



FINAL REPORT

External Evaluation of Project AECID “Supporting the Income Generation and Productive Capacity of Male and Female Farmers in the Gaza Strip”

Project Code: 2017/PRYC/94

Submitted to:

The Fundación Promoción Social (FPS)

&

The Palestinian Agricultural Development Association (PARC)

Submitted by:

Development Pioneers Company for Consultations (Pioneers)

Gaza, Al Remal, Al Shohadaa St., Palestine Building, 6th Floor

Telefax: 2888781

E-Mail: Wessam@pioneer.ps

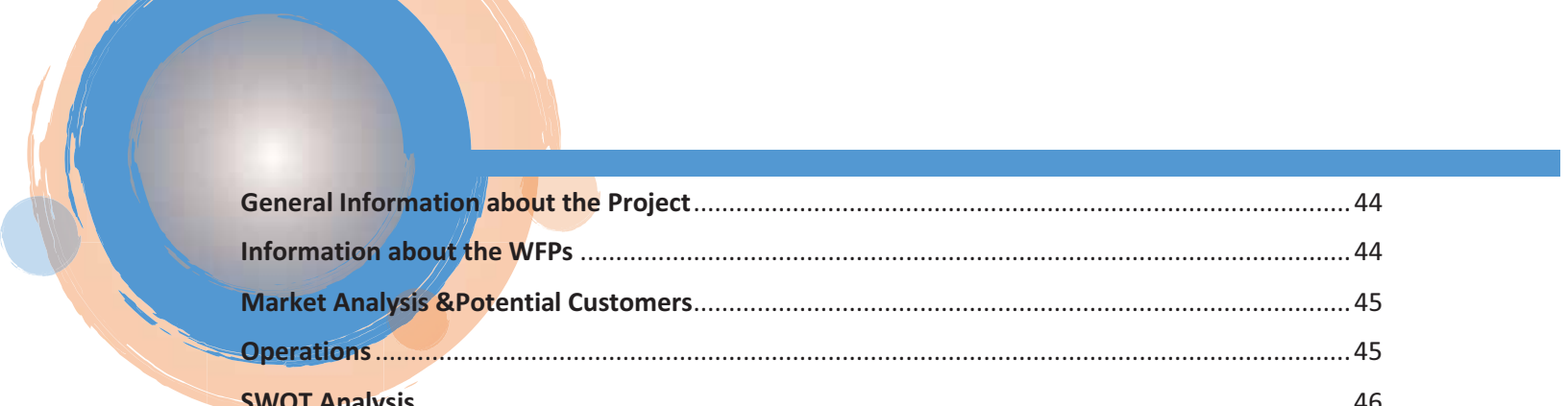
Mobile: 0597562424

April 2020



Table of Contents

List of Acronyms	4
List of Tables	5
List of Figures	6
Executive Summary	7
Introduction.....	12
1.1 General project objective:	12
1.2 Specific project objectives:	12
1.3 Key Project interventions and activities:.....	12
Socio-economic situation in Gaza Strip	13
Evaluation Goals and Levels of Analysis	14
Goals	14
Levels of Analysis.....	14
Evaluation Preparatory Steps	15
Approach and Methodology	15
Key Considerations.....	15
Proposed Methodology.....	16
Data Analysis and Reporting.....	17
Evaluation Findings	18
General Information About the Beneficiaries	18
Income & Expenses	19
General Information About the Project	20
Information About the Farm.....	21
Relevance of the Project	24
Effectiveness of the Project	28
Project Efficiency	34
Impact of the Project.....	36
Sustainability of the Project Interventions.....	40
Business Model Results.....	42
General Information About the Beneficiaries	42
Income & Expenses	43



General Information about the Project	44
Information about the WFPs	44
Market Analysis & Potential Customers	45
Operations	45
SWOT Analysis	46
Marketing Aspects	46
Development Needs	47
Conclusion	47
Lessons learned and Recommendations	52
Annex (I)	53



List of Acronyms

FG:	Focus Group
FGDS:	Focus Group Discussions
FPS:	The Fundación Promoción Social
HQ:	Headquarter
KII:	Key Informant Interviews
Km:	Kilometer
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organizations
PA:	Palestinian Authority
PARC:	The Palestinian Agricultural Development Association
Pioneers:	Development Pioneers Company for Consultations
SWOT:	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats analysis
ToR:	Terms of References
WFPUs:	Women Food Processing Units



List of Tables

Table 1. Interventions breakdown aligned with used tools, and sample size	16
Table 2 Information about the WFPUs	44
Table 3. Operational aspects	45
Table 4. SWOT Analysis.....	46
Table 5. Marketing aspects	46
Table 6. Development needs	47

List of Figures

Figure 1. Distribution of farmers benefited from land rehabilitation by family size	18
Figure 2. Distribution of farmers benefited from desalination plant by family size	19
Figure 3. Income & Expenses levels of farmers benefited from land rehabilitation	19
Figure 4. Other sources of income as reported by farmers benefited from land rehabilitation.....	20
Figure 5. Income and Expenses levels of farmers benefited from desalination plant	20
Figure 6. How did you hear about the project?	21
Figure 7. How did you hear about the project?	21
Figure 8. Distribution of farmers benefited from land rehabilitation by number of cultivated crops	22
Figure 9. Distribution of farmers benefited from land rehabilitation by land area.....	22
Figure 10. Source of water used for agricultural purposes by farmers benefited from land rehabilitation	22
Figure 11. Types of fertilizers used by farmers benefited from land rehabilitation.....	23
Figure 12. Status of irrigation networks after the project's intervention	23
Figure 13. Distribution of farmers benefited from desalination plant by number of cultivated crops.....	23
Figure 14. Distribution of farmers benefited from desalination plant by land area	24
Figure 15. Relevance of project intervention from the point view of farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support	27
Figure 16. Relevance of project intervention from the point view of farmers who benefitted from desalination plant	28
Figure 17. Indicators of project effectiveness from the farmers, who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support, perspective.....	32
Figure 18: Distribution of farmers by quantity of accessible water before and after the project intervention	33
Figure 19. Indicators of proejct effectiveness from the farmers, who benefitted from desalination plant, persepective.....	34
Figure 20. Project efficiency from the point of view of farmers benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support	35
Figure 21. Project efficiency from the point of view of farmers benefitted from desalination plant	36
Figure 22. Distribution of farmers by number of safe pesticides used	37
Figure 23. Project impact from the farmers, who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support, perspective	38
Figure 24. Qunatities of provided water for irrigation purpose	39
Figure 25. Project impact from the farmers, who benefitted from desalination plant, perspective	40
Figure 26. Project sustainability from the farmers, who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support, perspective	41
Figure 27. Project sustainability from the farmers, who benefitted from desalination plant, perspective	42
Figure 28. General Information About the women businesses	43
Figure 29. Income and expenses level of the three women businesses	43
Figure 30. How did you hear about the project?	44



Executive Summary

The report in hand aimed to analyze the processes, dynamics and linkages behind the success/setbacks of the project titled "Supporting the Income Generation and Productive Capacity of Male and Female Farmers in the Gaza Strip" in order to better understand the lessons learned and good practices to inform future programming.

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Evaluation Methodology of Spanish Cooperation (2001) and the revision of the Management Manual of Evaluations of Spanish Cooperation (2007), as well as the Guide for evaluation of Convenios¹, projects and actions of cooperation for development of AECID (2012), where the evaluation team conducted the evaluation according to different considerations to ensure its quality.

The methodology of the evaluation started by conducting a kickoff meeting with the project team, including a comprehensive desk review of project documents, based on which data collection tools were designed.

Regarding the data collection process, and given the challenges of the Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic, and imposed restrictions on movement as part of the state of emergency declared in Gaza Strip², the evaluation team in consultation with PARC and FPS decided to conduct the data collection via mobile phone. Despite this challenging situation, data collection was conducted as planned in the inception report.

The evaluation targeted 53 farmers from Rafah, and Khan Younis (48 male farmers and 5 female farmers) who have benefited from land rehabilitation and technical support. Besides the evaluation targeted 18 farmers from Gaza city (17 male farmers and 1 female) who have benefited from the desalination plant. Finally the 3 women's associations were targeted and fully surveyed to assess their business modality. The project team at PARC and FPS levels was also involved in the evaluation interviews and meetings.

The following presents summary results of the evaluation according to the project results and evaluation criteria.

Result 1: Increased capacities to develop safe agriculture and carry out sustainable agriculture

Relevance of the Project

As per the interviews with project team, it is revealed that the project was meeting the needs on different levels; local context, beneficiaries' priorities and PARC and FPS strategies and developmental needs. In the identification process, the reality of the situation was analyzed. PARC made the inception phase on the field and FPS studied and reviewed the bibliography and local normative (plans and so on) to guarantee the alignment to the local context and the adequacy to the Spanish Cooperation for Development plans.

The assessment of the project relevance from the farmers' point view showed positive results, where the project was able to identify their needs and to design the activities according to the identified needs. Which was also confirmed by the results of the interviews and FGDs with farmers and other stakeholders. Farmers reported that the implemented activities have contributed to improving their agricultural production and livelihood conditions.

¹ This guide has been prepared by the AECID ONGD Department and the Division of Evaluation of the General Secretariat of International Cooperation and focuses on addressing the updates as a result of continuous learning and the exchange of visions and lessons learned.

² <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2020/04/gaza-coronavirus-economy-tourism-unemployment-poverty.html>



Effectiveness of the Project:

The project interventions have contributed to rehabilitating their lands through the implemented interventions, including Tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings. In addition to that, all farmers reported that the technical training and field visits were effective and helped them acquire new knowledge and practices.

Project Efficiency:

The results of interviews with farmers and project team showed that the funds allocated for the project were sufficient, and that the project team was able to provide the needed trainings in an efficient manner. Moreover, the results showed that the resources (in terms of materials and capacity building) allocated for the project were sufficient and with high quality. However some farmers reported that the duration of project interventions was medium and that they needed to increase this period to maximize the benefit. In addition, they suggested that more funds should be allocated to provide similar services.

Impact of the Project:

The results of the evaluation showed that the activities of the project including tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings have essentially contributed to enhancing the income level of farmers and hence have impacted their livelihood at a very high degree. The same results were revealed in regard to the field visits which had a positive impact on improving the farmers' skills, knowledge, application and awareness especially in Good Agricultural Practices.

Sustainability of the Project Interventions:

The results of the evaluation showed that the activities of the project including tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings will still have a continuous positive impact on the production of farmers. Similarly the training will sustain effects on the farmers even after the end of the project. In addition to that, farmers reported that the awareness raising sessions, tools and equipment (Pesticide spraying pump, agricultural cart, agricultural rake, creek, and toreyah) provided by the project have helped them apply safe agriculture practices and use safe pesticides constantly.

Result 2: Access to new production and marketing chains of farmers and producers

❖ Business Model Results:

Market Analysis & Potential Customers

The results of the evaluation found that after the project intervention, the three business women have applied well-established business plans.

Each business has its own target customers where Bent El Balad is targeting the local community as a whole, Snunu is targeting employees and students, while Bent El Sharq is targeting women workers. From the point view of the business owners, there is a great potential for the food sector in the Gaza Strip, where the restaurants represent the high percentage of Gazan tourism sector in the GDP.

Regarding the competition facing the women business, the results of the evaluation showed that Bent El Balad is facing tough competition from nearby cooperatives, while Snunu is facing competition from nearby restaurants, and Bent EL Sharq is facing competition from bakeries. While all of them use different techniques to overcome competition.

SWOT Analysis:

The three women businesses were assessed in terms of SWOT analysis:

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good reputation - Good treatment - High quality products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good management - Good relationship network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good experience - Relationship network - Good location
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High rent cost - Unavailability of official registration - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unavailability of official registration - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a possibility to develop the unit through the introduction of additional food products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding and opening other branches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of new products and distributing the products to other areas in the Gaza Strip
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip - Electricity blackouts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip - Electricity blackouts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip. - Electricity blackouts - Unavailability of good storing facilities for the raw material

Overall, all the interviewed women have reported increase in their income due to the project interventions. About 45% increase of income was registered in average among 3 woman businesses derived from agricultural production and food processing. In addition they reported their great satisfaction with the technical and business training they received as they become able to produce and market high quality items that are compatible to the national standards.

Result 3: Increased the quantity and quality of water available for agricultural use

Relevance of the project

Farmers who benefitted from the desalination plant also showed that the project was successful in identifying their needs and designing the activities in a manner which responded to the identified needs. Very positive responses were gathered from the farmers regarding the relevance of the project activities to their needs.

Effectiveness of the Project:

The project has helped the farmers to improve their productivity, and the construction of the desalination unit has increased the variety of crops they cultivate. In addition to that, the field visits also contributed to improving the skills and abilities of farmers regarding irrigation practices and using safe agriculture practices. The results also showed that the tools received helped them to apply good agricultural practices whilst the awareness raising campaign improved their knowledge and expertise in regard to safe agriculture practices.



