%		
Total	54.2%	2.4%	37.3%	4.8%	1.2%

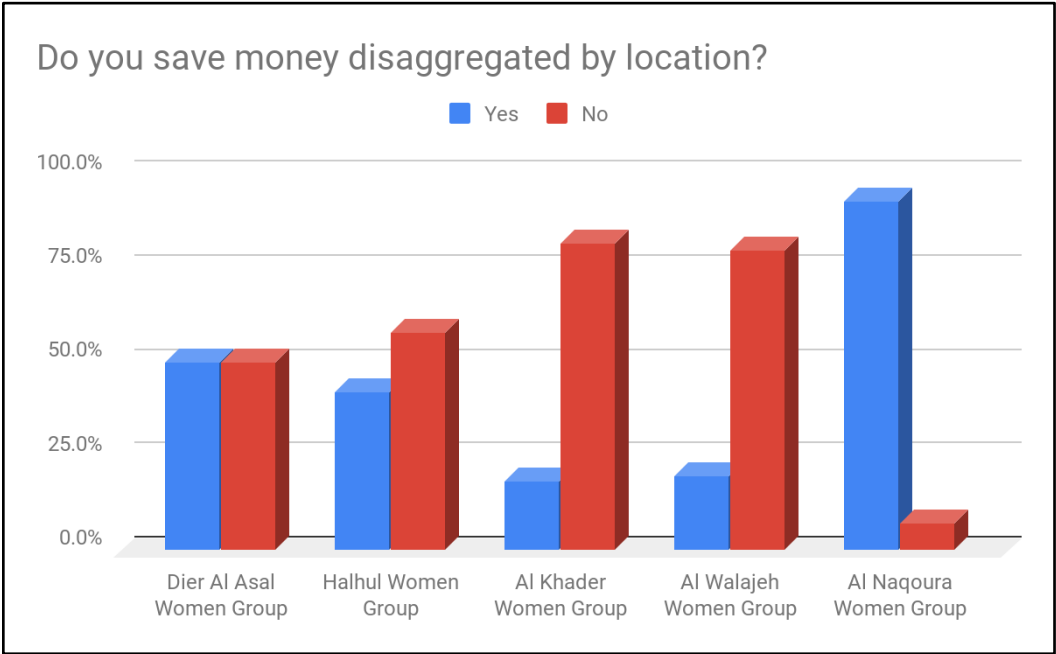
However, there is some negative results when looking at the figure below and seeing that for the most part these beneficiaries do not have their own money. While again it is likely that this is influenced by the fact that the majority of women are married and have children in this sample, therefore they may see that their money as a shared resource for the family. This would be particularly true when considering the high levels of poverty within these communities.

Figure 13 Do you have your own money disaggregated by location



Finally, it is interesting to examine the result from the previous figure with the one below. When asked if they save money, it is clear that the Naqoura women’s group is more developed in this way. This is understandable as they represent the more advanced of the cooperatives as they are a registered charitable society, but it is particularly interesting when considering the fact that their project was not operational due to the issues surrounding the equipment they obtained for the bakery. Additionally, this capacity and awareness of the need to save money also speaks to the strength of the support that surrounds the Naqoura project and the fact that there is a great deal of support for their project before as well as even now within their local council. This speaks to the importance of the community that surrounds these projects almost being more important than the project’s themselves in terms of the level of women’s economic empowerment that can be experienced. As seen in the fact that the different women’s cooperatives, all had different levels of support and interactions with their local councils and municipal representatives. While the projects all began with engagement with these entities, the fact that there were delays due to collecting the needed financial contributions and some of the projects not having the equipment they need to carry out their projects, it is clear that the groups with more support from the local councils and local community members ended the project with more or less positive feelings about the initiative.

Figure 14 Do you save money disaggregated by location



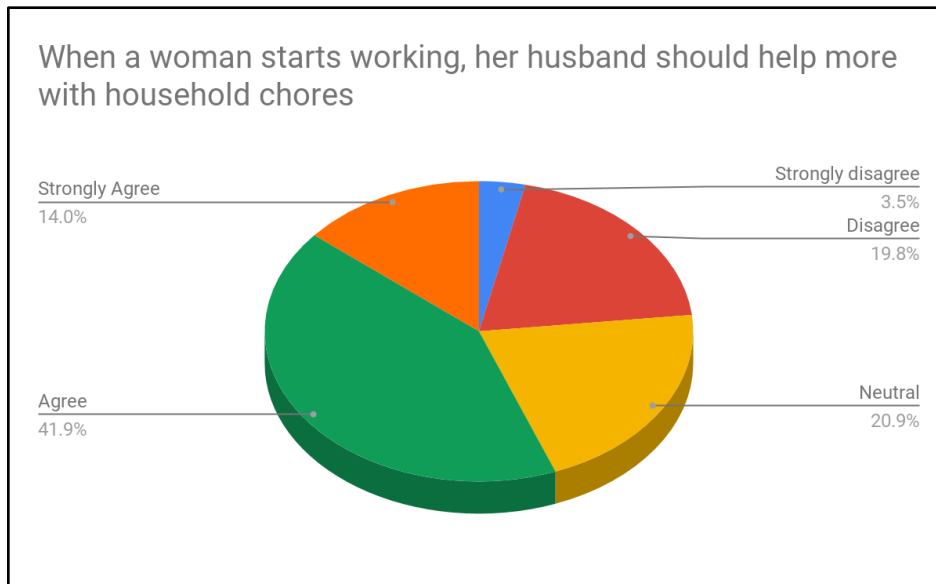
5.4 Gender Equality Indicators:

Overall, this GVA 16 initiative had some positive impact on gender as compared to the findings in the Baseline study, however the traditional roles and beliefs that existed at the start of the project largely remained intact. The strength of the relationship between women and men within local councils remained an essential component throughout the implementation of the projects as most

of the cooperatives were new and not registered, they needed the support of local leaders in order to implement their projects. However as noted in the baseline survey, cultural tradition remained a significant factor in the power dynamics and the relationship between men and women. Additionally, the decision-making remained either entirely in the hands of the men or were shared in a similar manner throughout the implementation of the initiative. That said women remained optimistic about the idea that being economically empowered would help them gain more power in terms of decisions in their household. This is still hard to measure as the initiative took a long time and in the case of Al Khader and Al Naquoura their projects have yet to really begin to generate money, and in the others they just began. It is likely that this effect will take more time to be seen.

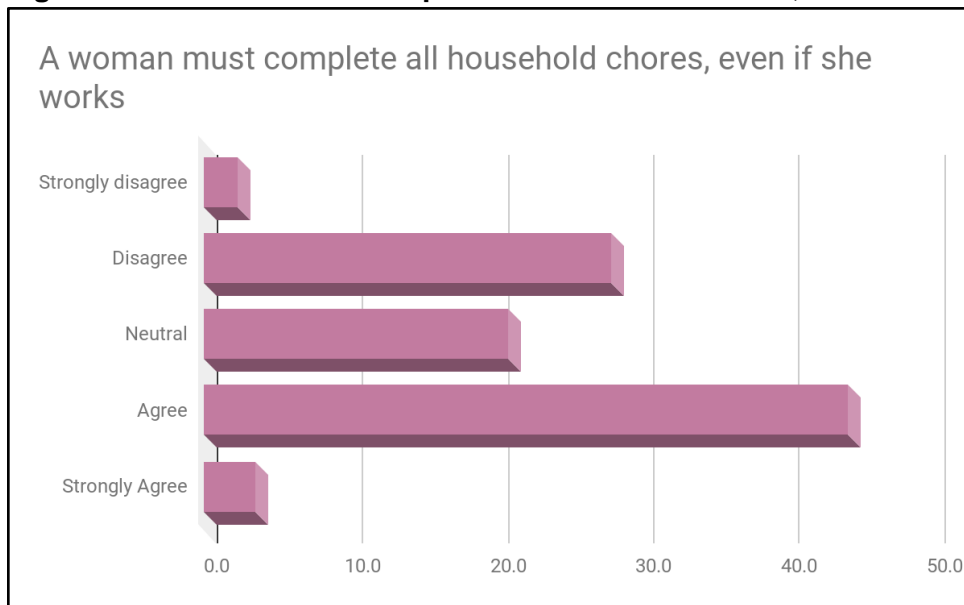
As seen in the Figure below, when asked whether a husband should help more with household chores, when a woman starts working, it is clear that the vast majority 41.9% agree, with 14% strongly agreeing. 20.9% were neutral, while 19.8% disagree and only 3.5% strongly disagree. This shows a positive feeling about husbands doing more in the household overall 55% but does also highlight that there is an almost equal amount who are neutral or disagree with this idea. However, it is important to keep in mind the global pattern of women taking on a double load of work when working outside the home and these results do not measure whether their husbands agree with to actually help in the home. Furthermore, as this initiative specifically targeted impoverished communities and they were larger families, it is likely that both men and women are having to work to try to cover expenses whenever and wherever it is possible. This is an important indicator given that the GVA 16 initiative is designed to promote women as economic actors, which would mean for many of them they would be taking on the work of the project/cooperative, while also maintaining their role as the one who is taking care of the domestic sphere.

Figure 15 When a woman starts working, her Husband should help more with household chores



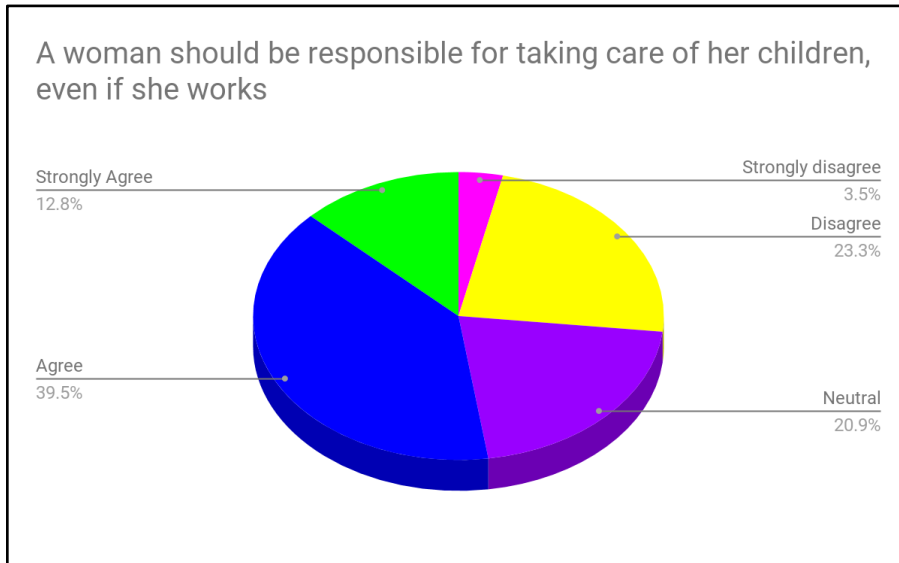
To explore this issue of multiplication of work and the potential of overburdening of women when introducing economic empowerment initiatives, it is interesting to examine the responses given when asked if a women must complete all of the household chores, even if she works. As seen in the Figure below, the vast majority agree at 44.2%, while only 27.9% disagree. Therefore, as this data is primarily women it is important to come to appreciate that most women feel that this is a requirement of their role within the domestic sphere and the implementation of similar initiatives should continue to take into consideration the level of culture and tradition are at place within these women’s lives. Additionally, this preference and the fact that 20% were neutral to this idea means that there is perhaps a need for some awareness raising and capacity building if women are going to become economic actors and not be overwhelmed with their other responsibilities within the domestic sphere. Specifically, through awareness raising and capacity development that is focused on men and male youth to help encourage support for the women actors, as well as perhaps targeted gender sensitive planning and training for community leaders and economic actors that already exist in the community to encourage that they include women in the economic sphere. The economic spheres should account for women’s domestic responsibilities in terms of working hours, access and safe transportation, child and elderly care facilities etc.