Project Efficiency:

The results showed that the funds allocated for the project were sufficient, where all of the farmers reported this to a high degree. It was also reported that the project team was able to provide the needed trainings in an efficient manner. The results of the interviews and FGDs showed that the farmers were satisfied with the quality of project interventions, however they reported that the duration of project interventions was medium and that they need to increase project duration. In addition, they believe that more funds should be allocated to implement similar services.

Impact of the Project:

The results of the evaluation showed that the construction of the desalination unit has contributed to improving the quality and quantity of water available for irrigation which in turn affected the diversification of crops planted by the farmers, and that the project has significant impact on improving the productivity of the farm. This in turn has improved the level of income of targeted farmers.

Sustainability of the Project Interventions:

The results of the evaluation showed that the construction of the desalination units will still have positive impact on the farmers in terms of improving their farm accessibility to quality water, productivity and revenues. In addition to that, the provided field visits and the awareness sessions will also have a positive lasting impact in terms of sustaining farmers' knowledge and expertise.

To sum up, it is obvious that the project was designed to respond to critical needs of the Palestinian farmers. The local staff have worked in a very professional way. At the beginning, the changes in FPS expats could be a risk in the quality of the communications, but quickly all of the team established a fluent canal of information. The local team's knowledge about the context and the problematic that affect the area and the population is very deep, and they have demonstrated it in their explanations of the different risk or options to implement the actions as reported by FPS.

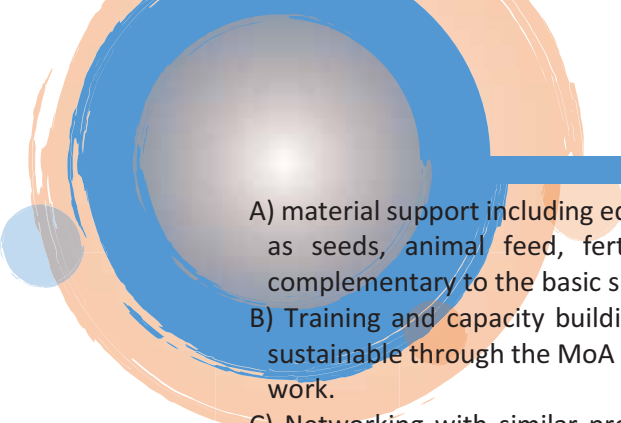
Overall and according to the documents review and meetings with the project team and different groups of beneficiaries, it is apparent that the project has achieved the expected results. The implementation suffered some delays that were solved positively, adapting them to reviewed and agreed between partners project action plan.

The interventions have been very strong and positive impact on the beneficiaries. The reports about the business plan for each productive project, the provision of legal support and the different trainings have increased the capacities of the target group to develop their livelihoods. Furthermore, to contribute to access more water through the desalination plant has also a very positive impact.

The evaluation has reached a number of lessons learned and recommendations to enrich the learning process and improve future interventions which are as the following:

Lessons Learned

1. A holistic approach, while more costly, might be the best option to overcome the layers of complexity in the Palestinian context. This implies that any intervention, especially in the most marginalized areas exposed to Israeli control thorough crossing, must find the best combination of material and non-material inputs (in-kind and capacity building). A successful package of support, while varying from one individual to the other and to some extent from one region to another, must include the following major components:

- 
- A) material support including equipment, machinery and other fixed assets. Other consumables such as seeds, animal feed, fertilizers and pesticides are important but must be targeted as complementary to the basic support (equipment, machinery and other fixed assets).
 - B) Training and capacity building, but mostly field visits and extension. This must be regular and sustainable through the MoA where field offices must be equipped with the needed staff to do this work.
 - C) Networking with similar producers/farmers, the markets and other relevant institutions; such connections must empower the beneficiaries to become more independent.
 - D) Encourage collective work, coordination and networking when cost-effective; this is especially helpful to avoid overcrowding, price deflation and control from traders and brokers.
 - E) Work with the PA, its agencies and with the international community through advocacy, improved coordination and lobbying to improve the surrounding environment and deal with the structural impediments imposed by the Israeli authority in Gaza Strip.
2. The project team is invited to expand their cooperation with the agricultural NGOs and sign memorandums of understanding to supply additional follow up, technical support and monitoring of in the field.

Recommendations

3. In addition, the project team is invited to continue working with their commended approach adopting interactive and engaging methodology (Participatory Approach).
4. The project team is recommended to further clarify the logical relation between the project interventions and the overall expected results of the project.
5. The project team can integrate a clear Theory of Change (ToC) in the project design along with the logical framework approach to describe the targeted behavioral change at the farmers and decision-making levels.
6. The project team is recommended to further encourage communal cooperation (cooperatives) between the beneficiary groups by introducing a governance system to sustain the different project components.
7. While the targeting of women was clear in some actions like WFPU's, and women benefited from the different actions. It must be noted that gender mainstreaming and transformation in gender roles and as such achieving gender equality and equity must be viewed from a more holistic point of view. For example, it is not sufficient to target women (in the form of support for project), but further actions including at the household, community and even national levels must be addressed. As such, a more careful assessment of the gender implications of the project activities must be carried out and the next project design must move a step further from (targeting women) to (gender analysis and mainstreaming), with an eye on achieving gender equity in the public and private sphere.

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of the final evaluation for the project “Supporting the Income Generation and Productive Capacity of Male and Female Farmers in the Gaza Strip”.

The project under evaluation aimed to strengthen the capacities of small women and men producers in the Gaza Strip by promoting sustainable farming systems through alternative sources of irrigation. Supporting these small producers develops productive initiatives that improve levels of food security.

To this end, training and actions linked to environmental sustainability were implemented. Directly associated with this point, the chronic water crisis was addressed by the project, through access to new water resources for agricultural use. In a context in which the aquifers are contaminated with wastewater, chemicals and salt water, there is a high dependence on imported water.

The project targeted three levels with its interventions; the farmer, the producers and the market. On the level of farmers; it provided farmers with a strong infrastructure and foundation for improving the quality of their production, it also helped improve their capacities in good practices and safe agriculture. On the level of producers, the project supported women cooperatives; women clubs; family business through developing their capacities in planning their businesses, and expand their market potential; it also increased the access to market for their production. The market also was a main target for this project; linkages with existing and potential markets were established for farmers and women cooperatives/women clubs/family business. The project also contributed to increasing the awareness of end customers about the safe products.

1.1 General project objective:

The general objective of the project was to contribute to reducing the socio-economic vulnerability of the population of Gaza.

1.2 Specific project objectives:

Producers in Gaza increase their capacities through sustainable farming. This specific objective will be reached through 3 results/outcomes:

- R1:** Increased capacities to develop safe agriculture and carry out sustainable agriculture
- R2:** Access to new production and marketing chains of farmers and producers
- R3:** Increased the quantity and quality of water available for agricultural use

1.3 Key Project interventions and activities:

- Intervention # 1: Land Rehabilitation and Technical Support to Farmers
 - R1A1 Evaluating and selecting 3 CBO's and 60 Farmers
 - R1A2 Land preparation for planting;
 - R1A3 Installation of irrigation system (access to water resources);
 - R1A4 Training on secure practice to farmers;
 - R1A5 Establish a commercial relation and fair price between farmers and women Associations;
 - R1A6 Awareness campaign; and
 - R1A7 Technical support to farmers to ensure secure practices (visits).
- Intervention # 2: Economic Empowerment for women
 - R2A1 Conducting a market research study;
 - R2A2 Evaluating and Selecting Women Cooperatives/Clubs to participate;
 - R2A3 Capacity building to 65 women in processing, quality control, packing, labelling.;
 - R2A4 Conducting a business plan to each women association;

- R2A5 To establish the specialization of each women association;
 - R2A6 Legal support to ensure women’s associations legal status; and
 - R2A7 Develop a market plan (production, distribution and commercialization) to women associations.
- Intervention # 3: Establishment of Desalination Plant
 - R3A1 Selecting the locality to build the desalinization plant;
 - R3A2 Selecting the water well (it has to work on a 125 dunams surface);
 - R3A3 Construction of desalination plant;
 - R3A4 To connect the plant to land irrigated; and
 - R3A5 Brine treatment.

2. Socio-economic situation in Gaza Strip

The socio-economic situation in Palestine in general and in the Gaza Strip in particular is still collapsing as a result of several factors that affected the social and economic life of the Palestinians³. The situation of the Palestinian economy will remain a concern in 2020, especially in the Gaza Strip, which is the focused of the intervention.

Gaza Strip is located on the south east corner of the Mediterranean Sea. The length of the Gaza Strip shore on the Mediterranean is about 41 km. The width of the strip ranges between 5 km in the middle to 8 km in the north and 12 km in the south. Gaza Strip is bounded by the green line with Israel from north and east and by Egypt from the south and by the Mediterranean in the west. The total population of the strip is about 2 million inhabitants on a total area of 378 square km⁴.

The Gaza Strip is caught in a downward spiraling crisis with grave implications for its two million inhabitants. The Israeli/Egyptian blockade of the territory severely restricts the flow of people and goods to and from Gaza; tension and competition persist between the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank and the de-facto government in the Gaza Strip; and war and violence are ongoing, damaging Gaza’s aged infrastructure and limited resources. Over half (53%) of the population in Gaza lives in poverty, two-thirds of the poor in deep poverty⁵. Farmers have experienced crop failures and reduced production of 40-60%, a loss of income that spills over to producers and cooperatives⁶ amid growing food insecurity.

About five years have passed since the last conflict took place in July/August 2014 which left behind large scale of damage and destruction as well as exacerbating the pre-existing humanitarian situation in Gaza. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health an estimated 1,400 civilians were killed, including some 500 children, and 11,231 were wounded, including over 3,500 children.

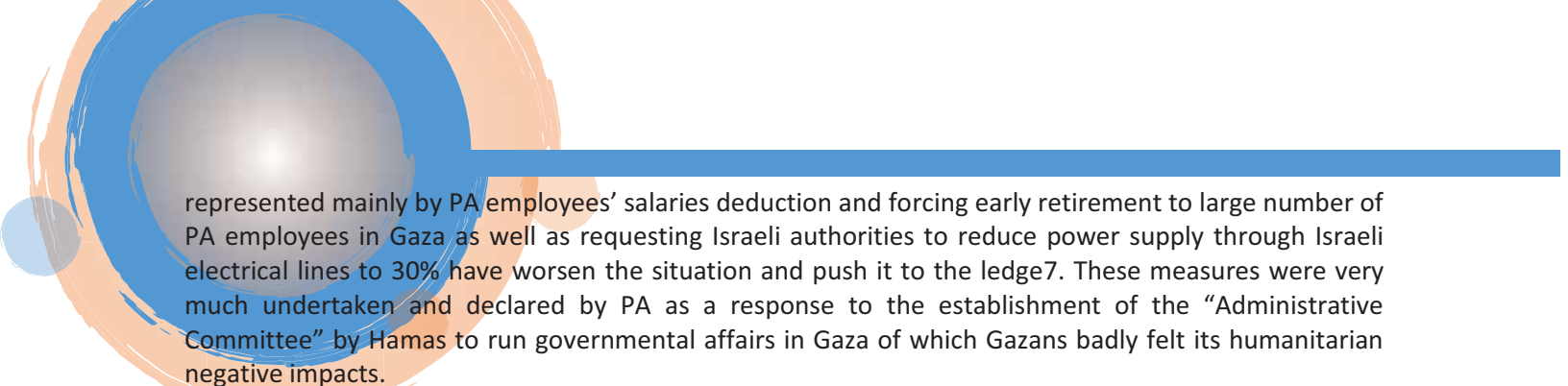
On the other hand, the political context continued to be characterized by internal divisions and the inability of the national consensus Government, formed in 2014, to fully exercise leadership. Civil servants employed by the de facto authorities continued to receive partial salaries, undermining service delivery and creating tensions with Palestinian Authority employees. Following the recent escalation of the conflict between the Hamas de facto authorities and the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority (PA), very much and badly contributing to the internal Palestinian division ever since 2007 violent take-over of Hamas in Gaza, the situation continues to deteriorate further. Recent measures taken by PA in Ramallah

³ The economic situation in Palestine is disturbing ... and Gaza has entered the stage of collapse. (n.d.). Retrieved March 1, 2020, from <https://www.palestineconomy.ps/ar/Article/bf935ey12555102Ybf935e>

⁴ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. National Census. Retrieved March 1, 2020, from http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/site/lang_ar/881/default.aspx#CensusA

⁵ <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/53-cent-palestinians-gaza-live-poverty-despite-humanitarian-assistance>

⁶ PARC’s assessments on agriculture production, 2019



represented mainly by PA employees' salaries deduction and forcing early retirement to large number of PA employees in Gaza as well as requesting Israeli authorities to reduce power supply through Israeli electrical lines to 30% have worsen the situation and push it to the ledge⁷. These measures were very much undertaken and declared by PA as a response to the establishment of the "Administrative Committee" by Hamas to run governmental affairs in Gaza of which Gazans badly felt its humanitarian negative impacts.