Figure 16 A women must complete all household chores, even if she works



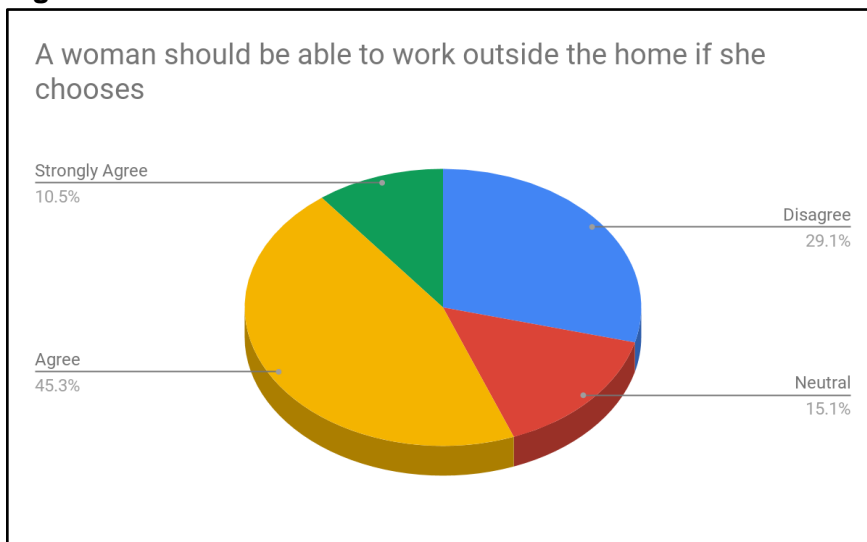
In Figure 17, beneficiaries were asked if women should be responsible for taking care of her children, even if she works. 39.5% agree, 12.8% strongly agree with the idea that women remain the main caregiver and be responsible for her children even if she works. 23.3% disagree and only 3.5% strongly disagree, while 20.9% are neutral. This is significant in terms of the strong cultural and traditional values that are shaping women’s desire to remain the one responsible for their children. Therefore, in the programming of economic opportunities, it would be essential to consider how the environment can be accommodating for children as many will need support in terms of childcare options and flexibility in terms of work schedules to accommodate children’s needs and the school hours.

Figure 17 A woman should be responsible for taking care of her children, even if she works



When looking at gender equality in terms of freedom of movement and decision making, it is positive to see that the vast majority of beneficiaries agree 45.3% or strongly agree 10.5%, that a woman should be able to work outside of the home if she chooses. This is important as the beneficiaries were members of the projects/cooperatives developed so it is good to see that there is a large amount of support and belief behind what they are doing. It is also interesting the 29.1% disagree with the idea that women should be able to work outside the home if she chooses, as it indicates that they do not see women as able to make such choices on their own to some extent.

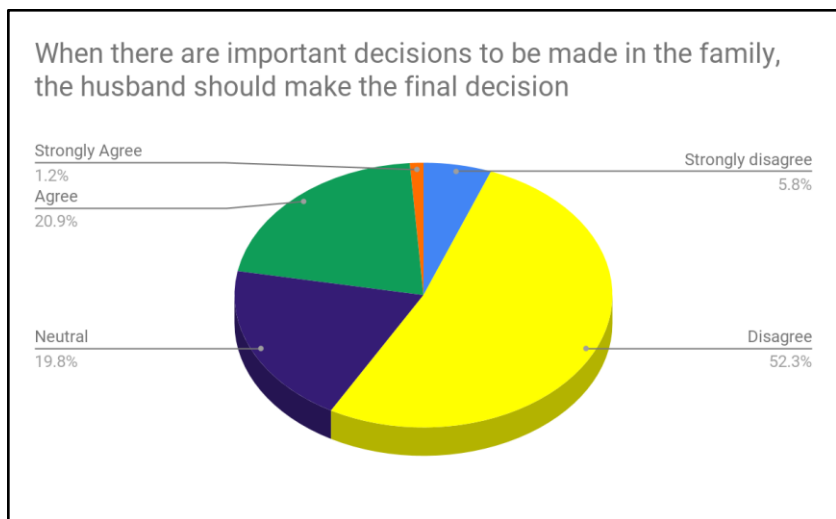
Figure 18 A women should be able to work outside the home if she chooses



When looking at the responses to the question of when there are important decisions to be made in the family, the husband should make the final decision, it is clear that the vast majority 52.3%

disagree and 5.8% strongly disagree. This is a positive sign that the women are feeling mostly in agreement that important decisions should be shared within the family.

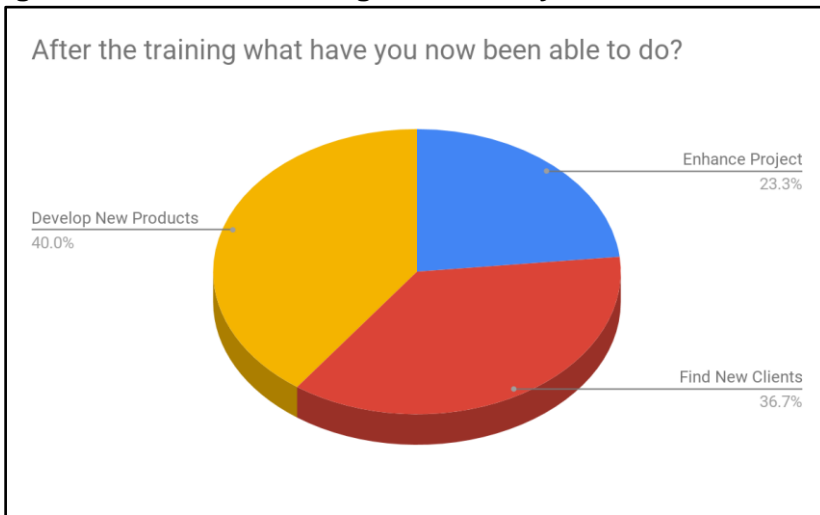
Figure 19 When there are important decisions to be made in the family, the husband should make the final decisions



5.5 Capacity Development Indicators:

Training for women in Palestine has been an essential component of the intervention work that has been done for decades. As noted in the baseline, the women in the targeted communities have received quite a number of training on political empowerment, leadership, project management, food processing, cooperatives, and marketing. The baseline indicated that the percentage of those that received training in the various subjects varied between 61% and 84%. This has created the foundation for highly informed groups of women in both empowerment, women's rights and protection. As was indicated in the baseline and reflected in the feedback by the women during the end of project evaluation, these trainings were also given in terms of specific skills such as marketing, food processing and management. Therefore, the additional training component of the GVA 16 initiative that aimed to build the participants capacity further was effective in most areas. When asked about what has now become possible for the beneficiaries following the training, it is clear in the Figure below that the biggest area of change has been in the development of new products by 40%. Similarly, Beneficiaries have been able to find new customers 36.7%, as well as enhance their projects 23.3%. These new clients included ladies living outside of their normal selling zone, which have contacted the cooperative to ask for additional products. These improvements are in areas that will not only in the short-term growth but are fundamental in setting the stage for longer term sustainability and economic viability. Which is supported by the fact that last season, the group members sold their entire inventory during the winter and spring seasons.

Figure 20: After the training, what have you now been able to do?



The capacity building is of course is a complex multi-stepped process that takes time. Therefore, it is logical that there would remain areas of need following the training. The Figure below illustrates these areas seen as still needing improvement disaggregated by the relationship/role in the project/cooperative. From the data collected the main areas of concern for the Board Members is 44% for Cooperative Work, 44% for Feasibility study/ Business planning, 32% Accounting, 36% Cooperative administration, 40% Marketing, 32% Production, 28% Quality, 28% Storage, 4% Governance and 4% Gender Issues. It is important to note that as gender issues was the primary area of training previous to this project, these results are likely to be more reflective of their past experience and desire to acquire new skills. However, it is perhaps an indicator that gender related training could be redirected toward the men and male youth in the community. Moving forward these also highlight that the women themselves appear ready and eager to expand their knowledge and learn how to become more effective within the economic sphere, which shows that there is a clear interest and foundation for the types of projects that were designed in this initiative.

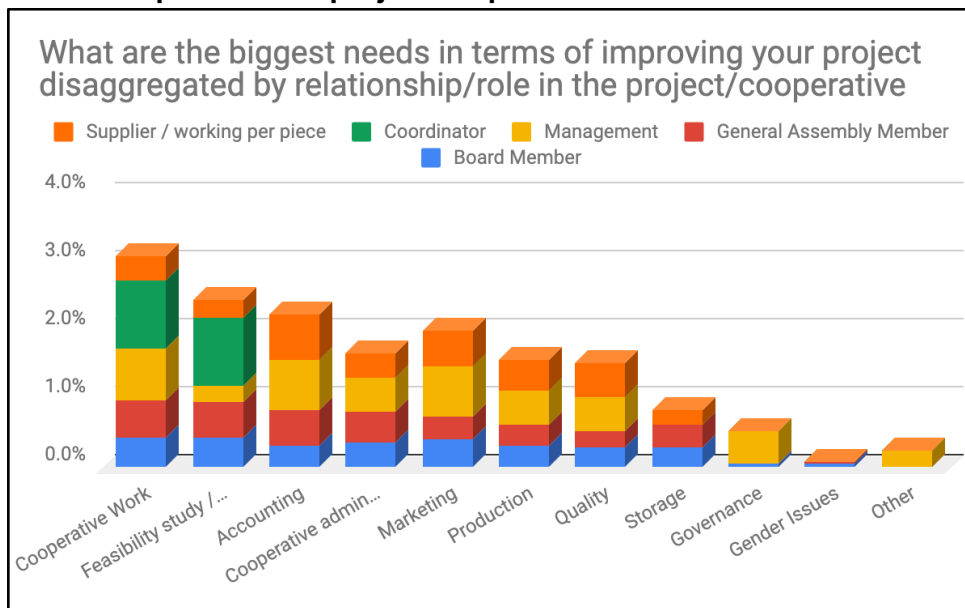
For General Assembly Members these are 55.2% for Cooperative Work, 51.7% for Feasibility study/ Business planning, 51.7% Accounting, 44.8% Cooperative administration, 34.5% Marketing, 31% Production, 24.1% Quality, 34.5% Storage and 3.4% Gender Issues. For Managers these are 75% for Cooperative Work, 25% for Feasibility study/ Business planning, 75% Accounting, 50% Cooperative administration, 75% Marketing, 50% Production, 50% Quality, 50% Governance and 25% Other.

For Coordinators these are 100% Cooperative Work and 100% Feasibility Study/Business planning. For Supplier/working per piece these are 37% for Cooperative Work, 25.9% for Feasibility study/ Business planning, 66.7% Accounting, 37% Cooperative administration, 51.9% Marketing, 44.4% Production, 51.9% Quality, 22.2% Storage.

Although the perception of the needs is clearly connected to the relationship/role of the individual answering, there is agreement that support is particularly needed in the areas of cooperative work, feasibility study/business planning and accounting.

As most of the groups are made up of women and there has been extensive programming geared toward women to raise awareness about gender issues, this is not an area that is seen as needing improvement.

Figure 21 What are the biggest needs in terms of improving your project disaggregated by relationship/role in the project/cooperative

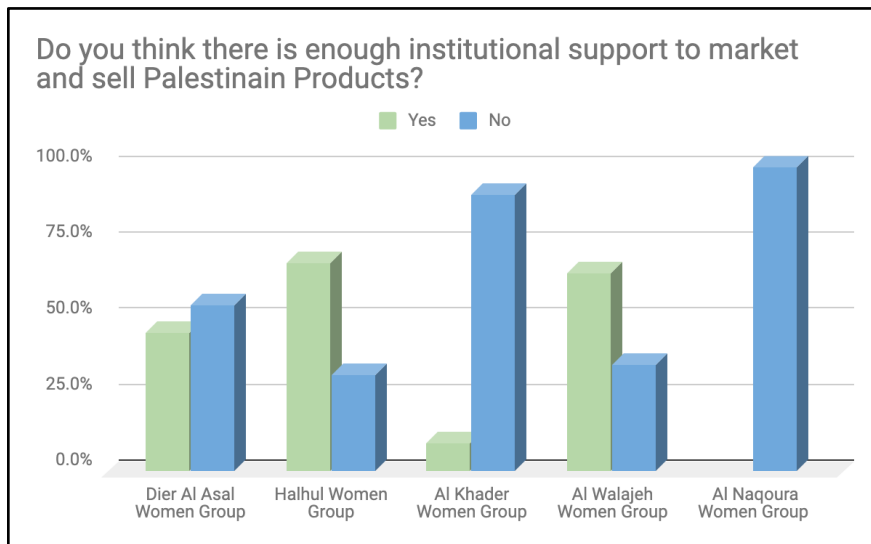


5.6 Access to the Market Indicators:

Considering that prior to the initiative, only 24.3% of women were participating in the economic sphere, it is important to recognize the important stride that was taken in the development of the cooperative and individual projects. The initiative therefore was powerful in terms of opening the door for women. Combining with the reality that included in this group, 18.6% of women are the head of household, it is also important that these opportunities are being expanded as they represent support not only for individual women, but also for entire families. Lastly, when considering access to the market there were some truly innovative approaches taken by the women in the design of their projects and the attention given to their relevance to the community needs. The very structure of support and the interaction between the local council and community leaders and women's groups allowed for particular attention to be given to creating economic endeavors purely in response to the needs of the community. Lastly, as these communities are generally challenged in terms of access due to occupation policies and lack of competitive edge in the marketplace due to geography, it is important to keep in mind that access is a challenge for just these newly created women's groups/projects, but in general an issue for these communities as a whole. As this initiative aims as being economically stimulating and generative, it is essential

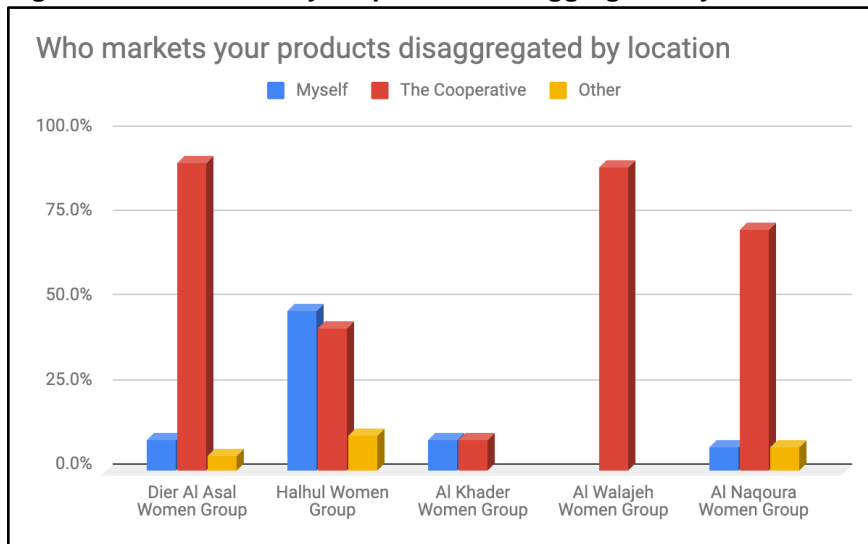
to examine the level of success and level of access and support the beneficiaries felt throughout the project. As seen in the chart below, when asked if they felt there was enough institutional support to market and sell Palestinian Product, it is clear that depending on the location, opinions varied. To begin, the response from Al Naqoura is quite telling as 100% said no to this question. The impact of the issue surrounding their oven has created an overwhelmingly negative view within this group. Additionally, in Al Khader more than 85% were negative about their access to institutional support, which might speak more to the fact that they missed the grape season and also were not able to start their project.

Figure 22 Do you think there is enough institutional support to market and sell Palestinian Products?



Finally, the figure below illustrates who markets the products being made by location. Through this it is clear the important role of the cooperative in economic empowerment within this context. Through the collective action, individuals are able to reach the marketplace in ways, without such a structure they would not. In particular, the support of the local councils and relevant ministries helped to encourage the women's groups as well as supported their initiative in terms of registration and resources such as space to carry out their work. Additionally, the training and support provided by PARC was for the most part appreciated by the women, but it is clear that in Al Khader and Al Naqoura where the initiatives have not begun they feel less supported. In Al Khader, they struggled with covering the cost of the buy-in and this caused a delay in their work that made them miss potential grape crops within which to start their project. In Al Naqoura, the women and the community as a whole are facing challenges to keep up with the project, due to the difficulties faced with the equipment.

Figure 23 Who markets your products disaggregated by location



As seen in the figure above there are a variety of ways women are bringing their products to market. The vast majority of them are doing so through the cooperative or themselves. Few respondents indicated that they marketed their products through the exhibitions held by the project and later on through the connections they made from their participation in the exhibition with nearby traders in surrounding villages. There are a few reasons for this as the communities from which the women live are generally limited in terms of access to the market so in many cases like Deir Al Asal and Al Walajeh, the customers are coming to them in their community. However these results do point to an opportunity with AL Walajeh, where if they were to connect more outside of the village and attempt more non-traditional pathways of marketing their services, perhaps through increased engagement with the men in the community, they would be able to improve their customer base. It is likely that once Al khader begins to market their goods, they will have a more diversified distribution, similar to Halhul. As the project has not started within Al Narqoura, and this group has received so much pressure from the men in their community due to the issues surrounding their project, their response is a reflection of feeling a bit alienated from the community as their support has lessened for the project over time.

5.7 Assessment of the Individual Income Generation Projects/Cooperatives:

5.7.1 Deir Al Asal Cooperative: The Elegant Lady Boutique:



General Overview: The Deir Al Asal project was designed to establish an income generation opportunity for 20 local women from the community and the surrounding 4 villages. In May 2018, the cooperative was established and since that time they have worked to promote awareness of women's issues and the need for women to participate in socially and economically in the community. A number of activities including a beauty salon, sewing and store were established and run by the members of the cooperative. It is important that the women were unable to cover the initial cost of the project and had the needed € 5,000 donated. They did, however, agree to pay for the cost of the goods to show their commitment to the project. The project provided a resource for the community, in particular for women and children that previously would have had to travel to Hebron in order to get these services. It not only cut down on travel costs, but also provided a way for women to provide for other women and make their lives easier. Additionally, as the community is highly impacted by poverty, the elimination of the travel costs meant that families were better able to cover the cost of the goods they needed.

In this community like the other, the initial financial contribution amount of money was not easy, the reason for a delay in the start of initiation, especially considering the level of poverty of the targeted women. To help with this cost the local council was able to help the women, which not only helped the project begin but also confirmed the community's commitment in the project as well. There were some issues early on with the strategies and decisions taken in terms of products and the women in their inexperience were at time taken advantage of and not given fair prices. This however was a learning experience and the strength of the group is their ability to adjust and learn from their mistakes. Overall, this is a highly sustainable project as it meets the needs of the community. However, in order to continue their success they will need additional support and capacity development in terms of business skills and accounting.

Relevance The project was designed in Deir al-Asal after a series of consultations with beneficiaries and local councils in four villages namely Deir al-Asal al-Fawqa, Deir al-Asal al-Tahta, Sikka and al-Majd. The group of women was formed of (20) women members. A number of ideas were discussed that included agricultural, production and service projects. After much discussion the decision was reached to develop a store, a tailoring shop and a beauty salon that

would serve the needs of mothers and their children. The rationale being that women in the village had to travel to Hebron to get needed items, which was not only inconvenient for the women, but also placed an extra financial burden on their families. The creation of the store was seen as the best and most promising way to create an income generation opportunity and meet a community need at the same time. Accordingly, the business idea was viable and there was a clear need for the business.

Design/Coherence The design of the project has been participatory and received strong support from the local and national stakeholders. The representative of the local council and cooperatives department at the MoL interviewed during the evaluation stated that the local council welcomed the idea and supported the group with extending the electricity and water lines to the store free of charge. The support to women cooperatives is part of both institutions strategies and the projects was relevant to the local developmental agenda. Attention was given to the design and coherence throughout the inception and implementation phases of the project. The design was strengthened by the fact that it was open in its structure and inviting of the input of the women's group members. This increased the likelihood that the store would be stocked with the needed items. Additionally, through the use of a participatory approach through all stages of design, the women were quickly placed in empowered decision-making roles, as well as were supported with capacity building in the areas of management and planning.

The result of the inclusive start to the project meant that the sense of ownership was more easily shared throughout the group, as well as promoted logical planning and sequencing in the implementation. Specifically, there was a sequence of the project activities that were followed in order to ensure all the details and needed components were thought through together amongst the members. As a result of this methodical process, the women were able to build interest in the store. They began first by announcing the project with the local stakeholders, mainly the local councils and then held consultation sessions between stakeholders, as well as established an organized application process to fill needed roles. All of their hard work set a strong foundation for growth and through this collective work strengthened the group and set the stage for sustainability and future success.

Efficiency Originally this project was designed to start on the 21st of March 2017 and end by the 21st of June 2018, with a total implementation period of 15 month. However, due to the time-consuming tasks of the application process and the collection of beneficiaries' contributions, the project planned activities were delayed. This resulted in a six-month extension. In addition, due to the delay in the grant approval, the group lost the opportunity of establishing the store in Deir Al Asal on the main street, which is a more popular area that would bring them more customers. The current location is in Al Majd Village, which is good; however, it is not as central as the previous option. This illustrates the challenges that these developmental projects face due to administrative aspects relating to the grant mobilization rather than challenges faced during implementation of projects. During the original period and the extension period of the project, PARC implemented all related activities with the group. This included capacity building training sessions and equipping the shop with needed infrastructure in order for it to be operational. Additionally, PARC allocated a local coordinator for the project based in the Hebron area, which has a positive impact on progress made. This extra support made the project awareness campaign, application process, group formation and the implementation of the action plan easier and more efficient. In addition, the project formed a local committee to supervise the project which

included different local partners such as Ministry of Agriculture, local councils and the Ministry of Labor which also supported and facilitated the implementation of planned activities. These ministries, local councils and cooperatives all worked together with PARC's team in all activities in terms of supervision and implementation. This open approach provided the opportunity to include professional and experienced members from all related stakeholders, who gave when possible effective suggestions and rich insights stemming from their different backgrounds working in the sector. This approach created confidence and strengthened trust between the beneficiary's groups and governmental and local institutions.

Effectiveness The planned activities were effectively implemented and fulfilled the project objectives. The group is active, the shop operational and successfully serving the needs of the four surrounding rural villages. Largely this effective implementation is due to the fact that the shop was established after a series of discussions were held to appropriately define the needs, develop a group of interested beneficiaries. Additionally, capacity building trainings on several topics such as management, cooperative work and leadership allowed for the membership to grow together and improve their understanding of what would be needed in order to be successful. The shop was equipped with needed infrastructure and supplies in order to help the shop establish itself within the communities they serve and be seen as an asset to its customers. Finally, the awareness raising sessions on women's rights and women's empowerment that were conducted by PARC proved to be effective. One interesting example is of a woman member of Deir Al Asal group who decided to take legal action against her male family members who did not want to give her rightful share of her inheritance. She won the case and got the assets. This example directly contributes to achieving the socio-economic empowerment goal of the project.

The shop represents a successful project not only due to the internal capacity development and the empowerment of its members through collective action, but also because it provides a solution to a major challenge for the residences in the rural villages of Dier Al-Asal al-Fawqa, Dier Al-Asal Al-Tahta, Sikka and All-Majd. It is important to mention that the training successfully provided the group members with general awareness about the different training topics covered, yet the group is still new to business development. At this time, they are learning by doing, therefore it's important to provide the group with a more focused training in certain topics which would affect the project positively such as accounting, procurement and marketing. On an institutional level the project was successful in its development of a solid group that has the capacity to work collectively. The next step will be to continue to support them to become more experienced in formal practices and planning of business management and provide a pathway to improve their legal arrangement in order to ensure sustainability.

Impact When assessing the impact of the shop on the individuals and group working to develop it, it is clear that it has had a significant positive affect. The location is very remote and lacks community-based organizations and women organizations that could provide support to the women socially and economically. Thus, this project was a first of its kind that provides socio-economic empowerment to women. In terms of economic empowerment, at this time it has yet to realized. While it is true that there is a lot of potential and the shop seems to be successfully operating and generating revenues, the members have not received any financial income at this time. It is important to note that it is likely that the members will not receive any profit in the near

future as the group is planning to invest the profits back into the shop. This investment will go toward further development and expansion to include a section where they can sell products that they themselves are producing. While this makes sense in the longer-term it does risk the new group's cohesiveness in the short-term if individuals feel that they would like to earn an income.

During the field visit conducted by the evaluation team, an attempt was made to try and calculate the shop's net income since its opening, but due to the lack of proper accounting practices it was not possible. Currently the accounting is kept through simple handwriting bookkeeping for the cash flow (in and out). Therefore, the only estimate that could be made at the time of the field team's visit was that the shop generated 30,000 NIS in sales and had costs of around 15000 NIS or more. The way that this was calculated is as follows:

Deir Al'Asal contribution:

- 92.074,00 shekels (€22,126.00)
- 5,665.31 euros.
- Total contribution Deir Al'Asal in euros: **27,791.31 euros.**

The project contribution (GVA) to the cooperative is: **22,569.83 euros**, which covered: rent, office supplies, beauty products and cosmetics, aluminum door, tester, decoration and internal partition, office furniture, printer, sewing machine.

Total investment = 27.791,31 + 22.569,83 = 50,361.14 euros

Women's percentage = 27.791,31 / 50,361.14 = 55%

Project percentage = 22,569.83 / 50,361.14 = 45%

The analysis of the numbers highlights that support for this project was provided by both GVA investment and the women's contribution. It is worth noting that the shop itself is an environment of learning by doing, which has created a place where the group is eager to learn and develop in the way they are conducting their business.

Sustainability In Deir Al Asal, the group has a high potential to continue after the project as it is vital to the area, also the group is highly committed and motivated already planning to expand the project and add new services and products. All of which are positive signs for their sustainability, in particular when taking into consideration the expressed interest of the group to continue to grow and develop both as individuals and as a group. It was also observed that the project provided a model for women's empowerment and the group is receiving many requests from other women who would like to join the project and become shareholders. If this project sustains its progress, it can result in a positive multiplier effect on other women and on the local community at large.