It goes without saying that many of the measures associated with the blockade are contradicting with the international law, as they penalize the entire population of Gaza without any regard to individual responsibility and seen as collective punishment. As such, Gazans' human rights including freedom to movement, free economy, as well as social and cultural rights are jeopardized.

3. Evaluation Goals and Levels of Analysis

3.1 Goals

The evaluation sought to analyze the processes, dynamics and linkages behind the success/setbacks of the project to better understand the lessons learned and good practices to inform future programming.

The overall objectives of the evaluation were:

- To assess, after the execution period, the **relevance** of the intervention and its objectives with regard to the problems identified in the proposal
- To assess cooperation design and the implementation of the assistance: **consistency** between the expected results and the achievement of the objectives, as well as its scope in the evaluated period, redirecting them where necessary
- To assess activities, their contribution to the **achievement of results**, and the optimization of the resources used to carry them out
- To analyze at this time of the **impact** expected by the end of the intervention, with the strategy developed with the dynamics of the intervention
- To establish a first measurement of **qualitative and quantitative** indicators to be compared with those previously set in the Baseline that was undertaken during the first months of the intervention

Regarding the usefulness of this evaluation, it helped obtain recommendations in regard to key elements for the intervention of the two organizations –FPS and PARC– regarding both, their design and planning, management and execution.

3.2 Levels of Analysis

- **Perspective of process:** evaluation of the design of the cooperation policy of the NGO in the country focusing mainly on two aspects: the framework of planning, organization and implementation of the assistance.
Also the evaluation of the process of implementation and management of the projects examined, *inter alia*, the operational structure of the NGOs in the country and the process of selection of beneficiaries was conducted by the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture and the final selection taking into account the criteria of vulnerability
- **Perspective of context:** the evaluation of the political, social and economic environment in which register the intervention and such is related to its context
- **Perspective of objectives:** Finally, evaluation of results and objectives achieved with the performance, which were made on an analysis of the interventions selected in each selected

⁷ United Nations Country Team in the occupied Palestinian territory. (2017). Gaza Ten Years Later.

country. In particular this involved evaluating the impact of productivity and economic had the project on beneficiaries

4. Evaluation Preparatory Steps

This section covers the preparatory steps followed in the conducting of the evaluation:

- Reviewed literature/Desk review;
- Approach and methodology;

4.1 Reviewed literature

The following documents were reviewed:

- Evaluation ToR;
- Project proposal and Log frame;
- Spanish legal framework;
- Budgetary framework;
- National Agriculture Sector Strategy 2017-2022;
- Final and Progress Reports;
- Follow up activity reports;
- Minutes of meetings;
- Forms; and
- Agreement.

4.2 Approach and Methodology

4.2.1 Key Considerations

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Evaluation Methodology of Spanish Cooperation (2001) and the revision of the Management Manual of Evaluations of Spanish Cooperation (2007), as well as the Guide for evaluation of Convenios, projects and actions of cooperation for development of AECID (2012)

The evaluation team conducted the evaluation according to specific, key considerations. These included the following:

- Close involvement of the FPS and PARC project team in the methodology, implementation and in the development of key lessons learned and recommendations.
- Strong beneficiary component in the methodology including the views and opinions of different beneficiaries in different locations.
- The evaluation addressed the most significant changes that occurred due to the project interventions.
- Gender-sensitive and rights-based commitment: the evaluation allowed an understanding of the degree to which different gender interests and rights-based approach were taken into consideration in project activities and organizational development support.
- Appropriate and ethical: methodologies used were appropriate to the context and not involve risk.
- Transparency and Focus: The evaluation was clearly defined and focused: Description of the initial situation, objectives of the evaluation, central questions, methodologies, qualifications of the evaluation team, reporting requirements.
- Reliability: The utilization and preparation of basic data is necessary in order to prove the assessment and the conclusions in a credible fashion.
- The evaluation was carried out through a continuous process of discussion and validation of the achievements, so as to guarantee reliability, dissemination, understanding and ownership of the results. Triangulation increases the validity of findings. To lessen bias and strengthen the

validity of findings from rapid appraisal methods and techniques, it is imperative to use multiple methods.

4.2.2 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation team conducted the process according to the following steps:

1. **Desk review:** a comprehensive desk review was achieved by the evaluation team. The documents included formulation of the intervention, Spanish legal framework, budgetary framework, National strategies and normative, follow-up reports and other related documents. In addition to that, a kickoff meeting was conducted with PARC focal point, where it was agreed to provide needed documentations including the related interventions and missions of socio-economic interventions of the institution upon the request of the consultant. **See Annex (I) minutes of the kick off meeting**
2. **Design of data collection tools:** a mix of quantitative and qualitative tools were developed in such a reflective way of the project indicators, and key evaluation criteria including relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, viability and impact. The draft tools were submitted to the PARC & FPS project team for their review and approval. Different tools were designed based on the type of intervention and target group including beneficiary questionnaire, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), as will be shown later, the draft tools were sent aligned with the inception report for the project team review and feedback. **See Annex (II) Data collection tools.**
3. **Data Collection**

As a result of the Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic, and imposed restrictions on movement as part of the state of emergency in Gaza Strip, the evaluation team in consultation with PARC and FPS team decided to conduct the data collection via mobile phone. Prior to the data collection, the team leader trained the field support team on the developed questionnaires to make sure of the quality of data collected and its reliability and accuracy.

The following illustrates the interventions breakdown aligned with used tools, and sample size.

Table 1. Interventions breakdown aligned with used tools, and sample size

Key intervention	Target group	Total no. of beneficiaries	Tools used	Sample size
Land Rehabilitation and Technical Support to Farmers	Farmers	60 female and male farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beneficiary questionnaire • KIIs • FGDs • Field visits to selected farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 53 farmers for the questionnaire (48 Male farmers, 5 female farmers)⁸ • 3 KIIs • 2 FGDs <p>Each FGD include 8-12 farmers</p>
Economic Empowerment for women	Women food Processing Units (WFPUs)	3 WFPUs	KIIs and field visits using a business model template with each WFPU to evaluate the businesses' feasibility and value addition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 units
Establishment of Desalination Plant	Farmers	25 farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire • FGD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire with the 18 farmers benefiting from the

⁸ The farmers distributed according to the proportion of farmers in Rafah & Khanyounis

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field visits to the established plant and selected farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plant (1 female and 17 males) One FGD
--	--	--	--	--

Besides the above-mentioned, key informant interviews were arranged and implemented with identified stakeholders at the project level (HQ and field).

Data collection and quality control

Aside from being trained and well instructed, survey interviewers' daily outputs (completed questionnaires) were reviewed and checked by the consultants. Further daily debriefings were done where issues/questions on questionnaire use were discussed and resolved. At the completion of data collection, all questionnaires were brought for final checking before being turned over for the data processing. Identification numbers were assigned for each interview respondent.

✓ Data accuracy

The checking of data accuracy involved several aspects of the survey, mainly statistical errors due to the use of a sample, as well as non-statistical errors related to the survey team and instruments.

✓ Quality control measures

Several measures were taken to ensure quality control in the survey in order to minimize the impact of non-statistical errors to the possible extent. Qualified field researchers were selected with competence in the implementation of such surveys; they received training on methods of field work and mechanisms of completing the questionnaires. Regarding the errors that can occur during data entry, very accurate data validation rules and procedures were developed to prevent any coordination errors that may occur during this process, in addition to that, and for the purpose of ensuring the validity of the collected data, the data collection team ensured that there are no blanks in the distributed questionnaire, as well as no missing data. For the purpose of data entry also, the selection of data enterers was based on their experience and competence in data entry. They also received training on the software and data entry form, as well as on data entry process quality control during this process. That said, the consultant followed clear guidelines and procedures to ensure that the data entry process is valid and meet the requirements of the task, the data validation process included the following:

- Perform an in depth check to detect missing values, outliers, and inconsistencies.
- Determine the reasons for the error
- Decide on the weight of the error
- Decide on corrective actions
- Correct the error

Furthermore, the data entry was verified for 5% of the questionnaires that were entered in order to assure quality of entry and absence of errors.

4. Data Analysis and Reporting

Open-ended, qualitative responses on the semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were entered into the database, sorted by locality and gender, coded for emergent themes (the same codes as in the data collection tools), and used for more culturally sensitive analyses as much as possible.

The analysis of the data and information was disaggregated, to the extent possible, by various interventions and characteristics of target group (geographical distribution, gender, etc.) as relevant in each intervention and each sub-activity and target groups.

The data was entered and analyzed using advanced Excel commands. It is also worth mentioning that the reporting was accomplished based on the key evaluation criteria. As well the analysis was based on three levels; process, context and objectives.

5. Evaluation Findings:

The following section presents the findings of the evaluation according to the expected results and above-mentioned evaluation criteria:

R1: Increased capacities to develop safe agriculture and carry out sustainable agriculture, and Result 3: Increased the quantity and quality of water available for agricultural use

General Information about the Beneficiaries:

Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:

The evaluation process targeted 53 farmers as shown earlier. Of which 91% are males and 9% are females. And 62% are located in Rafah, 38% are located in Khan Younis. About 98% of them are married, and 2% of them are divorced. Most of them (55%) are in the age group between 41-60 years, 36% are in the age group between 20-40 years, and only 9% are above 60 years.

As for the number of family members of the surveyed beneficiaries, the results found that most of them (72%) have from 6-10 members, 15% have from 2-5 members, and 13% have more than 10 members. The following figure shows the number of family members of the surveyed farmers distributed according to gender and age:

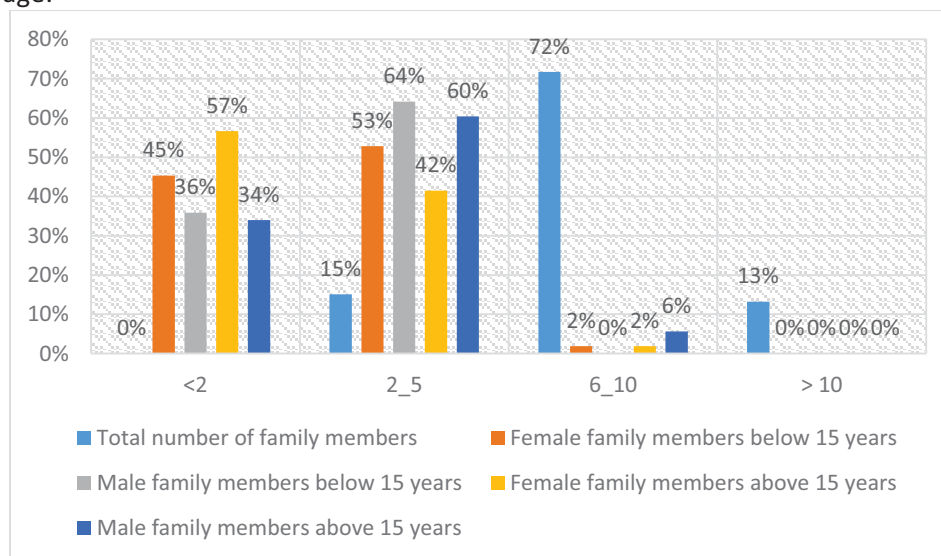


Figure 1. Distribution of farmers benefited from land rehabilitation by family size

Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant

The evaluation process targeted 18 farmers. Of which 94% are males and 6% are females. All of them are located in Gaza city. About 94% of them are married, and 6% of them are divorced. Most of them (50%) are in the age group between 20-40 years, 28% are in the age group between 41-60 years, and 22% are above 60 years. As for the number of family members of the surveyed beneficiaries, the results found that most of them (50%) have from 6-10 members, 39% have from 2-5 members, 6% have less than two members, and 5% have more than 10 members. The following figure shows the number of family members of the surveyed farmers distributed according to gender and age:

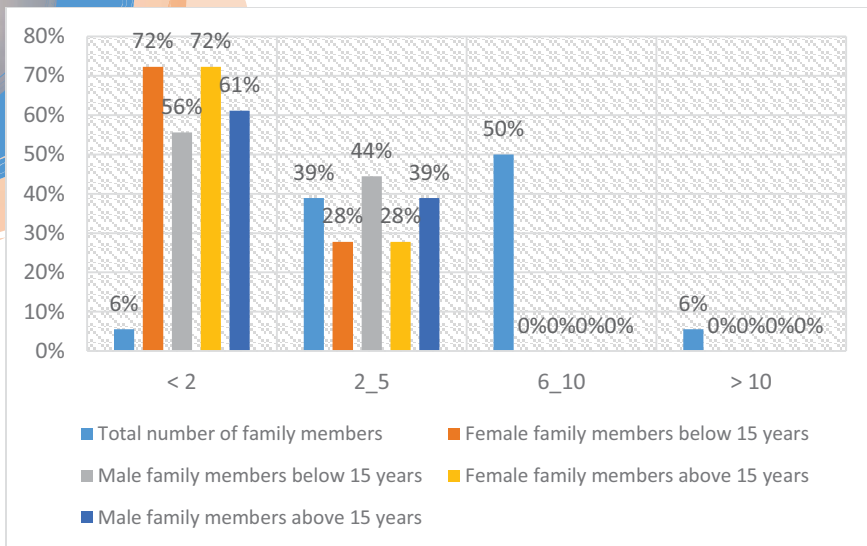


Figure 2. Distribution of farmers benefited from desalination plant by family size