Future outlook of the project: the evaluation team noticed that the women members are still facing challenges in relation to making business deals and negotiating with the traders and suppliers, especially big wholesale traders as they cannot meet the conditions imposed by the big traders such as payment in cash instead of on credit, which prevents them from having a price advantage by buying from wholesale. Establishing new market linkages is also a challenge due to the remoteness of the location, which includes Al Sikkeh, Al-Majd, Dier Al Asal Al foqa and Al Tehta. Discussions with PARC show that special attention will be given to these aspects in future capacity building that will be provided to Deir Al Asal group and a full package of accounting and

business management is currently under design by PARC and the group is expected to benefit from this support. As the project expands and as per the theory of change of PARC, a strategy needs to be put in place for a smooth transition from the formation/mobilization phase that was done through the GVA 16 project into organization and institutionalization. In addition, the group members stated that they have benefited from the ideas they saw in Spain as a result to the study tour to Valencia and they are considering to start offering recycled clothes, processing of grapes products and selling their own and other women's products.

5.7.2 Al Khader Women's Group:



Overview In Al Khader, the project established a new agricultural women's cooperative with 20 female members from the community. It began with the contribution of the original 20 members, however many of these had to withdraw because of their inability to pay their financial contributions. As a result new members eventually joined, but this did cause a delay in the setting up of the cooperative and the beginning the project. This cooperative focused on converting surplus grapes from local farmers into molasse or juice in order to help reduce spoilage and increase profitability. The processing of the grape crop helped to address a need for the community as the local farmers are facing challenges getting their crop to market in Jerusalem due to occupation policies placing restrictions on their movement, as well as lacking a competitive edge in the Ramallah market due to distance and too many competitors supplying grapes from Israel and Hebron. The cooperative's work helps to limit the loss of grapes, as well as protect the farmers from exploitation by those taking advantage of their tough geographic location by offering to buy the crops at low and often unfair prices. The grape juice and molasse production can be stored and sold throughout the year and provides a more sustainable income for the cooperative and the community as a whole. Additionally, the equipment purchased through the GVA initiative enables cooperative members to use equipment to produce other non-grape food products, which creates an opportunity for increased sustainable income, future growth and diversification of services offered.

In the focus group discussion, the women expressed that they have ideas to expand and diversify, however as they missed the grape season, they are waiting to test out their first round with the grapes before putting such plans in place. Ideally the women seek to create a plan where they could be producing new food products complementary to the different crop cycles throughout the year.

In terms of economic relief and empowerment, the project serves the nearby communities in the southern region of the West Bank, not just Al Khadar. Therefore, it provides potential income generation for farmers in the area, especially those that grow grapes. Furthermore, the project has contributed to the development of women's capacities in terms of skills required for safe food processing, in particular of grapes. It has helped to promote the role of women as economic actors, as well as the benefits of the cooperative structure of shared work. However, it is important to point out that while this project has clear potential for income generation, an improved standard of living and employment, the requirement of 2000 NIS to join the project did exclude impoverished women and families from participating. This resulted in only a delay in the start of the project because it took so long to collect the dues, it also impacted the level of empowerment within the initiative. Specifically, it is recommended that a different or at least diversified method of buy-in is applied in future initiatives because the current system ended up excluding the most impoverished women and families from the cooperative.

Relevance The project relevance in Al Khader has grown out of the participatory approach taken at the start of the project, which took into account the concerns and ideas of the local council, women in the cooperative and community. From consultations with all relevant parties, the project idea was agreed upon and a group of (20) women was formed in Al Khader. While a number of ideas were discussed, after the priorities were determined by all the partners, the women's group chose the idea of establishing a grape processing unit in order to meet one of the biggest needs within the community. The project design was informed and made relevant by the fact that most of the women in the group had their own family grape crop, which meant that they knew first-hand the problems these farmers face. Recognizing that the majority of the crop was sold without any manufacturing and at a low price due to the high supply in the market during the peak season, the women wanted to address the issues of spoilage and profit loss. Through these discussions, they also realized that most of them were already manufacturing part of the grapes in their home kitchens, but could not do it on a larger scale because it was not cost effective. Therefore, the concept of developing a processing unit where the cost of manufacturing could be kept low and the grape surplus could be sold throughout the year was developed. This processing unit is relevant to not only the community needs, but clearly places women in a role as essential economic actors working with the main crop for the area.

Design/Coherence The project design in Al Khader, was designed to empower women from its planning phase through to its implementation. Particular attention was given to developing a design that would not only provide income generation for the cooperative, but also be aligned with the needs of the community. Additionally, the project included capacity building activities which were very important in helping to enhance the women's group capacity to manage the planned intervention and successfully create the Grape Processing Unit. Additionally, support was provided in order to establish a functioning processing unit and allocated the needed resources such as gas, boiling containers, and bottles. As a result of taking into consideration the community needs and context, as well as the desires of the women involved, the design and coherence element of the project was one of its strongest elements.

Efficiency As with all of the other initiatives the original project plan this project was designed to start on the 21st of March 2017 and end by the 21st of June 2018, with a total implementation

period of 15 month. However, due to the time-consuming tasks of the application process and the collection of beneficiaries' contributions, the project planned activities were delayed. These delays in Al Khaddar were mostly related to the group formation taking a long time and delays in the delivery of equipment and supplies, which actually arrived at the end of the project, therefore production could not take place. Across all of the GVA 16 initiative activities, this resulted in a six-month extension. During the original period and the extension period of the project, PARC implemented all related activities in Al Khader including capacity building training and equipping the processing unit in order to ensure it would be operational, however the delays did result in the group missing grape seasons, therefore the group did not process grapes last year. It is important to note that within the context of Al Khader the contributing factor that primarily led to this delay was the time it took to identify 20 participants economically able to provide the required financial contribution to join the cooperative. Beyond the delay, this meant that the project excluded more impoverished women and families and has delayed the processing until the Summer of 2019.

PARC allocated a local coordinator for the project in Hebron area, which provided valuable support in terms of helping the group progress and develop their capacity, managing the application and project design process. In addition to that the project formed a local committee to supervise the project that includes different local partners such as ministry of agriculture, local councils and the ministry of labor, all who supported the implementation of the planned activities. It is important to know that the local council played a leading role in supporting the group in all activities especially in finding a suitable location for the processing unit. In all of the project areas, these ministries, local councils and cooperatives all worked together with PARC's team in all activities in terms of supervision and implementation. This open approach provided the opportunity to include professional and experienced members from all related stakeholders, who gave when possible effective suggestions and rich insights stemming from their different backgrounds working in the sector. This approach created confidence and strengthened trust between the beneficiaries groups and governmental and local institutions. This support in Al Khadar provided wide support for the project despite the delays and continued interest in the upcoming summer crop to try the new processing unit. Furthermore, is very clear that the local council is invested in the success of this project and see it as something that serves not only the women, but also the entire community. They are showing their support through follow-up meetings held between the women, the local council and municipal representatives in order to start preparing for the grape season and promotion of the processing unit to farmers and neighboring villages.

Effectiveness The planned activities in Al Khader were designed to achieve the project objectives. The project succeeded in establishing an active group that is planning to process the grapes for this upcoming season together. As there was not a group prior to the GVA 16 initiative, the project effect in carrying out a series of discussions to define the community needs, forming a group of interested beneficiaries and establishing the legal structures needed for the cooperative to receive funds and resources through the initiative. Additionally, the cooperative members in Al-Khader received specialized training in producing desserts and cookies from grapes and other fruits, best practices for preserving the food products, as well as an introduction on basic management, the nature of cooperative work and leadership. The sessions included two sets of 16 hours of training held over 4 days each, the first focused on technical skills needed and the second on introductory business skills.

The members were supplied with needed grape processing tools, however, as mentioned earlier, by the time the processing unit was ready, the grape season had already ended therefore the group did not process any commercial amount; however, they were able to process their own grape production. This delay has resulted from collecting the group contribution and the time required for the approval process. It is important to mention that the training successfully provided the group members with general information about how to process grapes safely and create manufactured products. Moving forward, the group is eager to consider what other crops can be used throughout the year and learn how to diversify the products they can make. As the group is very newly formed and the members have little training, future capacity must be built in the areas of business management, accounting and marketing. On an institutional level, the project was successful in forming a new cooperative women's group in Al Khadar, while they do not have their own registration yet, the community institutions are supporting them until they can become more developed and formalize their organizational structure.

Impact In terms of economic empowerment, the project in Al Khader has the potential to serve the women's needs as well as an urgent need for the grape farmers in Al Khader area. Farmers in Al Khader suffer from difficulties in marketing their grapes due to competition from Hebron and Israeli grapes being sold and difficulty to sell in big markets like Ramallah. Thus, the availability of a processing unit in Al Khader will result in extending the benefit from the products beyond the season or almost year-round. Thus, it can be said that this economic project will not only benefit the women group but will also benefit the local community at large. This group has a more understanding of the importance of the unit and it is acting as a processing unit not only for the group members' crop, but also in terms of how it can provide this service for other farmers. Moreover, in order to create a higher value for the processing unit plans should be developed to account and innovate around the seasonality of the current business model. The group members stated that they have received a net income of 4000 NIS for each member within the 3 month grape harvesting season, but the evaluation team could not track this number as the group does not have a system for documentation or accounting.

Sustainability Due to the Al Khadar project is so well integrated and designed to meet the needs of the community, their potential to continue is high. The cooperative also benefits from the fact that many of their members also belong to other institutions and their activities, as it highlights the participants interest in learning and access to additional resources for their own growth and development. The women are planning to carry out awareness activities about the importance of the processing unit and spread information about the services it will provide with the support of the local council. The group has the potential to continue, as their project is highly needed and vital to the area. Also, the group is planning to process grapes for other farmers. Another important factor contributing to the group's sustainability is the strong support of the local council in Al Khadar to this project which found and is supporting a new and bigger location for the unit. While the group has not been able to work and produce during the previous season due to equipment delays, the women's group in Al-Khader region has set up a grape juice factory and is preparing to produce during the upcoming season. Prior to this factory, people living in these agricultural areas would rely on home production and primitive tools, which resulted in loss of part of the juice. This intervention (juice factory) is not only providing new methods and building the capacity of the population, but it brings with it clear improvements and sustainable change to their ability to produce. However, this is a new and unfamiliar process in the area and therefore its success will rely on strategic marketing and awareness raising that promote the services and educate the

farmers about the importance of juice production service they are providing. So far, no community initiatives have been implemented, and this is a challenge, since the summer is near, and the season is close so the promotion and marketing of the plant services should begin and not wait until the season arrives.

Future outlook of the project: The group needs additional business and marketing training to enhance their business mentality, to open new markets and attract additional customers. Producing for other farmers and manufacturing other products in addition to grapes will expand the business, however, they will need additional accounting, bookkeeping, pricing and food processing training on the additional products.

5.7.3 Halhoul Women Group- Rural Women Group:



General Overview: The project the Halhoul area was designed like the other initiatives through collaborative meetings held with the women, the local council and relevant ministries. From these meetings it was decided that the community would create a processing unit to address the spoilage and loss of their grape crop. This project was developed to therefore not only provide economic opportunities for the women involved, but also provide relief to the local farmers. Throughout the project there was a lot of support for the economic empowerment of women and the members recognize that through becoming more financially independent they will be able to take a bigger role in the decision-making in their and their families' lives. Of particular interest in this community, there seems to have been a more positive response by the whole family to the women working and in focus groups, women expressed that they received support in their work in the home by their daughters, sons and husbands as they participated in this project.

The project has contributed to the development of women's capacities in many issues related to food processing, specifically the use of grapes (Hardness, gypsum, alternative to sumac, milk, grape seeds and others). The women feel empowered through the cooperative and are already planning for improvements in the future. Considering the abundance of crops and vineyards, the project appears to be highly sustainable, which is further confirmed by the support they are receiving from the experience of female members is the basis for sustainability, the relationships with the other institutions in the village, specifically the Savings, Credit, Municipal and Relief Association. Through this relationship the women are able to consider taking out loans to help

support business expansion, which in turn has allowed them to consider the possibility of exporting their product as well as selling it locally.

Relevance The project was designed in Halhoul after a series of consultations with beneficiaries and the local council in Halhoul. A group of (20) women was formed. A number of ideas were discussed including agricultural, productive and service projects. However, after the priorities were determined by all the partners, the women's group chose the idea of establishing a grape processing unit, as grapes are the largest crop in the area. Most of the women in the group have an annual crop of grapes, which was sold mostly without any manufacturing at a low price due to the high supply in the market. The members of the women group also tried to manufacture part of the grapes on their own and found that working individually was not cost effective.