Income & Expenses:

- Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The results of the evaluation showed that most of the farmers (80%) have average monthly expenses that ranges between NIS 500-1000, 11% have average monthly expenses of more than NIS 1,000, and 9% have average monthly expenses of less than NIS 500. While on the other hand, 53% of them have monthly average income of NIS 500-1000, 45% have average monthly income of less than NIS 500, and 2% have monthly income of more than NIS 1000 as shown in the figure below:

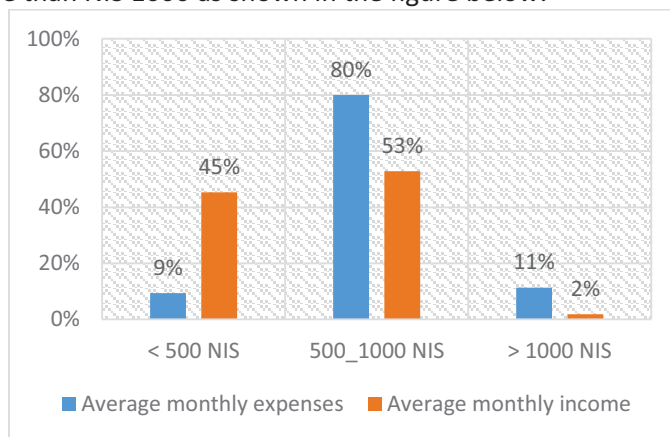


Figure 3. Income & Expenses levels of farmers benefited from land rehabilitation

In addition to that, all of the surveyed respondents reported that their main source of income is farming, however, all of them reported that their income does not cover their expenses, and that they used to borrow to cover their expenses.

When asking about the farmers' dependency on other sources of income, the majority 87% reported that they do not have any other source of income other than farming as shown below:

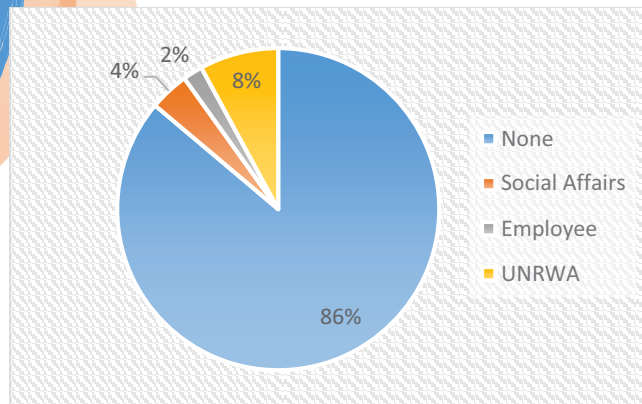


Figure 4. Other sources of income as reported by farmers benefited from land rehabilitation

- Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

The results of the evaluation showed that most of the farmers (72%) have average monthly expenses that ranges between NIS 500-1000, and 28% have average monthly expenses of more than NIS 1,000. While on the other hand, 94% of them have monthly average income of NIS 500-1000, and only 6% have average monthly income of more than NIS 1000, as shown in the figure below:

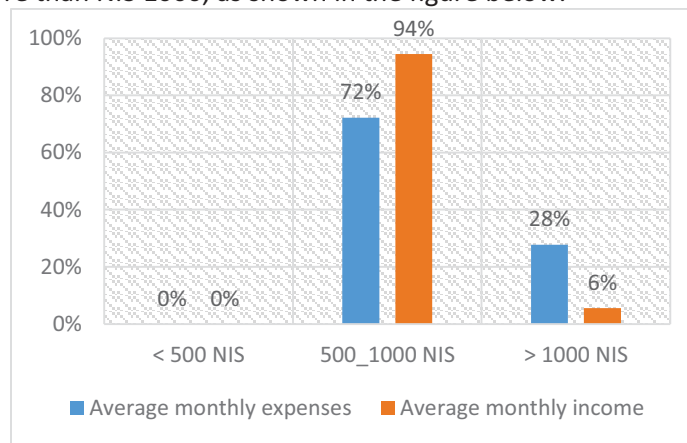


Figure 5. Income and Expenses levels of farmers benefited from desalination plant

In addition to that, all of the surveyed farmers (100%) reported that their main source of income is farming, while 94% of them reported that their income does not cover their expenses, and that the same percentage (94%) reported that they borrow to cover their expenses.

As for the assessment of the existence of other sources of income, all of the farmers (100%) reported that they do not have any other source of income other than farming.

- General Information about the Project:**

- Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The results of the evaluation showed that all farmers have heard about the project during the period from 2018-2019 from different sources as shown below:

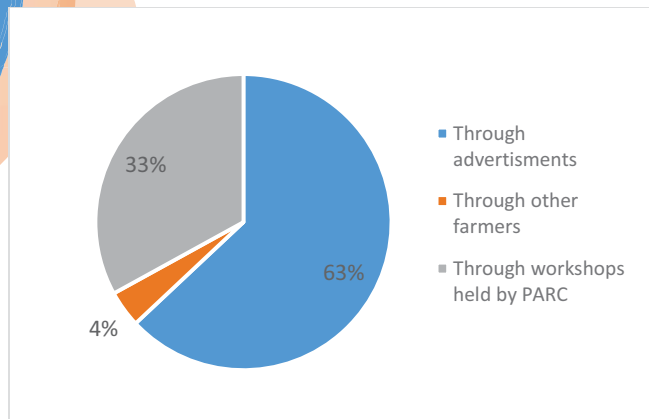


Figure 6. How did you hear about the project?

All the farmers showed that prior to the start of the project, they were familiar with the project nature and what it aspires to provide, where all of them (100%) reported that the project will provide them with farming tools and equipment, irrigation network, seedlings, and technical trainings.

- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

Similarly, it is found that all farmers have heard about the project in 2019 from different sources as shown below:

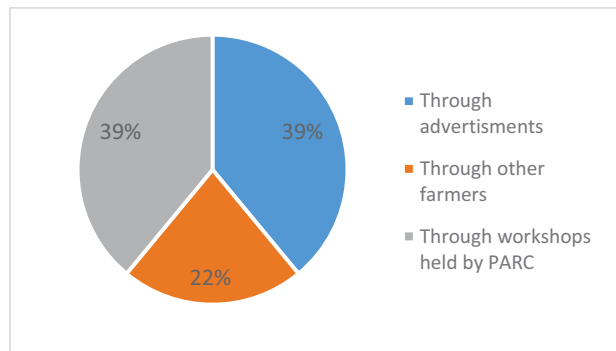


Figure 7. How did you hear about the project?

All of them showed that prior to the start of the project, they were familiar with the project nature and type of services intended to be offered, where all of them (100%) reported that the project will provide them with high quality water.

- **Information about the Farm:**

- **Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

Regarding the number of crops cultivated in the farms, the following figure shows the number of crops cultivated by the targeted farmers:

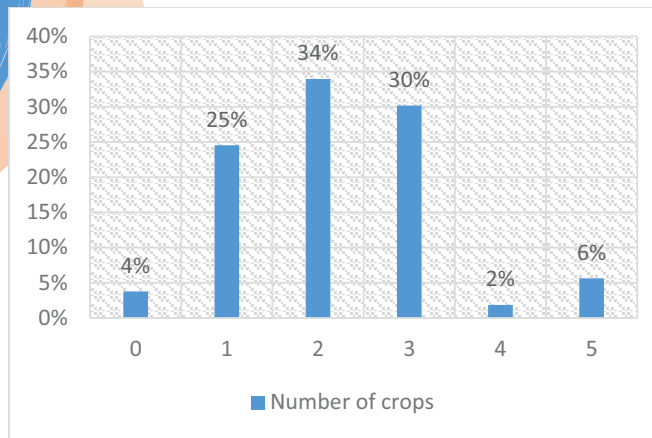


Figure 8. Distribution of farmers benefited from land rehabilitation by number of cultivated crops

In this regard, the farmers showed that they cultivate different crops including potato, tomato, cucumber, pepper, sweet pepper, and many other varieties.

Most of the farmers (57%) reported that they have from 10-20 years of experience in practicing agricultural activities, 28% have more than 10 years of experience, and 15% have less than 10 years of experience.

As for the land area of the farm, about 87% of the farmers reported that they have a farm with a land area of 1-5 dunums as shown in the figure below:

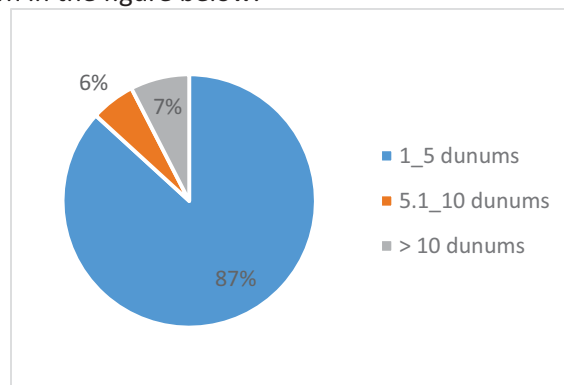


Figure 9. Distribution of farmers benefited from land rehabilitation by land area

As for the source of water they use, the results showed that about half of them (49%) use wells, 36% buy the water, and 9% use bonds as shown in the figure below:

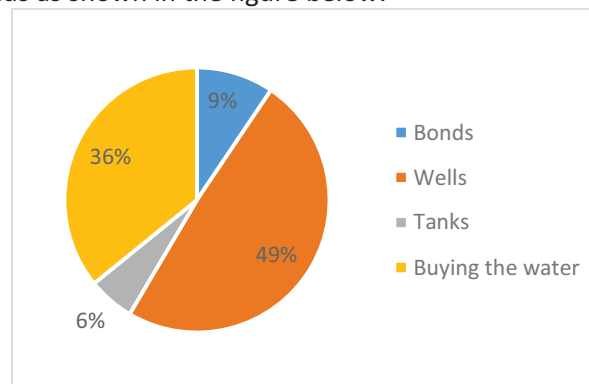


Figure 10. Source of water used for agricultural purposes by farmers benefited from land rehabilitation

About 75% of the farmers reported that they use less than 500 cubic meters of water to irrigate their land, while 21% use between 500-1000 cubic meter, and only 4% use more than 1000 cubic meter.

In addition to that, 94% of the farmers reported that they use fertilizers whenever they cultivate their lands, 2% fertilize the land twice a year, and 4% fertilize it three times a year. As for the type of fertilizers used, the following figure illustrates these types:

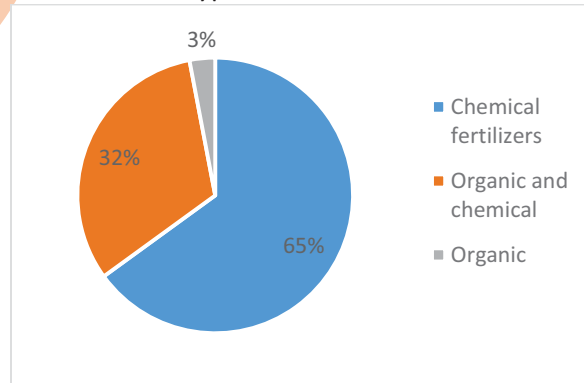


Figure 11. Types of fertilizers used by farmers benefited from land rehabilitation

As for the irrigation networks, the results of the evaluation showed that prior to the project's intervention, 91% of the farmers reported having irrigation networks in a bad status, and 9% did not even have irrigation networks of any kind. While on the other hand and after the project interventions, the results are as follow:

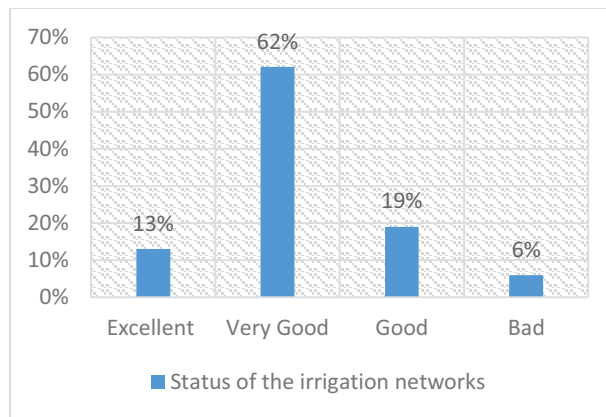


Figure 12. Status of irrigation networks after the project's intervention

- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

Regarding the number of crops cultivated at the farm, the following figure shows the number of crops cultivated by the farmers:

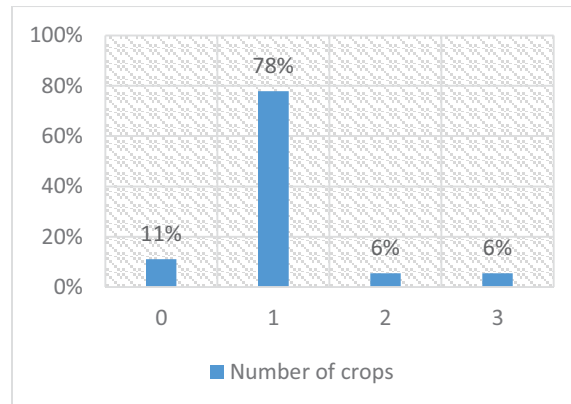


Figure 13. Distribution of farmers benefited from desalination plant by number of cultivated crops

With regard to the types of crops cultivated, the farmers showed that they cultivate different crops including potato, tomato, cucumber, lemon, strawberry, olive, etc.

About 61%, 11%, and 28% reported that they started practicing agriculture 10-20 years ago, less than one year, and more than 10 years respectively.

As for the land area of the farm, about 67% of the farmers reported that they have a farm with a land area of 1-5 dunums as shown in the figure below:

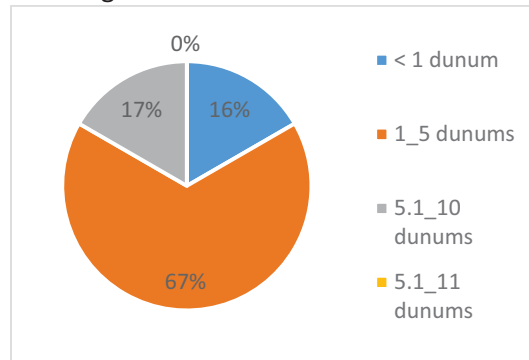


Figure 14. Distribution of farmers benefited from desalination plant by land area

As for the source of water they use for irrigation, all farmers reported that they use water from the desalination unit, and that they use dripping irrigation method.

About 83% of the farmers reported that they need less than 500 cubic meters of water to irrigate their land, while 17% need between 500-1000 cubic meter. While prior to the project interventions, all of the farmers reported that they use less than 500 cubic meters. All farmers reported that the desalination unit has improved their ability to access additional amounts of high-quality water.

Before the project intervention, none of the beneficiaries cultivated crops that need high quality water (with low salinity and nitrogen level), and only 33% used to cultivate less than 5 dunums with such crops. After the project intervention, 17% cultivate less than one dunum with crops that need high quality water, 67% cultivate 1-5 dunums, and 16% cultivate 5-10 dunums with these crops.

As for the use of pesticides, the results showed that 72% of the farmers use pesticides once a season, and 28% of them use it based on the nature of the crop and its needs given that all of them use both chemical and organic fertilizers.

As for the irrigation networks, the results of the evaluation showed that prior to the intervention of the project, 56% of the farmers have irrigation networks that need maintenance, and 44% reported that they have bad irrigation networks. While after the project interventions, all farmers reported that the irrigation networks are of high quality (78% have very good networks and 22% have excellent networks).

Relevance of the Project

- **Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The evaluation revealed that all farmers have participated in the design phase of the project with varying degrees, as they were involved in different meetings and workshops with PARC team. In addition to that, all farmers reported that the design of the project was relevant to their needs to large extent. The results of the interviews and FGDs also showed that the project beneficiaries were introduced to its interventions by the project staff, as the aim of the project interventions was to provide farmers with the necessary agricultural tools and equipment, in addition to providing them with irrigation networks. Farmers reported that all their real needs were effectively met.

The project was successful in identifying the needs of the farmers prior to the intervention, where 96% of the farmers reported this (34% very high agreement, 62% high agreement). In addition to that, the farmers reported that the project has efficiently responded to the identified needs, same results also revealed

regarding the ability of the project to provide the required assistance to the farmers at the most appropriate time.

The project was also successful in identifying the needs of the farmers in terms of the safe use of pesticides, and the provision of high-quality irrigation networks.

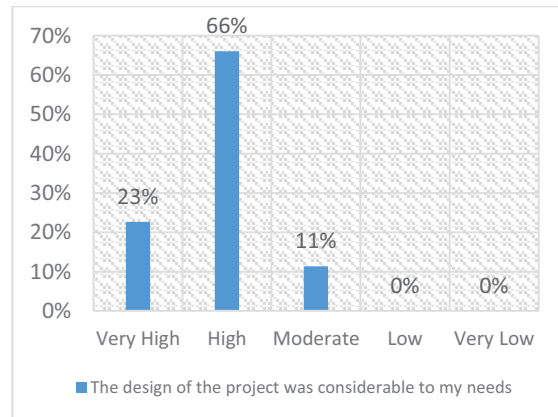
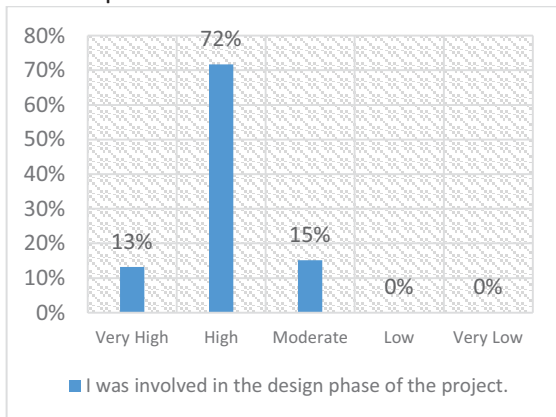
From the evaluator perspective, the project was relevant to the needs of the targeted beneficiaries in specific, and for the Gaza context in general, and it can be considered as a starting point for similar projects in the future. It is worth mentioning here that the Palestinian agriculture is struggling with the following constraints:

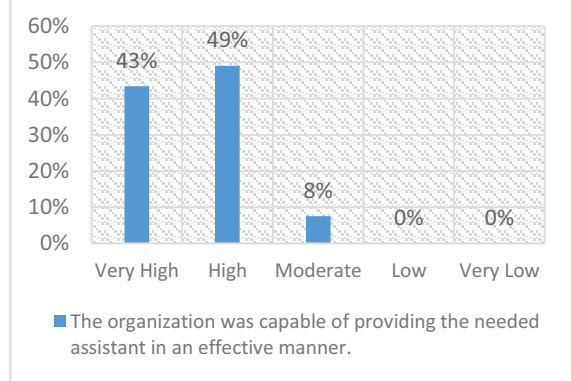
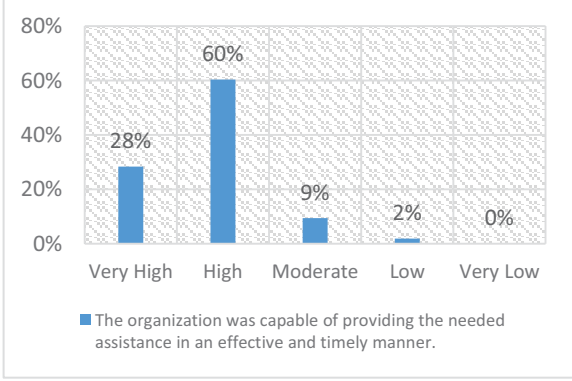
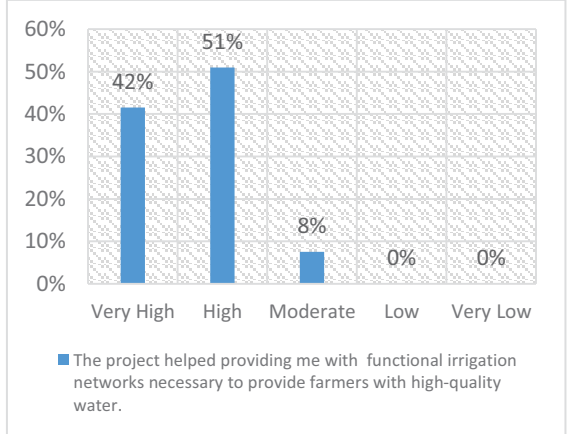
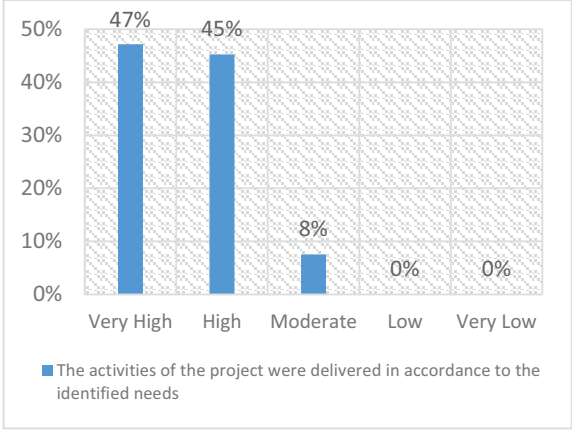
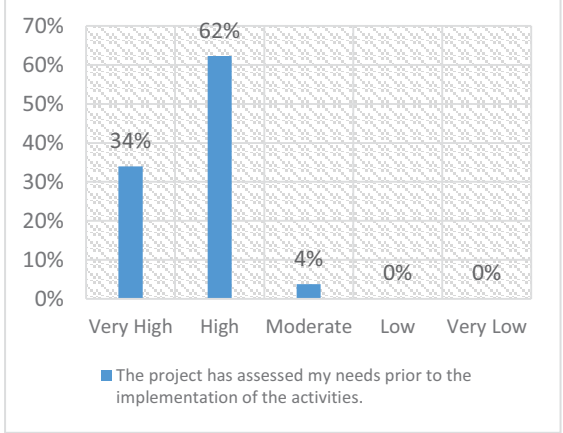
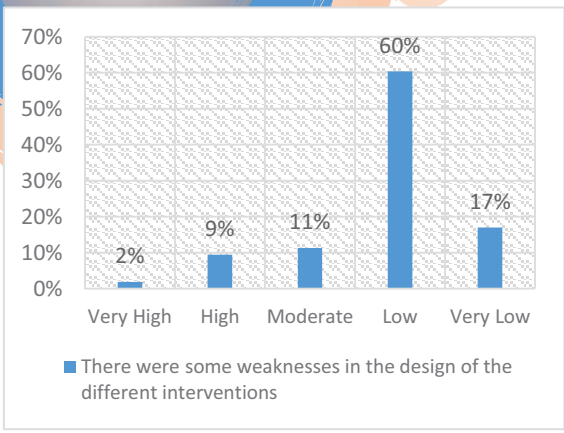
- restricted access to water and markets (eg. frequent border closures, electricity outage, roadblocks; competition with subsidized Israeli products)
- high costs for water and agricultural inputs
- water losses due to inefficient irrigation practices, poorly maintained infrastructure

According to OCHA (2017), the severity of electricity outages in the Gaza Strip had a detrimental impact on the availability of essential services and undermined Gaza’s already fragile economy.

The energy crisis has taken its toll on the agricultural sector and 30,000 out of 80,000 dunums planted with seasonal vegetable crops across the Gaza Strip were at risk of total loss due to irregular irrigation. This is directly linked to shortages in the electricity supply needed to support sufficient pumping hours from water wells. The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) estimates that up to 60 per cent of the demand for water is unmet as a result of electricity outages.

The following figures shows the responses of the farmers regarding the relevance of the project from their point of view:





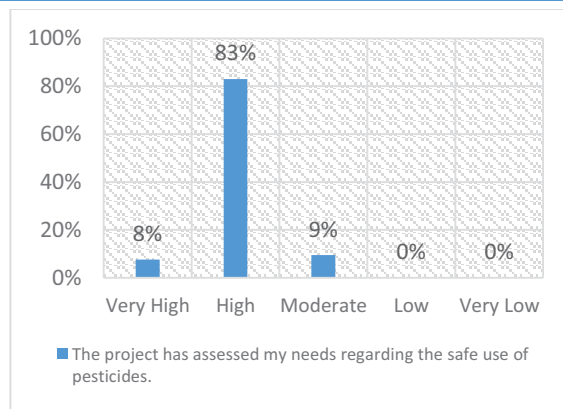
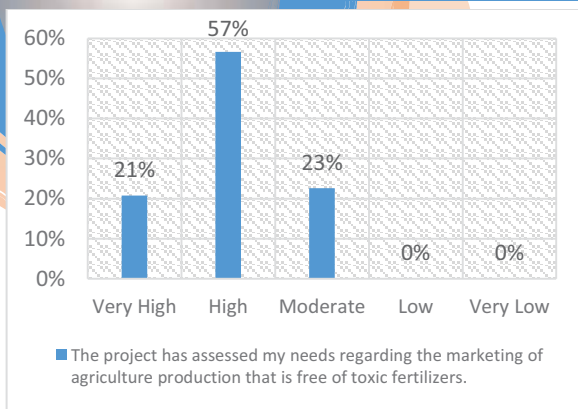


Figure 15. Relevance of project intervention from the point view of farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support

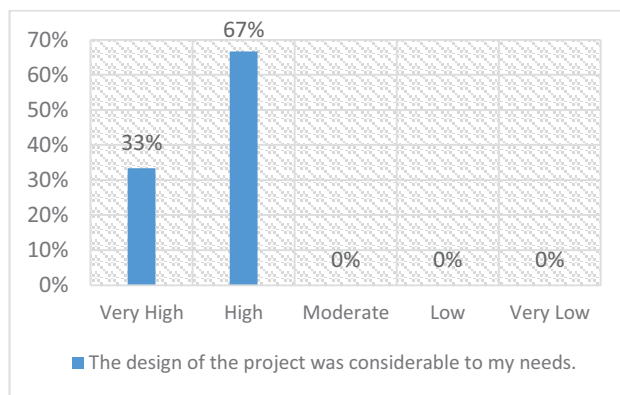
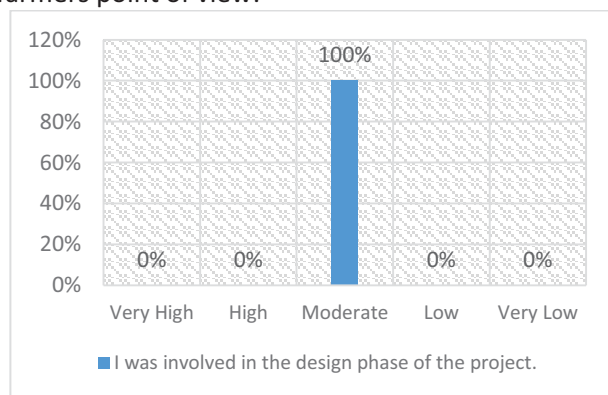
- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

Regarding the participation of farmers in the design of the project, the results showed that their participation was somewhat moderate, where they were only involved in some sessions and meetings about the project. However, positive responses from the farmers have been recorded since all of them reported that the design of the project was considerable to their needs.