Design/Coherence The project is designed to empower the Women's Group in Halhoul and the sequence of project activities and the implementation plan enabled the project to address the group's needs. This was done by carefully identifying their needs and prioritizing them in order to ensure the most urgent issues are addressed first. The project design included capacity building activities that aimed to enhance the women's group capacity to manage the planned intervention (the grape processing unit) as well as the provision of needed equipment such as gas, boiling containers and bottles in addition to a dryer to be used for producing raisins and grapes sumac.

Efficiency Originally this project was designed to start on the 21st of March 2017 and end by the 21st of June 2018, with a total implementation period of 15 months. However, due to the time-consuming tasks of the application process and the collection of beneficiaries' contributions, the project planned activities were delayed. This resulted in a six-month extension. As for the experience in Halhul, specifically, this project represents the most efficiently implemented project within the initiative at this time. Therefore, the results emerged faster, due to the fact that the equipment and supplies were delivered earlier allowing more time to work with the grape season. During the original period and the extension period of the project, PARC implemented all related activities in Halhoul including capacity building training and equipping the processing unit in order to ensure it would be operational, but to date there was a problem with the dryer which was found to be consuming large amounts of electricity, therefore the dryer was returned to the supplier and PARC team replaced it with 4 smaller ones.

PARC allocated a local coordinator for the project in Hebron area which had a positive impact on project progress, as well as started the project awareness campaign, application process and group formation and finally the implementation of the action plan. In addition to that the project formed a local committee to supervise the project that includes different local partners such as the ministry of agriculture, local councils and the ministry of labor representatives, which also supported and facilitated the implementation of planned activities. The project steering committee was formed at the beginning and its members represented the relevant institutions and experts in the Halhul area. They contributed their support to the project and women in an advisory role. The presence of agricultural engineers, experts in cooperative work, representatives of the Savings and Credit Association contributed to the success of the work of the women's cooperative and improved their production by providing advice. Additionally, they offered technical support in based on their experience in food processing, cooperative work, as well as financial guidance on best practices through to its affiliation to the Association for Saving Credit. Lastly, this steering committee also help with the marketing of the products and promotion of the cooperatives

services. The local councils and PARC were also helpful to the group and supportive of the group's activities.

Effectiveness The planned activities in Halhoul had been implemented successfully according to the project objectives. The cooperative is active, engaged and already planning for the upcoming grape harvest. The early implementation phase was constructive and inclusive of the local community's voices and needs. The cooperative was formed and a legal structure established to ensure that they can legally receive needed resources from the initiative. The members received specialized training for 16 hours over 4 days about grape production and manufacturing, as well as another 16 hour over 4 days training focused on introductory management, cooperative work and leadership.

As a result of the implemented activities the group rented a place to process the grapes together where they successfully processed crop grape of their land to gather. In order to ensure that they will continue after the end of the project, the cooperative agreed to prioritize paying for the running costs before taking any profit from the project. By the end of the season each of the group members received a net income of 4000 NIS, which many of the women have used the profits to refurbish their homes, pay bills, save money and contribute to their children's educational costs. Therefore, this group has also achieved the targeted results related to economic empowerment through a collective approach. It's important to mention that the training successfully provided the group members with general awareness about the how to produce new products from the grapes. However, with regard to capacity building, it is also essential to provide the group with a more focused training in areas such as accounting and marketing. That said, it is important to note that on an institutional level the project successfully established a cooperative group in Halhoul, as well as helped to develop a relationship with the credit and savings association, which enabled the group to be officially registered and eligible for the initiative.

Impact In terms of economic empowerment the project in Halhoul has a lot of potential. The group was successful last season and were able to generate revenues that were distributed to the group members. It's important to note that the processing unit is seasonal and lacks the dryer, which could enable the work of the project to be extended. With this dryer equipment, the processing could continue for a longer period, therefore, it is essential that the dryer problem must be resolved. Also, in order to create a higher value for the processing unit, a better business model should be created to ensure sustainability and further development. In terms of the economic impact of the project, the group members have stated that they have each received a net income of 4000 NIS each, following the 3 month grape harvest season, however due but this number could not be tracked as a result of a lack of an accounting system.

Sustainability In Halhoul, the group has a lot of potential to continue their initiative after the project ends because they are meeting a need that is vital to their area. Additionally, the group is motivated and is already planning to expand and is currently looking into ways in which they can utilize other crops or produce other traditional Palestinian food.

Future outlook of the project: PARC has established a marketing company called "Shahd Al Enab" that is expected to support the Halhoul group in marketing their products beyond the local market only. As the women group is not registered yet, they lack the label under which they can market their products and thus the new company's label will help them access markets and potentially export to external markets. The group is still facing a challenge in finding a location

and most of the production was done from the beneficiaries' homes. While the local council can support them to come extent the cost of the rent will likely be too high without additional sustainable support. Further challenges exist due to the type of production where homeowners are hesitant to rent for a grape processing unit as it attracts insects etc. Unlike Al Khader where there are locations available that are far from housing areas, in Halhul this space is not available. This issue needs to be solved in the near future and will need to rely on the cooperative members strictly following proper processing procedures that would include suitable storage area, closed area for processing and proper waste management. In addition, due to the seasonality of grapes, this group needs to diversify the products that could include tomatoes and strawberries. Lastly, the group could also benefit from a grape squeezer that would save a lot of waste and provide additional products for the group.

Innovation Grant: Mukarram Al Zeer comes from a family challenged by poverty, therefore as a grant recipient she was eager to use her skills in interior design and engineering to help provide for her family's needs. Through the grant she received needed equipment including a computer, a laptop, a special printer and a camera. Despite these resources, she still needed additional technical training on using the design software and lacked access and knowledge in terms of networking and building her brand in the marketplace. While she tried, it was clear from her interview that she needed more support to properly connect with others in her field and find customers. Although the equipment was given to the beneficiary in April 2018, they remain in the warehouse as she does not have a clear plan forward. Therefore, the grant did not have much of an impact on Mukarram's role in her community or her family. Her goal is still to create a business, but it is clear more support will be needed in order for her to get started on this process.

Perhaps networking and individual mentoring and advisors could help improve the success of her business. She sees the need to continue especially in terms of addressing her family's economic situation.

5.7.4 Al Walajah Women Group/Kitchen:



General Overview: The Al Walajah project was designed to bring together members from the two women's groups in the village to develop a catering service for guests and tourists to the village. To support this initiative, a guest house was built in May 2018 and the project began serving food in November 2019. The goal of this effort is to provide economic opportunities for women, as well as increase income generation for the village as a whole. This project was born out of services that were informally being provided by the women in the village and represents an

effort to institutionalize the process and develop further the sustainability and economic viability through encouraging the women to work together.

Al Walajeh is a village heavily impacted by the oppressive policies of the occupation, due to its geographic location and proximity to settlements and vital roadways, it is often subject to closures. This has not only resulted in Israel taking from their agricultural lands, but also impacts the ability for residents to access economic opportunities. Therefore, this initiative is helpful in terms of creating something within the village, however remains vulnerable as does the entire village from being cut off by occupation forces. The provision of materials and equipment through this initiative allowed to cut down on costs, but as there will be continual issues with access and vulnerability within this community, it remains to be seen how sustainable this project will remain, especially if the current oppressive policies continue to put pressure on the community. Through focus group discussions, it was clear that the women are in agreement about the establishment of the restaurant and its positive impact on their lives. The members recognize that they have limited knowledge in terms of business processes and lack a strategic plan moving forward, however it is important to note that they are planning on meeting on this topic in the coming months.

Relevance The project was designed in al Walajeh after a series of consultations with the beneficiaries that includes al Walajeh local council, Ansar women's center and the Women club. A group of (20) women was formed; however, it turned out that 10 were already members of Ansar women's center and 10 were members of the women's club. While this is theoretically not a problem, it turns out that the women are usually busy with other projects initiated by their respective organizations and their loyalty seems to be more to those organizations. Despite this issue of loyalty to their original groups, this shared initiative was developed in this way because it is based on a pilot project established in 2015 in the village by the Jozor Foundation in Jerusalem to attract tourist groups to visit the village. At the time, the visits were designed to raise awareness about the impact of the separation wall, as well as provide income generation to the community by providing traditional food. During the original piloted program, the food preparation was done across the two groups, which motivated the two groups to again decide to work together in this cooperative. Additionally, the number of members in the two groups is not very large and it was thought by combining the work it would be more likely that the cooperative would be a success, as well as the concern that existed to create a cooperative that only supported one area of the village rather than both. While several ideas were discussed at the start of the project, it was quickly decided to invest in expanding and enriching the existing kitchen and catering services. The kitchen project is relevant as a result of not only meeting the needs of the two women's clubs in the village, but also as a needed service for village visitors.

Design/Coherence The project in Al Walajeh was designed to empower the women economically, as well as encourage tourism within the village, which is essential as the village is under extreme pressure due to the separation wall, settlement and settler access roads that surround the community and separate them from their agricultural land. Their political situation and beautiful natural landscape attract solidarity groups and humanitarian aid organizations, while at the same time is a popular location for hikers and families wanting to spend time in nature. This interest in their location was the motivation for the design of this project, making it aligned with community needs.

Accordingly, the group participated in 2 sets of trainings and awareness raising sessions about women's empowerment. These training for the most part met the needs of the group and encouraged more professional approach to food processing, cooperative work and management of their project. Both the design and the trainings were useful but there is a weakness when it comes to the practical implementation of income generation and empowerment. However, the reason behind this lack of income generation is only partially due to the inexperience of the group, as it is mostly due to the lack of visitors to the village. Although they are well situated, as the political situation continues to deteriorate solidarity groups are also decreasing in size and weekly protests are less significant as much of the resistance movement is working to address the occupation through BDS campaigns, legal cases and on a policy level. These contextual shifts create a challenge for the village to attract enough tourists interested in staying long enough to stop, eat and support their initiative.

Efficiency The project started on the 21st of March 2017 and it was planned to end by the 21st of June 2018, with a total implementation period of 15 month. Due to the time consumed in the application process and collecting the beneficiaries' contribution, the project's planned activities were delayed. As a result, the project was extended for an additional six months like the other geographic areas. During the original period and extension period of the project, PARC implemented a technical food preparation/processing training, an introductory business training and awareness raising sessions. The cooperative was equipped with needed kitchen equipment and preparations were made to the outdoor seating area in order ensure that the cooperative was ready to welcome customers.

A local coordinator appointed by PARC supported the cooperative throughout the design and implementation stages of the project, making the process run smoother. By providing support and raising awareness about the initiative from its earliest stages of development, the project was accepted by the community and the members of the cooperative felt reassured about their kitchen idea. In addition, the project formed a local committee made up of representatives from the village council, the Ansar Club and the Women's Center, all who acted in an advisory role which lent their advice and expertise to the success of the project, as well as supported and facilitated the implementation of planned activities as all of the members of the cooperative were members of the two women's groups in the village.

With regard to group formation and contribution collection, the members could not pay their contribution which is relatively a low contribution and was paid by the two women clubs (10 members from each) in the village and the members will pay this amount later to their clubs. This has affected the identity of the group and made the two clubs more visible in terms of managing the group.

Effectiveness Al Walajeh received the needed resources to fully equip the cooperative kitchen and provide the related capacity building training. In terms of the development of the group and adaptation of a more collective approach, the group members showed a lower level of understanding than the other groups as they rely heavily on the women's club that they belong to and struggle to connect across the different groups. Since its establishment, the kitchen provided food catering services for three groups only, which is partially the result of a lower number of visitors and the political context, as well as due to a lack of marketing and linkages with incoming tour operators.

It is important to mention that the training was successfully provided to the group members, but as the group members are so new, they are learning by doing most of the time. Which means more support is needed in order to help further develop their capacity. On the institutional level the project was successful in its development of the group and has a lot of potential to develop further into a legal entity.

Impact In terms of economic empowerment, there is clear income generation potential in Al Walajeh project, however this potential is not currently being reached under the current business model. The group members are very inexperienced, there is a lack of connection being made to tourist groups and the identity of the cooperative is unclear in relationship to the two women's groups that contribute to it. Therefore, the impact of the project at this time is more reflective of these challenges and work needs to be done in order to better define the roles of the cooperative and its goals in relationship to the work of the other two separate women's groups in the area. Additionally, more attention must be given to helping the cooperative connect with visitors to the area.

This is not to say there has not been an impact in terms of the personal development of the women participating, they are interested and engaged in trying to develop their project further and even want to introduce frozen food for the kitchen services, which could help increase the overall impact of their project. However, they lack the needed knowledge. Furthermore, due to lack of proper accounting, the net income of the kitchen is unclear. The fact that they rely on three groups to provide food catering services for them, there is a real need for a skilled project management to be in place in order to keep the details of these three groups clear and recorded properly in the bookkeeping.

Sustainability Both women's clubs realize the importance of developing a clear business model for the kitchen services provided and are working toward developing the restaurant further by adding products to kitchen service. These will include semi processed food and frozen option, as well as additional baked products.

Future outlook of the project: They need to attract more solidarity groups and tourists, initiate additional revenue streams that could include school canteens or providing ready meals for orders for weddings, parties, Ramadan etc. this needs both a market assessment and a feasibility assessment as well as further infrastructure development to make the place more appealing for receiving groups. ACP and PARC have put in place a 10 months implementation plan where PARC will provide additional technical support to the cooperative for developing their business model with a comprehensive marketing plan for the services of the kitchen to diversify their client base. The cooperative is currently working on identifying marketing channels and opportunities for the optimal utilization of the production line.

Innovation grant: Rasha Hajajleh participated in the project through the women's club in Al Walaja village, which is supervised by the Rural Development and Agricultural Relief Association. The idea of the grant was developed by Rasha and inspired by her deep love and commitment to nature and the environment. In her project she aimed to recycle the leftover wood from furniture manufacturing. To support her efforts she received equipment worth 3000 euros, six months ago,

which enabled her to switch from manual labor to mechanical work. This switch helps her to save time, effort and increases her productivity. Through this initiative, she did not participate or get any training, which she feels was appropriate as she already had the skills to carry out her project. Rasha, currently works alone with her family, which did not employ women workers. The project did not contribute to the opening of employment opportunities for other women from the village yet, but she plans to in the future. While she has not been able to hire others, it is clear that her initiative has sparked inspiration in others and helped to promote the role of women as economic actors within her community.

There is a concern however around the specific follow up and nature of support for individual projects, which unlike the cooperatives lack a clear system of support. IN the case of Rasha, while she might not have needed skills training, there is some evidence that she still struggles with decision-making within her household and perhaps empowerment training for her and her family could have been helpful. Additionally, perhaps a mentoring system with other entrepreneurs could have been of great service to her.

Rasha was working in this field prior to the innovative grant, but it was all done by hand and on a much smaller scale. With the additional resources, her potential has increased in terms of income generation, however she is struggling in terms of marketing and planning for expansion. Specific business mentors and advisors could be a great help in the future as the issues she faces is different than that of the cooperatives. Furthermore, perhaps networking the individual grant recipients with leaders in their field might help them enter the market place with more support and knowledge.

5.7.5 Naqoura Women's Charitable Society/ Bakery:



General overview The GVA 16 initiative targeted the Naqoura Women's Charitable Society which was an already established cooperative that was running a moderately successful bakery at the start of the project. The objective of the project was to build on this previous success by providing them with industrial grade bakery equipment to enable them to produce and sell baked goods on a larger scale. This was designed to the income of the association and the working members. The Al Naqura group, had a clear vision and goal of providing and supporting educational initiatives for women and youth, as well as promoting economic empowerment for women. The

members of the organization are passionate about their work, but lack a specific strategy to achieve their goals. In focus group discussions they speak passionately about the importance of women's economic empowerment and they see it as a clear pathway to increasing women's confidence and improving themselves as well as the lives of their families socially and economically.

"We face a constant challenge and many in the society believe it is likely that we will fail, but we all work as members to make our cooperative successful and to reflect a positive image," said Shadia Abu Hashish, president of the association.

Relevance The project in Al Naqoura was designed through a series of consultations with the beneficiaries that included al Naqoura local council, Naqoura Women's Charitable Society which represented the 50-member group of women. The inspiration for this project came from the potential that members saw in the small bakery that was already being run through the Naqoura Women's Charitable Society's office. With the support of the resources provided through the GVA 16 initiative, the group thought it would like to expand the small bakery in order to provide more work opportunities to more members. This increased capacity would then provide the economic benefits designed to empower its membership. The group used to produce traditional cookies with a very small oven; which generated sales for them, therefore they decided to introduce other types using the new bakery. The bakery project was considered relevant to the needs of the women group represented by Naqoura Women's Charitable Society as it promised to provide economic empowerment tools, resources and the development needed by the group.

Design/Coherence The project was designed to empower the women's group economically in Naqoura village and enable them to expand the horizon of their already established successful small bakery. The sequence of activities in the design of the project, were similar to the other groups in terms of the nature of the activities that were planned, including capacity building training sessions like all other groups, as well as additional specialized training in the field of food processing and how to assess and identify the required assets needed for the expansion of their bakery. The project was designed with the aim of creating a professional bakery for the women's group. However, this step required more in-depth study and an in-depth market needs assessment and technical assessment of the required equipment and their specifications such as the electricity costs in the village in order to ensure success in such an expansion. Therefore, a clear economic development model should have been integrated in the design of the project in a better way, in order to be able to continue and provide economic value for the group of women.

Efficiency The project started on the 21st of March 2017 and it was planned to end by the 21st of June 2018, with a total implementation period of 15 month. Due to the time consumed in the application process and collecting the beneficiaries' contribution, the project's planned activities were delayed. As a result, the project was extended for an additional six months like the other areas. During the original period and extension period of the project, PARC only completed the capacity building training sessions and initially equipped the bakery with the electric oven, however this oven did not suit the financial resources and the infrastructure of the community. At the start of the project, the women of the group did their own market research that showed high demand within the surrounding markets for the bakery products. The women's group also

identified the specific equipment needed that would work best for their context. The women's group selected their own specialist to advise on the specifications and PARC has accommodated this special request giving the women members of the cooperative the voice and the power to be part of the process of establishing the bakery. This information was then shared with PARC who accommodated the requested specifications in the tender documents of the equipment. The technical staff of PARC reviewed and approved the specifications and the equipment was bought. A major challenge was then faced by the cooperative and PARC relating to the high consumption of the equipment to electricity and the high associated costs of operating the bakery. To mitigate this situation PARC replaced the oven with a smaller one; however, the high cost of electricity still made the operating cost of the project not feasible. The project was operational for a short period of time 1.5 – 2 months only. Still, the evaluator's assessment of the project idea and based on the demand in the surrounding markets, is that the project is relevant and has high potential to generate the intended income based on the additional mitigation steps agreed between the implementing partners.

Effectiveness The planned activities in Naqoura were implemented with the goal of equipping the women's group with an expansion of their existing bakery and the provision of capacity building training sessions by PARC. Based on the results on the ground, currently the group still needs to put additional efforts with the support of PARC to operate the bakery. It is important to keep in mind that institutionally, this group is more mature than the other groups and had already been formed before the start of the project. It is officially organized, and they have experience successfully implemented their own initiative running school canteens in the community prior to this initiative. All these elements are encouraging for the potential success of the project.

Impact On the level of economic empowerment, the project in Naqoura currently has had no impact on the women's group. It is significant to note that the locals were very supportive in all locations, even in Naqoura of the project. But as a result of the technical problems associated with the establishment of this bakery for the women's group, especially in the procurement and specifications of the required oven/equipment, the local council and members of the local community are not as supportive as they were at the beginning of the project. PARC and the women's cooperative agreed to put additional efforts for communicating the agreed mitigation plan and the additional interventions that PARC will provide to the women's group to operate the bakery.

Sustainability The women's group in Naqoura is very active, innovative and determined to succeed in this project, this will be feasible if and only if the issues related to implementation, specifically the problem of bakery machinery are resolved. Although this is a challenge, it remains a viable project and has the potential to be one of the biggest successes for the project and PARC.

Future outlook of the project: The discussions held with the women's group, local stakeholders and PARC show the need for a complete technical reassessment of this project, starting from the technical specifications of the equipment that is needed bought. In addition, a market assessment of the type of baked products needed in the local market is now necessary to ensure that the project can cover its running costs and eventually make a profit. PARC has put a 10 months extensive intervention plan that will start with PARC and the cooperative conducting a feasibility

and a marketing plan for the bakery utilizing PARC's own resources. PARC will conduct a technical reassessment of the production line and the associated costs and will upgrade the bakery unit accordingly. PARC will also provide the necessary technical assistance and capacity building in the field of the bakery unit management that includes the proper calculations of the costs, raw materials, pricing and sales. The cooperative representatives are currently expanding their potential marketing channels and have been active in identifying immediate opportunities and it is clear that they will be able to conclude successful business deals and orders sufficient for operating the bakery once the operational costs are put under control.

6. Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

6.1 Conclusions:

The income generation projects/cooperatives: At this time the groups are relatively small and are characterized by relatively low institutional arrangements. Most are non-registered (4 out of the 5 are non-registered) with different levels of group cohesion and sets of challenges due to the limited resources and poverty that these communities face. It is clear that continued support will be needed in order to further develop their capacity as well as ensure sustainability. The time was short for project implementation, especially when taking into consideration the amount of required to create the groups and decide on the project activities, which did not provide an opportunity for much income generation to take place. However, while the overall income was not improved, the development of these initiatives and groups has increased the potential for future earnings. Additionally, considering that this initiative targets beneficiaries and cooperatives in their early stages of development, time to learn and grow should be taken into account when creating an indicator to measure income generation. Specifically, this initiative set out to have each individual beneficiary increase their income by 100 euros a month. This expectation was not met by any of the participants, which is likely more to do with the establishment of an unrealistic indicator, rather than a sign of a shortfall within the project. These are vulnerable communities characterized by poverty and cooperatives that are in their beginning stages of economic development, therefore, a better indicator would be to set a percent change over time, rather than a specific monetary amount designed to measure income generation.

Individual initiatives/project: The two innovative individual projects represent one of the most interesting aspects of this project design. While it is common for support be shared with the greatest number of individuals, the investment in creative and capable individuals has an added benefit that the collective approach does not. By sparking the entrepreneurial spirit of one individual there was a positive result throughout the community. Local councils and community members were able to look at the possibilities that could be created when one individual is empowered to pursue their vision. Additionally, both micro businesses contributed to the protection of the environment through their mindful approaches. For example, the interior design office project, the woman beneficiary received equipment that will make her work more effective and efficient, which resulted in less paper loss due to inaccuracies using the old equipment. Also, the carpenter micro business uses and recycles wood waste to design and make environmentally friendly wooden products, which contributes to environmental protection and sustainability.

The exchange of experience: The GVA 16 Initiative was an opportunity for beneficiaries to build their capacity and expand their horizons, as well as audiences within Valencia deepen their understanding of conditions in Palestine. Specifically for the attendees of the Congress held in Palestine, both Palestinian beneficiaries, as well as the two Valencian specialist were able to address some key issues, learn from one another and better conceptualize their role within their cooperatives. This learning was furthered for those Palestinian beneficiaries that travelled to Valencia and took part in a number of exchanges and growth opportunities. Additionally, the act of travelling itself for many of the participants was in itself an expansive experience that helped to expand their horizons and encouraged them to bring their experiences and lessons learned back

to their cooperatives and communities. Furthermore, through the exchange Valencia audiences were also able to deepen their understanding of life in Palestine, as well as the challenges the women and their communities face. The exchanges and opportunities to learn from each other were an essential component linked with the project's objective which aimed to increase empowerment. The lasting impact of this activity can be seen in its potential to help promote stability within Palestine, as a result of the skills gained and the awareness raising steps taken to help inform the Valencia audience of the need for protection of vulnerable communities within Palestine. Perhaps an area that could be improved in future initiatives could be more income generation focused meetings between the Palestinian cooperatives and potential economic partners in Valencia. However, as the attendees are largely from rather informal business models, the economic improvements that could have been gained from such an exchange would need to be well structured and take into account limited experience on the Palestinian side. If given enough time to develop their cooperatives, this exchange component of the project could become increasingly important and result in business partnerships that are beneficial for both the Palestinian and Spanish marketplace. Therefore, in future initiatives it could be beneficial to consider piloting such a partnership between private businesses in Spain and successful cooperatives within Palestine.