As for raising any concerns regarding the design phase, 94% of them reported this to limited degree, where most of them reported that they need additional support to enable them to better manage their farm and develop their livelihood conditions. However, from the evaluator point of view, such responses are exaggerated, given that farmers may consider asking for more support will contribute to better improving their socio-economic situation.

All of them reported that the project has been successful in identifying their needs and responding to the identified needs, and it was able to provide the needed assistant to the farmers. Moreover, the farmers reported that the project helped providing them with irrigation networks with high quality. Furthermore, the results of the interviews and FGDs showed that the project beneficiaries were introduced to its interventions through the project staff and the others farmers in the area, as the aim of the project interventions was to provide farmers with the high-quality irrigation water. Farmers reported that all their real needs had been met.

The following figures shows the responses of the farmers regarding the relevance of the project from the farmers point of view:



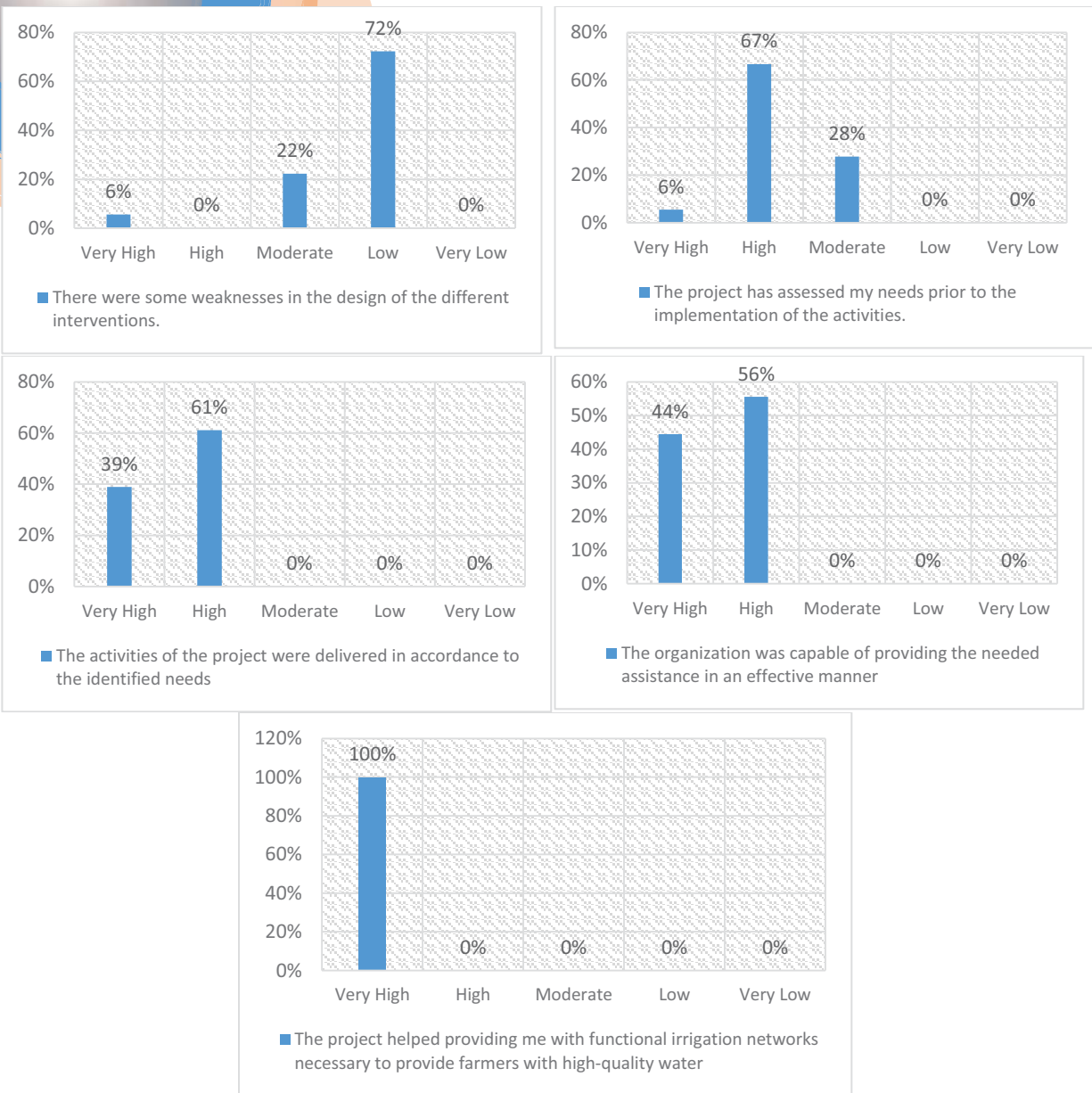


Figure 16. Relevance of project intervention from the point view of farmers who benefitted from desalination plant

Effectiveness of the Project:

Overall and according to the documents review and meetings with the project team and different groups of beneficiaries, it is apparent that the project has achieved the expected results. The implementation suffered some delays that were solved positively, adapting them to reviewed and agreed between partners project action plan. The following table shows brief presentation of the project achievements against the logical-framework indicators.

	Logic	Indicators	Key Achievements
R1	Increased capacities to develop safe agriculture and carry out sustainable agriculture	<p>R1IOV1: At least 60 farmers in the Gaza Strip use IMP (Integrated Pest Management) methods to promote safe agriculture</p> <p>R1IOV2: At least 60 farmers in the Gaza Strip receive technical support on agricultural extension</p> <p>R1IOV3: At least 60 farmers link their production to the businesses of women's associations through the sale of products at the end of the project</p> <p>R1IOV4: At least 60 farmers market agricultural production free of toxic fertilizers</p> <p>R1IOV5: 50% decreased wasted water</p> <p>R1IOV6: Increased the use of safe pesticides (70%) at the end of the project</p> <p>R1IOV7: Recovered 60 dunams for crops</p>	<p>The evaluation revealed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 60 farmers in the Gaza Strip used IPM (Integrated Pest Management) methods to promote safe agriculture. About 96% of farmers reported their increased knowledge and improved practices in safe agriculture. - 60 farmers in the Gaza Strip received technical support on agricultural extension - 60 farmers market agricultural production free of toxic fertilizers - Increased the use of safe pesticides among farmers. It is found that 48% reported that the project helped them better understand the standards and the methods of using pesticides, 25% reported that the project helped them identify the requirements as per each seedling. In addition the analysis showed that 75% of the farmers have increased their use of safe pesticides. - 90% decreased wasted water among farmers - 60 farmers linked their production to the businesses of women's associations targeted by the project. The farmers have sold their produce through packaging and distribution point that established by project
R2	Access to new production and marketing chains of farmers and producers	<p>R2IOV1: % Increased of income derived from agricultural production</p> <p>R2IOV2: 3 women's associations in the Gaza Strip have a business plan at the end of the project</p> <p>R2IOV3: 3 associations of women from the Gaza Strip have legal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - About 40% of farmers (who benefited from land rehabilitation) confirmed that the project intervention helped them increase their income to very high degree, 54% reported that their income has improved to a high degree, and only 6% reported that the impact of the project on their income level was

		<p>status at the end of the project (recognized right)</p> <p>R2IOV4: 65 women have received training in processing, quality control, packaging, labeling and marking at the end of the project.</p> <p>R2IOV5: 3 women's associations have a market plan adapted to the end of the project.</p>	<p>moderate. As well, 83% of the farmers (who benefited from desalination plant) reported high improvement in their income level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All the interviewed women reported increase in their income due to the project interventions. About 45% increase of income was registered in average among 3 woman businesses derived from agricultural production. - The 3 women's associations have well-established business plans and market plans - The 3 women's associations have official permission from the MoE to market their products with their own label including the name of the project in the local market, supermarkets, shops, etc... - 65 women have received training in food processing, food presentation, hygiene practices, storing processing, quality assurance, packaging, labelling, and branding. The interviewed women reported their great satisfaction with the training outputs as they become able to produce high quality items that are compatible to the national standards.
R3	<p>Increased the quantity and quality of water available for agricultural use</p>	<p>R3IOV1: 500 cubic meters of fresh water is pumped daily to farmers in selected communities.</p> <p>R3IOV2: 25 farmers grow 125 dunums of profitable crops from agricultural products that require high quality water (low salinity / nitrogen)</p> <p>R3IOV3: Increase by x% functional irrigation networks necessary to provide farmers with high quality water</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The evaluation results showed that the average quantity of accessible water has increased with a rate of 83% from 153 cubic meters before the project intervention to 280 cubic meters after the project intervention. - After the project intervention, 17% cultivate less than one dunum with crops that need high quality wáter (low salinity / nitrogen), 67% cultivate 1-5 dunums, and 16% cultivate 5-10 dunums with these crops

- It is also found that 18 farmers have now functional irrigation networks that provide them with high quality wáter.

• **Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The results of the interviews and FGDs showed that farmers demonstrated that they were aware of the objectives of project interventions prior to implementation, and that project interventions had achieved the planned goals through effective methods and techniques.

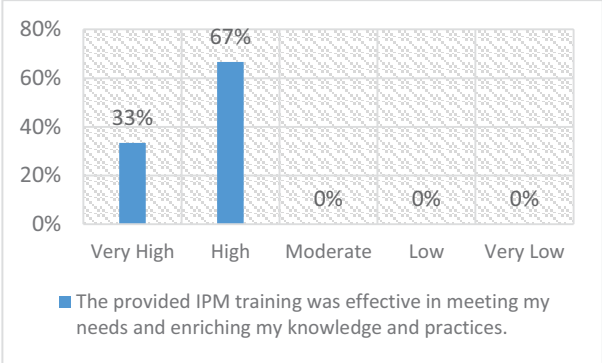
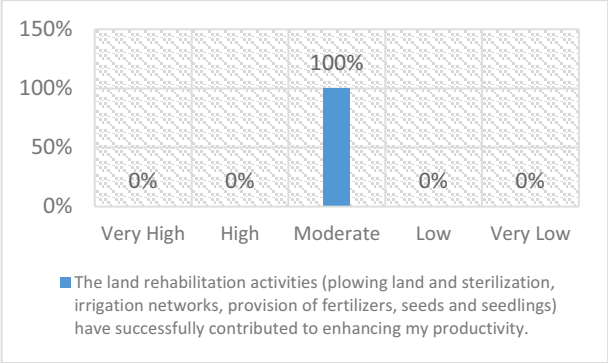
To support this, the evaluation showed that the project interventions have contributed to rehabilitating the lands of the farmers through the implemented interventions including Tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings. In addition to that, all of the farmers reported that the technical training they received was effective and helped them acquire new knowledge and practices.

Similar results were presented regarding the effectiveness of the field visits, which proved to help the farmers to apply good agricultural Good Agricultural Practices. Additionally, the agricultural tools provided by the project and the irrigation networks established as part of the project were of high quality and helped the farmers improve their production capacities.

As for training, it has contributed greatly to increasing and developing their skills in the good use of pesticides.

From the evaluator's perspective, the interventions of the project have come as a matching response to existing needs, given the context of the Gaza Strip and the worsening situation in the area. The efforts of the project have come as much responsive as possible to existing needs whether at the support of physical assistance level or at the trainings and workshops levels.