Gender Equality and its connection to economic empowerment: The foundational approach taken in this initiative emphasizes economic empowerment and equality as essential to the stabilization and strengthening of women. The approach taken was considerate of the nuances that exist within the selected communities for women, particularly in terms of the challenges they face due to poverty, lack of individual experience in the economic sphere and oppressive occupation policies. This attention to context is particularly apparent in the capacity building and training that took place, as well as the time taken by the project staff to ensure the initiatives were viable and representative of the women's choice. Despite this attention there were still challenges within the project in terms of appreciating the extent of pressure some women were under within the domestic sphere as a result of having a lack of help from others, social pressure to do everything in the home and having to take care of many children in large families. The approach used was relatively successful in working to support the women and meet their needs by providing meeting times that were easier for mothers and support them with child friendly events, this will remain an essential component that have to be kept at the center of any such socio-economic empowerment initiatives. Additionally, the social norm at this time within these communities reflects that most of the women want to be the sole person in charge of the domestic sphere, therefore this will require that economic initiatives outside of the home will need to remain mindful of the need to align with this desire and try not to overwhelm them with work by creating opportunities within the economic sphere. At the same time, effort should be spent focusing on the male community members and supporting the expansion of their views of the role of women as economic actors. It was reflected by many participants and project staff that sessions/activities that have to do with gender equality and women's empowerment are generally not attended by men, as it is seen as not being related to them. In future initiatives, it would be helpful to create male allies within the community that can help the projects/activities to be seen by the men in the community as connected to the wellbeing of the community as a whole. By increasing buy-in among the men in the community, the women will be able to be seen by their families and

community as economic actors. This shift in perception could also help the men begin to reconsider their role within the domestic sphere, which in turn will help the women's initiatives to be more stable as the members of the cooperative will be supported both within the project and their households. Lastly, this initiative benefitted from a great deal of support for the designed projects/cooperatives from the key stakeholders such as local councils, which points to the potential that exists for future initiatives to further engage men and youth in these projects. For example, as men and male youth generally have more experience in the economic sphere, it could also be meaningful to create partnerships between them and the women's cooperatives and seek support with aspects of their project. This support could include help promote the products in spaces largely dominated by men in order to increase potential customers.

6.2 Recommendations:

- The cooperatives need to have active support to systemize their record keeping, and pathways to become legal entities with a formal business arrangement. This will protect them as well as help to promote future hope. Therefore, project management activities are needed and support in feasibility studies and business planning are essential.
- Special attention must be given to the specific limitations within rural communities when purchasing equipment. As these communities do not have as consistent access to water and electricity, it is vital that an assessment is made, and the preferences, presence and engagement of the representatives of the women groups/cooperatives are taken into account when making changes and improvements to the infrastructure related to project activities. This is a key component of sustainability and the promotion of the economic and institutional empowerment.
- Individual projects should continue to be part of such initiatives not only for the benefit to the individual selected but also for the positive role model that is created within the community, sparking innovation and the individual drive to create a project based on a personal vision. This is particularly important in relationship to women's economic empowerment, as currently women are not encouraged to imagine and create outside of the domestic sphere. A well supported individual project can help fight against gender stereotypes and create a framework for women to be inventive economic actors within their communities.
- Networking between groups should be encouraged, but consideration about the limited time available to the women should be taken into consideration. Perhaps even providing further childcare support or child friendly environments for events could help with improving attendance and lessening the burden on the women.
- The current structure for the exchange provides excellent benefits for social and personal expansion for selected beneficiaries, as well as awareness raising which promotes the protection of vulnerable groups. However, as the goal of these initiatives are to also promote income generation, it is essential to develop a networking system within the exchange that could lead to professional development and potential economic opportunities for trade and innovation. Time should be spent in considering the ways in which mentoring and networking could develop sustainable connections between groups

and consultations around business practices should be made easily accessible to the groups as they grow and develop.

- In addition to awareness raising, the exchange has the potential to link private investors and business leaders with the different groups, which would contribute to their overall development, as well as move them away from a donor dependent model to a business based one.
- The promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women within vulnerable communities must continue. The approach being taken is successful, however it is likely it could increase its rate of success by reframing the sessions about women's rights in such awareness sessions that is engaging to not only women, but the men in the community as well. By packaging these sessions in a different manner, it may help to encourage men to not see such ideas as 'women's business' and find a role for themselves within it as agents of change and advocates for the women in their lives.
- Focusing on youth engagement would also provide an opportunity to begin this process earlier in the hopes of promoting the development of a more tolerant and equitable community in the future.

6.3 Lessons Learned:

- The relationship with the cooperatives and projects must be carefully maintained in order to ensure future success. As in the case of Al Naqoura, the cooperative's request for a gas oven was not honored and they were given an electrical one instead. This has caused not only no progress of their bakery to stop in relation to this project, but also the business that they had before this initiative also stopped because they no longer can use the space, despite the beneficiaries clearly asking for a gas oven as their village's electrical grid could not handle the amount used by the electric oven. The level of miscommunication that occurred has resulted in a negative view of the initiative within this community. This negative view is despite the fact that this cooperative represents one of the strongest in terms of promising potential and sustainability. The context of the projects is essential to working well within these rural communities and the resources and equipment needs to match the capacity of the infrastructure available in the location it is being brought into.
- Individual projects have a great impact on the views of the community and serve an added purpose in terms of advocating for women as economic actors capable of developing successful businesses outside the traditional roles they often find themselves. While the investment in one individual could be seen as ineffective in terms of value for money, in reality when done well and the individuals selected are supported in their development the multiplier effect far reaching.
- The exchange process needs to consider more strategic income generation components if it is going to be able to meet the objectives set out by the project.

7. Annexes

7.1 Tools used for the development of the evaluation:

Evaluation Matrix:

Evaluation dimension	Women Group/ Cooperatives interview question	Evaluation questions	Source to answer
Relevance	<p>-What are the key problems / challenges you usually face?</p> <p>- What are the most urgent issues / priorities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what extent did the project stakeholders engage in identifying the need for the project, its objectives and design of the interventions? - To what extent is the project design and objectives are aligned with local and priorities and policies within which it has been placed. - To what extent is the project address the socio-economic-cultural factors. - How the project design and implementation addressed the identified problems and needs. - Are the initiative objectives aligned with national policies and priorities? - How the project is aligned with targeted women group's needs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National policies - Stakeholders interview - Project documents
Design/Coherence	<p>-What was the initial design and how did it relate to implementation processes of the project?</p> <p>-Were any big changes made to the project design during implementation?</p> <p>-Does there exist a need for the project design in future similar projects to be changed after based on the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How the project design and implementation addressed the identified problems and needs. - How was the selection of participating stakeholders and targeted was done. - How appropriate is the level of ownership of the project's stakeholders. - To what degree the initially identified problems changed, if relevant, how the project was reacted to these changes. - Did the project enhance the participation of women as intended? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National policies - Stakeholders interview - Project documents

	results from this project?		
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number and type of training received. - was the training and activities flexible in terms of sequence and timing? -Were the trainers good? Was the training evaluated before and after the training? -When did you start discussing the cooperative establishment? When the contribution was collected and was it affordable for you? Did the provided equipment match your needs Did the women participants build their capacity as a result of participation in this project? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the project budget were adequate to achieve the objectives. - How well the project was managed? - Were there opportunities for women to take leadership roles? If so, were there any changes as a result of their involvement? - To what extent the project was implemented within the planned timeframe. - Have the project arrangements were conducive to achieve the expected results. - What selection criteria used to select the targeted benefiteres? - To what extent the project procedures were conducive to facilitate the project implementation. - Has all activities been implemented? - To what extent the project logical framework and monitoring system were conducive and facilitated the decision making process. - The quality and timelines of reporting? - To what extent the project arrangements were conducive to project implementation. - Have the anticipated contribution from the beneficiaries been managed efficiently and provided as planned? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FG Meetings - Stakeholders interviews - Project documents - Project reports
Effectiveness	-Was the training according to your expectations?	- To what extent were the planned activities delivered to target groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FG meetings - Stakeholders

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -what additional knowledge gained from the different training? -Are your cooperative registered if not what is the current arrangement. - are there membership roles. - are there coops bylaws. - are there elected BOD for coops/ women groups. -are there collective activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are the members satisfied with the new arrangements - is the group/ cooperative providing services to members - are there records of financial and management issues? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what degree the project's objective was achieved. - How effectively the beneficiaries participated in the implementation. - Has the project provided good solutions. - Has the project helped to develop the local capacities of the targeted groups and how? - Have the targeted groups were able to maintain and adopt the acquired knowledge? - Has the project been able to officially formalize the women group's \ cooperatives? - Are all the planned targets and results achieved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> interviews - Project documents - Project reports
Impact	<p>As a result of the different trainings is there the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -income increase -New products/ service developed or improved - new clients - income increase for the members / families - Coops has attracting new members. - are coops officially registered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What impact produced by the project on the targeted beneficiaries and also on indirect beneficiaries. - Has the project had an impact on how women groups/ coops are adopting collective approach? - How much increase in the income of the targeted beneficiaries. - How much increase in the number of newcomers to the coops supported by the project. How much increase in the products/services developed by the coops/ women groups. How much increase in the customer base served by the coops/ Women groups? - Has the project had any unintended positive/negative on other groups within the five targeted localities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FG meetings - Stakeholders interviews - Project documents - Project reports

Sustainability	<p>Has the knowledge gained used in other activities?</p> <p>Is the group still operational in terms of meetings and services</p> <p>Are there any new members joining the coops/ women groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the outcomes and benefits of the project are likely to continue after the project. - Does the project has exit plan? - Does the beneficiaries/stakeholders have ownership in the collective approach? - To what extent the acquired knowledge is embedded in the new institutional arrangements for the coops/ women groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FG meetings - Stakeholders interviews - Project documents - Project reports
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Qualitative and Quantitative Questionnaires:

Questionnaire 1: Interview with Project Management (ACPP and PARC)

- Provide a brief background on **your country strategy**, where does the intervention fit within those objectives and priorities?
- Provide a brief summary of project’s geographic context (**why these locations?**) and describe the design, objectives and activities that were carried out.
- This is the first project that we came across that had **2 innovative startups**, is this a pilot or a new approach?
 - How is this different from supporting the cooperatives in terms of individual empowerment versus group empowerment?
- Do you have a **theory of change** for this project or for the economic empowerment of women?
 - Considering the idea that **community mobilization** is an essential step toward the socio-economic development and empowerment of women, please provide examples of how this project supports or challenges this theory of change.
 - What specifically is the approach taken within this project would you suggest changes (if anything) in order to better support the larger goal of empowering women through socio-economic development in similar future initiatives?
- Regarding the **official stakeholders such as ministries and municipalities**, how were they brought on board:
 - At the design phase?
 - What contribution or support or lack of did they provide?
 - What else is needed at the official Stakeholder engagement level?
- Was there any **modification** to project design or activities before or during implementation?
 - If yes, what are the modifications and why?
 - Were there any delays that were anticipated or unpredictable?
 - Any issues with Area C limitations, access, infrastructure etc that you faced?

- To your knowledge, before the project, what was **the role of women** and the selected cooperative within the community?
 - Have you seen any **shifts** in this role since the start of the project?
 - What do you **attribute these changes or lack of change in** relation to the activities of the project as well as in relation to the overall community context.
- How would you describe the level of **participation and commitment** of the beneficiaries in the project activities?
 - What were the biggest challenges barriers for participation and how were they mitigated?
 - What suggestions do you have, if any, about what would increase and improve participation?
- How would you describe the quality of the relationship and level of commitment of **PARC and the cooperatives** to the results of the project?
 - Did you or PARC plan an exit strategy?
 - Do you have any future plans for the same localities?
 - It was noticed that ACPP strategy is to repeat the same project in new or different locations?
 - Many of the cooperatives or 4 of the 5 are not registered, how committed do you think they will be after the project?
- If the cooperatives are not registered, **how do you ensure the institutional capacity and good governance** of the cooperatives/women group?
 - What interventions did PARC provide in this aspect?
- How relevant was the **project and the approach** taken during its implementation?
 - Please provide examples when possible to support your answer.
- In terms of effectiveness, what were the **most successful aspects** and the not so successful aspects of the project?
 - How were the challenges dealt with and mitigated?
- How effective was the **management** of the project?
 - What were the strengths in the management approach taken and what could be improved, at ACPP and PARC (CB, M&E, etc)
- What was the **impact** of the project on the **target groups, their families and society**?
 - How successful would you say the project was in terms of reaching its desired outcome?
 - In terms of measuring the impact, how attainable were the indicators established for this project, in particular in terms of measuring economic gains? (ie 100 euro increase in monthly income for beneficiaries)
 - Do you have any additional suggestions for indicators that would help to capture and measure the success of this or similar future initiatives?
- Considering the context specific to the project how **sustainable** do you think the project activities are at this time?
 - Are there any suggested steps that could be taken in order to improve sustainability within this project, as well as in similar future initiatives?
- In terms of **lessons learnt**, what would you say are the biggest areas of learning throughout the implementation of this project?

- What were some of the challenges?

Questionnaire (2): Focus group with women who benefited from the Interventions of the Project

- Describe the nature of the work of the society / women's group? When and what was the motivation for this group to form?
- Were you consulted in the design of the project you benefited from? If yes, how and if not, how did you hear about the project?
- Is there a clear strategy of action and objectives, specifically with regard to the integration and economic empowerment of women, improving their income, and enhancing their roles and participation in society?
- What if any successes have been achieved in terms of women's economic empowerment within your community? What role did this association have in this success?
- What are the challenges that currently exist in terms of women's economic empowerment? What do you believe could be done to best address these challenges within a project such as this one as well as future similar initiatives?
- In terms of participation, how many members were there prior to the implementation of this project? How many are there now? What challenges exist in terms of participation of women in projects such as these? What do you believe could best address these challenges?
- Considering the process and approach taken with this project, what new opportunities have been created for the association/group, as well as individual beneficiaries? What are the possibilities for growth and development did this provide now and how can these be further developed in the future for the association/group as well as individual beneficiaries?
- What products are produced and sold? How are their revenues and profits distributed to the participants?
- What skills and capacity do you now have as a result of the project? Are these new skills and capacity in line with what was needed in terms of the association/group as well as individual beneficiaries? What training do you feel would be needed in the next stage of development in order to make the work of the project sustainable?
- Have you participated in the project exercises, what? Did these exercises contribute to the development of your knowledge and skills?
- The impact of the project at the level of the policy of the association / group? The level of development and improvement, whether in the income of the association or the private income of women?
- Is there a societal role or support for society / group towards society, towards women's rights and economic support? Has the Society implemented any community initiatives? During the implementation or because of the project?
- Did women's engagement in economic activity change their role in the community? How?
- What are the main achievements of the association? At the assembly level? Women?
- How will the association / group work after the project ends? Sustainability?
- What are the main challenges faced by the Association during the implementation of the project? Will you face any challenges after the end?

- Are you satisfied with the performance of the association, what are your needs for the development of the association?
- In your opinion, were the project activities sufficient to develop your business? How and Why?
- In your opinion, has the participation of women in the association reflected positively on their economic empowerment and their ability to participate in decision-making within and outside the family?
- Are women able to make decisions on their money? How to spend or save the income gained from the project?
- Did the project affect your participation in your life? Income level and standard of living? Decision making within the family before and after participation? relations? What change did you feel?
- Has the project contributed to any change in the society in which it is implemented? At what level?
- If the project is re-implemented, what will you repeat and what will you cancel? And why? Your recommendations?
- Has the project contributed to improving your relations and the level of coordination and networking with institutions at the level of the region and beyond?
- Did the project change your role in your community? How?
- Did the project change the decision making dynamics within your household?
- Are you able to make decisions over the income you earn on your own?

Questionnaire (3) Interview with women who participated in the Valencia Experience Exchange Conference/Activity

- Tell us about joining the project, the level of your participation in the project, the new experiences and information you have acquired?
- Has the project changed your life? How do? What is the effect of the measure?
- Was your family supportive of your participation? How about the local community?
- Tell us about your participation in a conference / activity that was implemented in Valencia? Was the decision to participate and travel easy? What is the nature of your post? What interest did you gain? What is the achievement of your participation? Did you have a reflection on your life and your family and your relationship with your community and your association?
- Do you have future plans? what is it? And if you do, is it related to your participation in the project?
- Was the project and its interventions successful from your point of view? Determination?

Questionnaire (4): Interview with Beneficiaries of the Innovation Grants

- Tell us about joining the project, the level of your participation in the project, the new experiences and information you have acquired?
- The nature of the exercises you participated in, were the exercises based on your actual need?

- The nature of your participation in the project, has it contributed to changing your life? How do? What is the effect of the measure?
- Tell us about the grant you received? Why did you get it? What interest did you gain? What is the achievement of your participation? Has it contributed to your economic empowerment? Did it have a reflection on your life and your family and your relationship with your community?
- Do you have future plans? what is it? And if you do, is it related to your participation in the project?
- Was the project and its interventions successful from your point of view? Determination ?
- Do you need training to continuously develop your skills? what is it? How will you get it? What is the role of the project in improving the level of relations, knowledge and access to information?
- Did the project change your role in your community? How?
- Did the project change the decision making dynamics within your household?
- Are you able to make decisions over the income you earn on your own?

Questionnaire (5): Interview with family and community members to discuss the impact of the project on women and their lives economically and socially

- What is your relationship with the association / group and how well do you know or know the nature of its work?
- What distinguishes the community / group in your neighborhood from others? Are there positive implications for the family in general? Are there any negative implications for the family in general?
- Have you noticed any development on the performance of the group/association as well as individual beneficiaries during the past two years? What is the reason for your view?
- What do you see as the role of women in economic development within your community? Do see any reason for changes to their current role? What would changes in their role mean for the community, family and individual women?
- What do you think of the economic empowerment of women? Has the project contributed to and affected women's economic and social empowerment within your community as well as family?
 - How about the gender roles inside and outside the house?
 - Are you (men or husbands) support women to do this economic activity? If yes, are you contributing to house work, care for the children, other tasks that women used to do?
 - Do you think the engagement of women in this economic activity has changed or will change their role in their communities? How?
 - Did women's engagement with economic activity change or affect the decision making dynamics within the household?
- In your opinion, to what extent is there a demand for the products or activities of the group? Why? Are there other opportunities that you would suggest be explored in similar future initiatives?

- Are you satisfied with the role of the association/group? How can the association/group continue its work successfully? Do you or other institutions have a role in supporting them? How so?

Questionnaire (6): Interview Questions with Local and National Stakeholders (Local Councils, Ministries etc)

- 1- In your opinion was the project suitable to the priority needs of the people living in the targeted locations? (please assess per type of intervention as well).
- 2- Is the project intervention in line with your strategic plan/objectives? Comments. If not, which elements we have to include in the proposal project to be in line with the strategic plan/objectives?
- 3- Did you have any role in identifying the projects?
 - What was your role? Do you usually work as a network with other organizations like PARC?
- 4- What services or support does your institution provide to the target cooperatives?
- 5- Are you planning to support these projects in the future? Do you have future initiatives that could benefit the projects?
- 6- Does your institution have similar interventions/programs or projects in the project locations?
- 7- How do you assess the level of coordination between your institution and the beneficiary cooperative in your area?
- 8- What difficulties do the cooperatives face in production and marketing their products?
- 9- What difficulties face women in accessing work, property and access to decision making? Are your institution working in the difficulties involving all the community (women, men, and young people)?
- 10- Does your institution have any plans to improve women's role in the agricultural and cooperatives sector? What are the main measures planned? What do you think could be improved in this area?
- 11- In your opinion, what is the role of cooperatives in the socio-economic empowerment of women?
 - What are their limitations?
- 12- What do you think is the potential sustainability of the project outcomes?
- 13- What do you think can be done to promote consumption of local-Palestinian products in Palestine?
- 14- Any final remarks or recommendations.

Questionnaire (7): Interview Questions with Valencia experts

- Before the exchange, what was your understanding the role of Palestinian women and the selected cooperative within their community? Was there any shifts in your own understanding of their role as a result of the Valencia experience? What do you attribute these changes or lack of change to in relation to the activities of the exchange?

- Provide a brief summary of the exchange’s geographic context and describe the design, objectives and activities that were carried out. Do you feel that this exchange achieved the objectives it set out to achieve? What were the areas of greatest success and areas in need of the greatest improvement within the design and intention of the exchange?
- How would you describe the level of participation and level of understanding of the beneficiaries in the exchange activities? What were the barriers for participation and understanding? How were you able to mitigate these barriers? What suggestions do you have, if any, about what would increase and improve participation and understanding?
- How relevant was the exchange experience for the beneficiaries and the approach taken during its implementation? Please provide examples when possible to support your answer.
- Considering the idea that community mobilization is an essential step toward the socio-economic development and empowerment of women, please provide examples of how this exchange supports or challenges this theory of change. What specifically in the approach taken within this project would you suggest changes (if anything) in order to better support the larger goal of empowering women through socio-economic development in similar future initiatives?
- Considering the context specific to the project how sustainable do you think the exchange activities are at this time? Are there any suggested steps that could be taken in order to improve sustainability within this project, as well as in similar future initiatives?
- In terms of lessons learnt, what would you say are the biggest areas of learning throughout the implementation of this project? What were some of the challenges?
- Please describe the follow-up mechanisms used with the target groups? How successful were these mechanisms and how can they be improved in the future?
- In your expert opinion, how do you assess the capacity of the Palestinian women in relationship to the projects they are implementing? What are their greatest strengths and weaknesses? What skills or resources do you see they still need in order to ensure sustainable success of their projects?

Questionnaire (8): Quantitative Survey for Project Direct Beneficiaries

Demographic Data						
1. What is your name?						
2. What is your age?						
3. What is your gender?	Male			Female		
4. What is your marital status?	Single	Engaged	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated

5. What is your highest level of education?	No formal education	Basic school (up to 10 th grade)	Secondary school	Bachelor's	Master's
6. How many people, including yourself, live in your household?		6a. relationship to the head of household: 1. Head of household 2- spouse 3- son/daughter 4- father/mother 5- other.....			
7. Please choose the Cooperative in which you are a member/beneficiary:	a. Dier Al Asal Women Group b. Halhul Women Group c. Al Khader Women Group d. Al Walajeh Women Group e. AL Naqoura Women Group				
8. What is your relationship/role to the project/cooperative?	a. Board Member b. General Assembly Member c. Management d. Coordinator e. Supplier / working per piece				
Economic Indicators					
9. What is your total monthly income, in NIS?					
10. Who in your family earned this income?					
11. How much money did you earn last month, October 2018 from your cooperative project, in NIS?					
12. What is the products types and the quantities did you sell last month (October 2018) through the cooperative? (for example, the types are grapes, grape extract, baked goods etc and the quantities are in Kg					
13. What was your total income from the cooperative during 2018?					
14. What are your other sources of income (for family)?					
15. How much money did you spend in the last month on food (for family) in NIS?					
16. How much money did you spend in the last month on basic needs (for family) in NIS?					
Decision-Making and Ownership of Assets Indicators					
For each of the following statements, please choose the main family member that is responsible for the following decisions in your household:					

Decision		Number		Family Member	
17. Whether or not you should earn an income				1) Me 2) My husband 3) My wife 4) Me and my spouse jointly 5) My mother 6) My father 7) Other	
18. What type of paid work you should do					
19. How the money you earn will be used					
20. Buy or sell an asset (such as land, car etc)					
21. Major household purchases (such as a refrigerator)					
22. Minor household purchases (such as food)					
23. Healthcare for yourself					
24. Healthcare for other family members (such as children)					
25. Whether or not your children should go to school					
26. Whether to take a formal loan or not					
27. How you spend your free time					
28. The number of hours you can commit to working weekly					
29. Do you have a formal bank account?	Yes, in my name	Yes, in my spouse's name	Yes, jointly in both our names		No
29a. is the account is opened after sharing in the project?		Yes		No	
30. Do you yourself operate the account, that is, sign checks, and deposit and withdraw money?		Yes		No	
31. Do you have any money on your own?		Yes		No	
32. Can you alone decide how to use this money?		Yes		No	
33. Do you have any assets in your name?		Yes		No	
34. If yes, can you decide alone on what to do with the asset?		Yes		No	
35. Do you save money?		Yes		No	
36. How do you save? <i>Circle all that apply</i>	Stash cash in the house	Informal / community savings group	Purchase of assets (stocks, gold)	Savings account at a bank	Other

37. How many days in the last month were you able to meet your family's food needs?	All	Half the days of the month	Less than half the days of the month		
Gender Equality Indicators					
Please rate how much you agree with the following statements:					
38. When a woman starts working, her husband should help more with household chores	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
39. A woman should be responsible for taking care of her children, even if she works	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
40. A woman must complete all household chores, even if she works	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
41. A woman should be able to work outside the home if she wants to	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
42. When there are important decisions to be made in the family, the husband should make the final decision	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Capacity Development Indicators					
43. Have you received any training related to your project from the cooperative?	No	Yes, 1 - 3 times	Yes, 4 - 6 times	Yes, more than 6 times	
44. After the training have you been able to do one of the following:	a) Enhancing project management b) Finding new clients c) Developing new products d) Modifying your way of doing business e) No, the training was not useful f) Other: _____				
45. What are your biggest needs in terms of improving your project? <i>Circle all that apply</i>	a) Cooperative work b) Feasibility study / business planning c) Accounting d) Cooperative administration e) Marketing f) Production g) Quality h) Storage i) Governance j) Gender issues				

		k) Other, please specify: _____	
Access to the Market Indicators			
46. Who markets your products?	Myself	The Cooperative	Other, please specify: _____
47. Where do you market your products?	In local fairs	In small shops in your community	Others:
48. Do you think there is enough institutional support to market and sell Palestinian products?	Yes	No	
49. What is the added value of your product and why is it different from other products? _____			