The following figures shows the responses of the farmers regarding the effectiveness of the project from their point view:



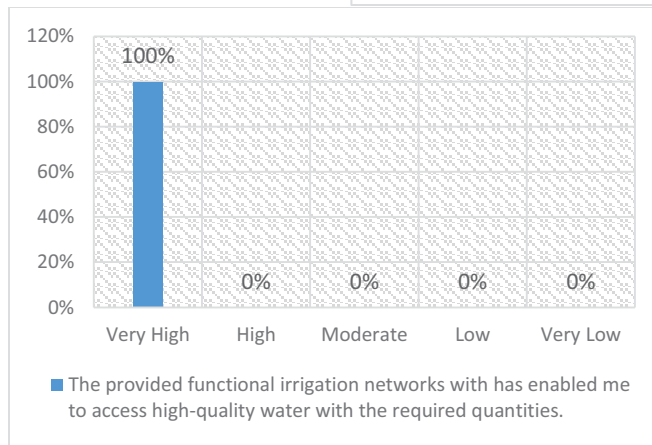
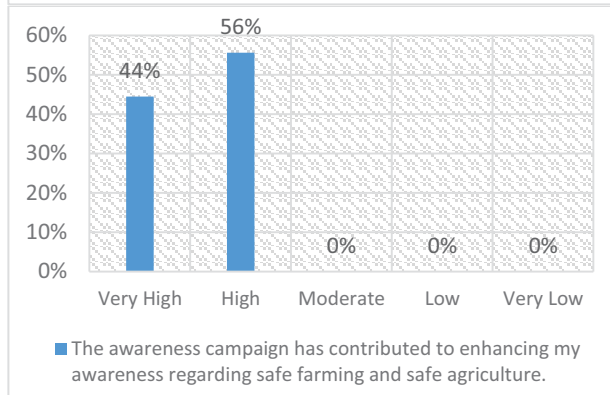
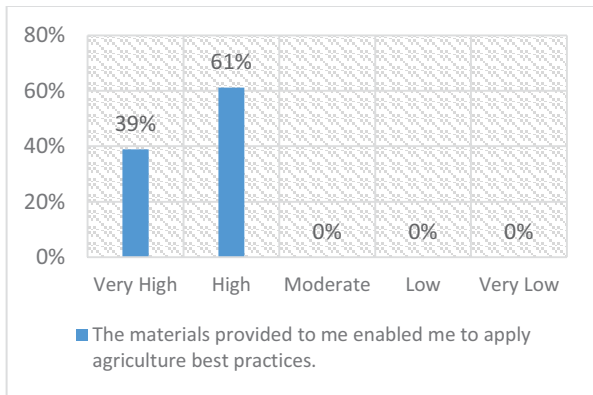
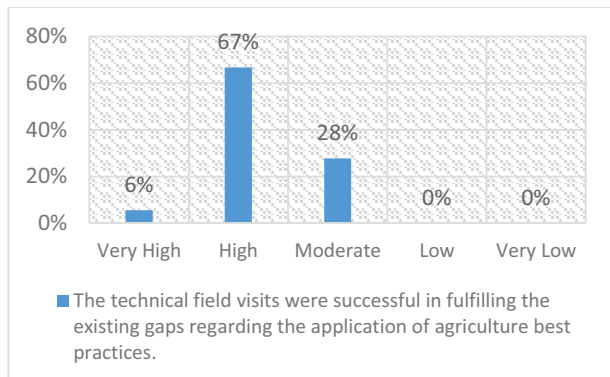
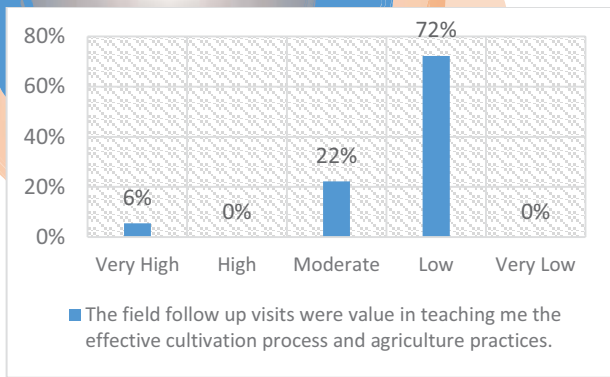


Figure 17. Indicators of project effectiveness from the farmers, who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support, perspective

- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

The results of the interviews and FGDs showed that farmers were aware of the objectives of project interventions prior to implementation, and that project interventions had achieved the planned goals through effective methods and techniques.

In this regard, the farmers who benefitted from desalination plant addressed that the construction of the desalination unit has helped improve their productivity (50% very high agreement, and 50% high agreement). In addition to that, all of the farmers reported that the construction of the desalination unit has helped them increase the variety of crops they cultivate (61% very high agreement, and 39% high

agreement). Similar results were also presented regarding the contribution of the field visits in improving the skills and abilities of farmers in the irrigation practices and using safe agriculture practices.

Furthermore, the support provided by the project and the tools delivered to them have helped the farmers apply Good Agricultural Practices with a response rate of 100%. As for the awareness raising campaign, the results also showed positive responses, where the farmers reported that these sessions helped develop their knowledge and expertise in regard to safe agriculture practices.

As for the irrigation networks, the evaluation revealed that 100% have been able to access high quality water with the required quantities.

It seems that the average quantity of accessible water has increased with a rate of 83% from 153 cubic meters before the project intervention to 280 cubic meters after the project intervention. The following figure shows the distribution of farmers versus the accessible quantity of water before and after the project intervention.

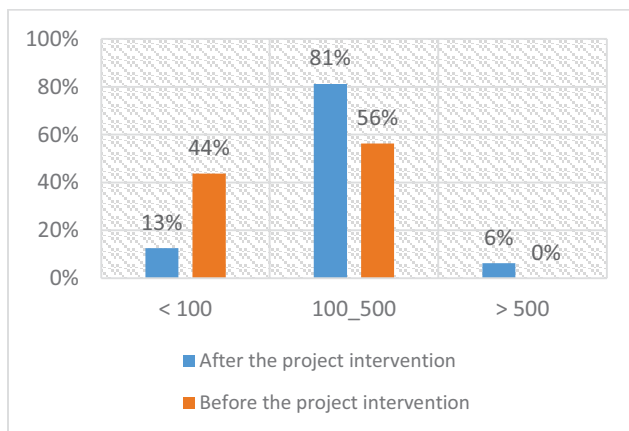
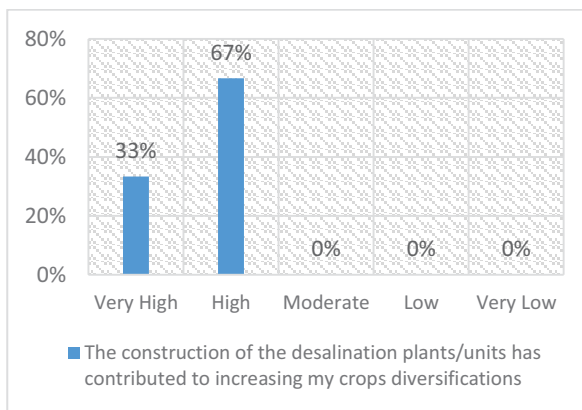
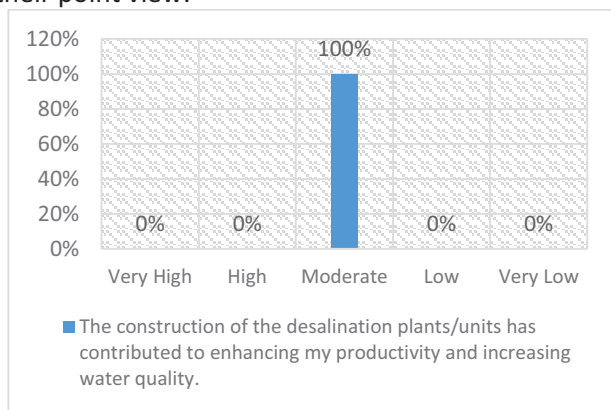


Figure 18: Distribution of farmers by quantity of accessible water before and after the project intervention

As for training, it has contributed greatly to increasing and developing their skills in the best use of pesticides.

The following figures shows the responses of the farmers regarding the effectiveness of the project from their point view:



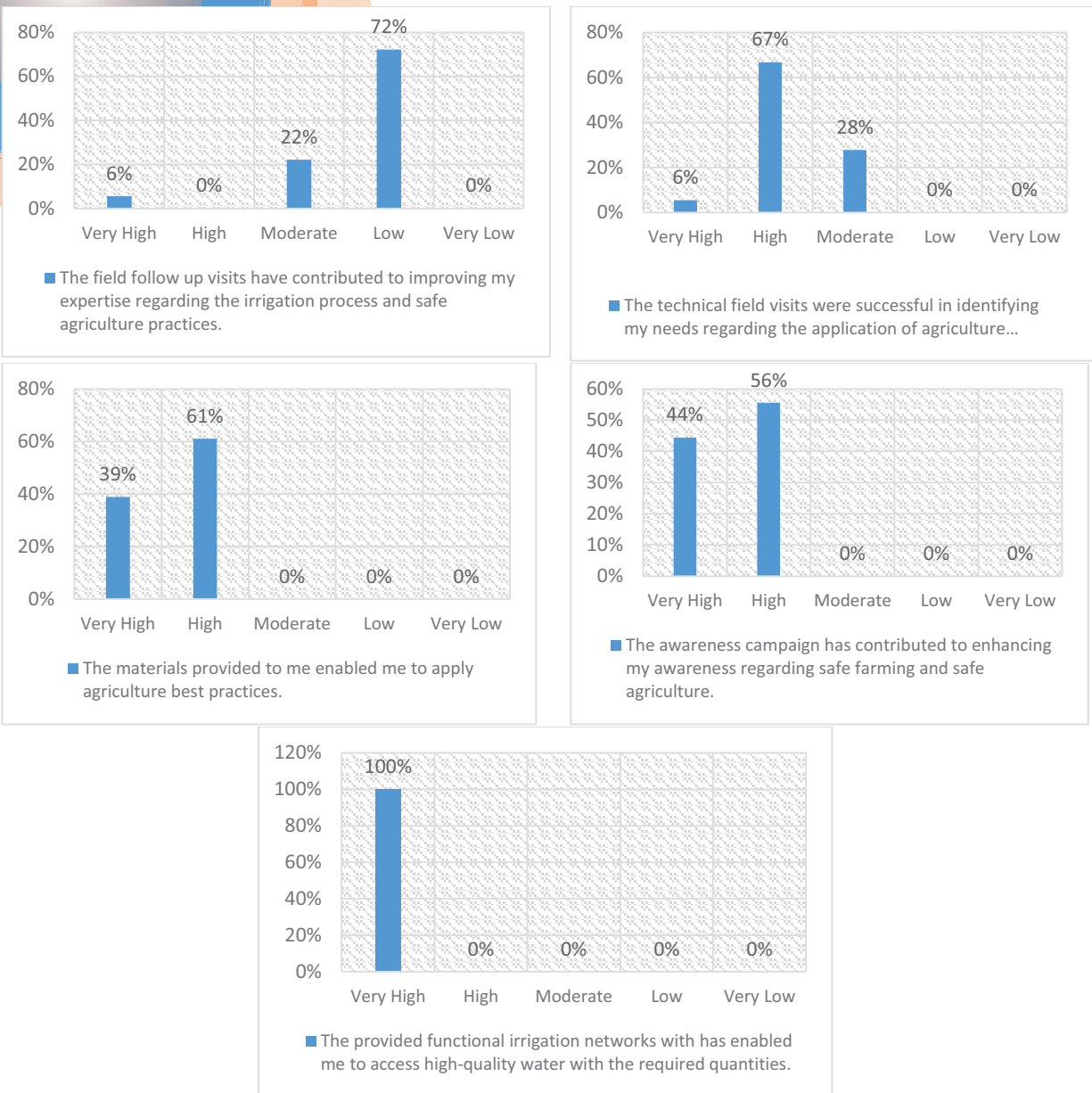


Figure 19. Indicators of project effectiveness from the farmers, who benefitted from desalination plant, perspective

Project Efficiency:

Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:

The results of the survey with the farmers revealed that the funds allocated for the project were sufficient, where 81% reported that these funds were sufficient to a high degree, and 11% reported that they were sufficient to a moderate degree.

In addition to that, the farmers reported that the project team was able to provide the needed trainings in an efficient manner. Moreover, the results of the evaluation showed that the resources (in terms of materials and capacity building) allocated for the project were sufficient and with high quality.

The results of the interview and FGDs also showed that farmers confirmed that the quality of project interventions was very good and that they were sufficient, however they reported that the duration of

project interventions was medium and that they needed to increase this period. In addition, they emphasized that more funds should be allocated to implement similar services.

From the point view of the evaluator and considering the implemented activities and the obtained responses from the beneficiaries, and the project team, the allocated resources for the project were sufficient to meet the designated needs with the required quality.

The following figures shows the responses of the farmers regarding the efficiency of the project from the farmers' point of view:

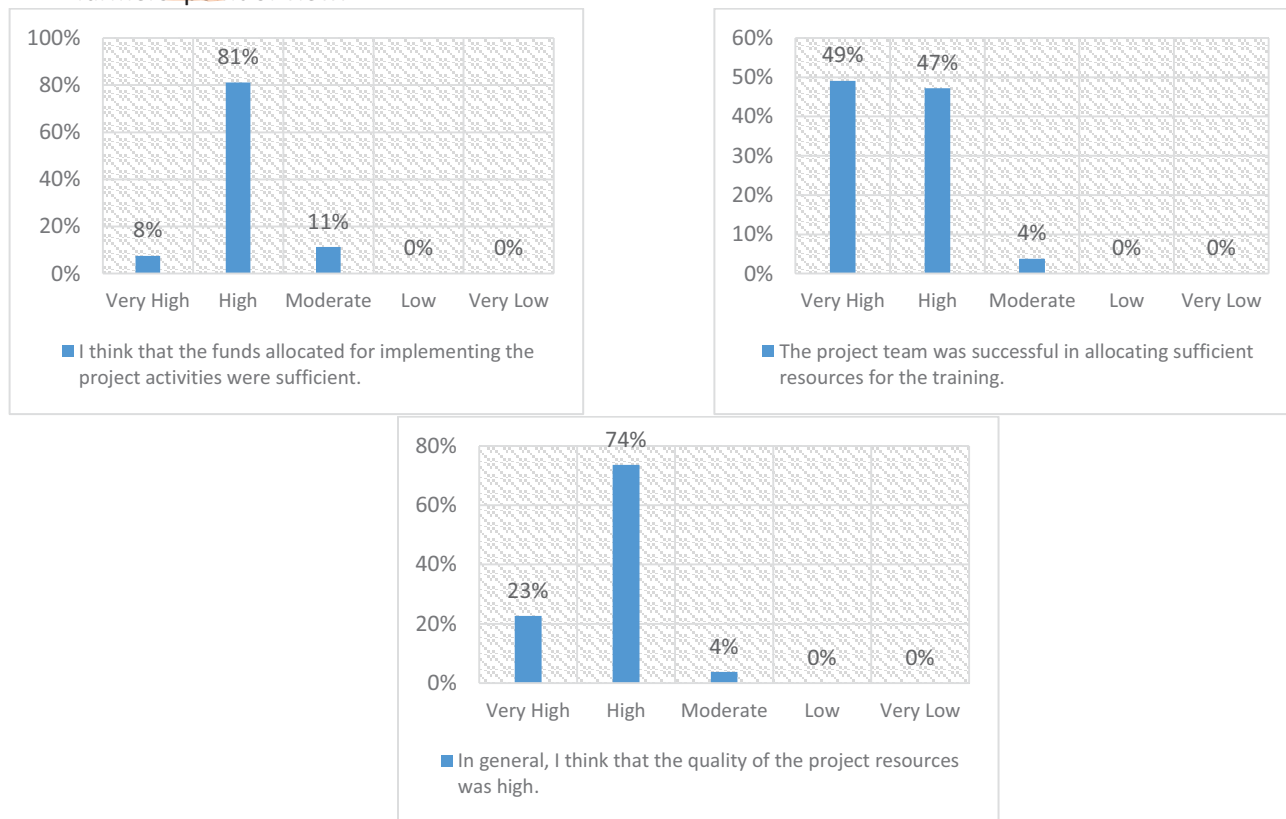


Figure 20. Project efficiency from the point of view of farmers benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support

• **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

The results of the survey with farmers revealed that the funds allocated for the project were sufficient, given that all farmers reported that these funds were sufficient to a high degree.

In addition to that, the farmers reported that the project team was able to provide the needed trainings in such an efficient manner. Moreover, the results of the evaluation showed that the quality of the resources allocated for the project were sufficient and with very high quality.

The results of the interviews and FGDs showed that the farmers were satisfied with the quality of project interventions, however they reported that the duration of project interventions was medium and that they need to increase project duration. In addition, they believe that more funds should be allocated to implement similar services. The following figures shows the responses of the farmers regarding the project efficiency from their point view:

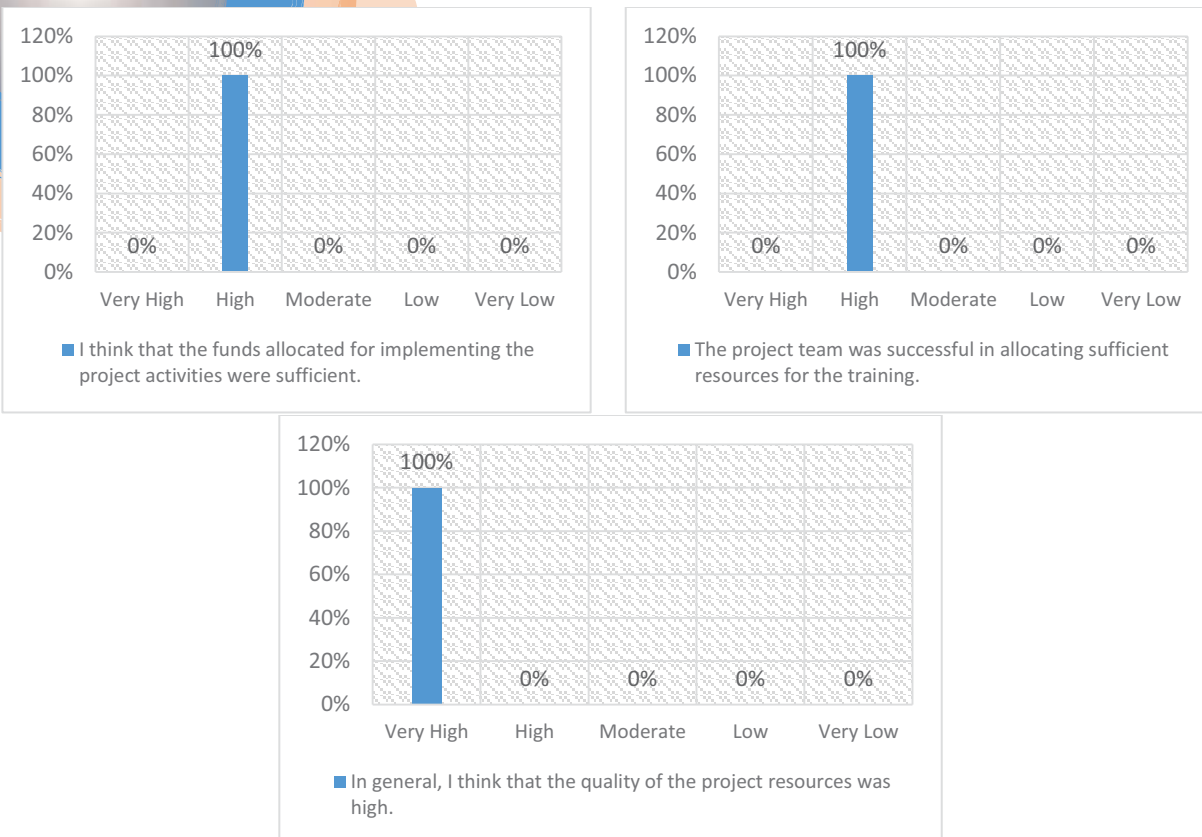


Figure 21. Project efficiency from the point of view of farmers benefitted from desalination plant

✚ Impact of the Project:

• Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:

The assessment of the project impact on the lives of beneficiaries has showed positive results according to the farmers. Where all of them reported that the activities of the project including tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings have contributed to enhancing their livelihood conditions. About 40% considered that these activities helped them increase their income to very high degree, 54% reported that their income has improved to a high degree, and only 6% reported that the impact of the project on their income level was moderate. Similarly, farmers reported that the field visits have a positive impact in terms of improving their skills and knowledge regarding Good Agricultural Practices (38% very high agreement, and 57% high agreement).

Farmers also reported that the provided assistance (materials and tools) has enabled them to applying Good Agricultural Practices (36% very high agreement, and 57% high agreement). In addition to that, the awareness raising campaign helped increase their awareness in safe agriculture practices. Importantly, the improvement in the productivity of the farmers as a result of the project interventions helped the farmers to market their products for women cooperatives, and other parties. The farmers have sold their products (i.e. Potato, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Classic Eggplant, Carrots, Radish, Pepper, Pea, Turnip onion, Olive, Cucumber, Tomato ..etc) through packaging and distribution points that established by project for the three women businesses namely; Bent Al Sharq, Al Snuno and Bent Al Balad. The farmers are now able to market their products, which are free of toxic fertilizers. In addition to that, the project enabled the farmers to use safe pesticides in such an effective manner.

Farmers confirmed in the interviews and FGDs that the project affected them through increasing their skills in safe agriculture, production and their income. The results of the interviews with PARC and FPS

team also showed that the project has introduced farmers to new skills and has improved their skills and capacities in different areas. For instance, the assessment of the before and after use of safe pesticides showed an improvement in the number of safe pesticides used by farmers as a result of the project intervention:

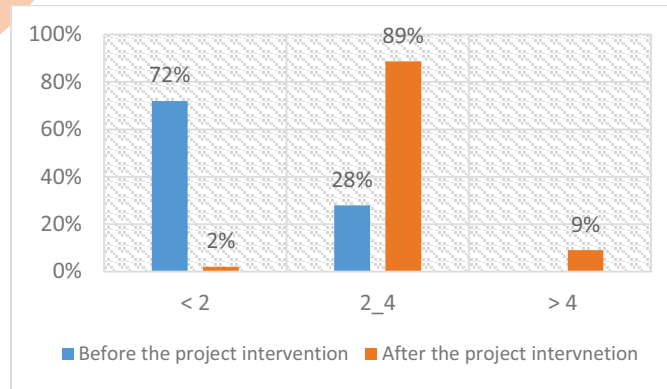
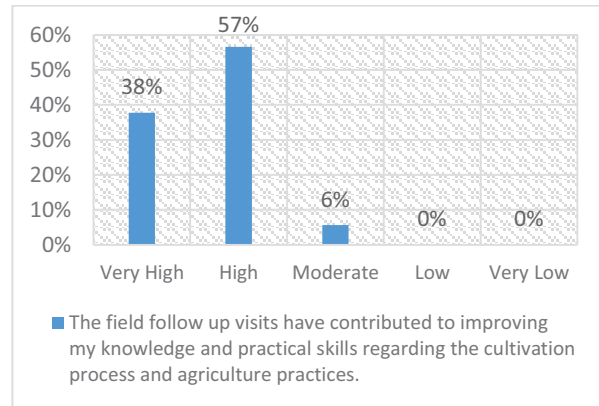
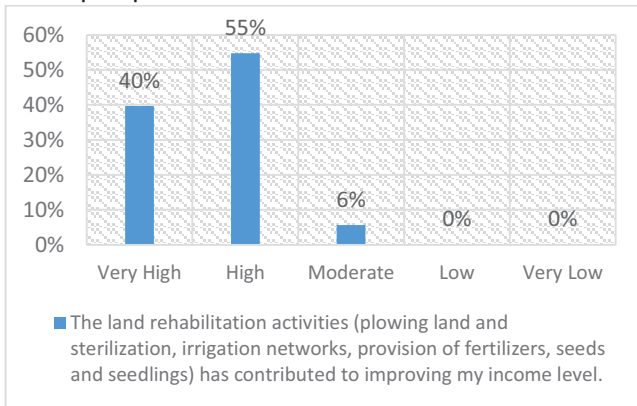


Figure 22. Distribution of farmers by number of safe pesticides used

It is worth mentioning that the project has helped the farmers improve their skills and abilities regarding the safe use of pesticides as illustrated by their responses, where 48% reported that the project helped them better understand the standards and the methods of using fertilizers, 25% reported that the project helped them identify the requirements as per each seedling.

At this point, it can be concluded that the implemented interventions have a positive impact on the targeted beneficiaries at different levels, and that the implemented activities have provided farmers with new techniques and approaches that enable them to improve their productivity and thus achieving higher return which will contribute to enhancing their socio-economic status.

The following figures show the responses of the farmers regarding the impact of the project from their perspective:



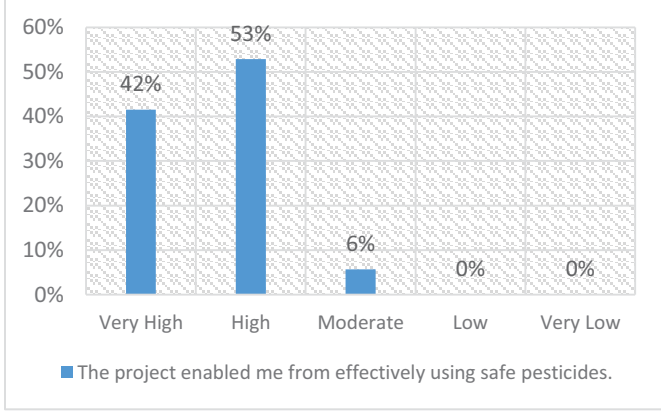
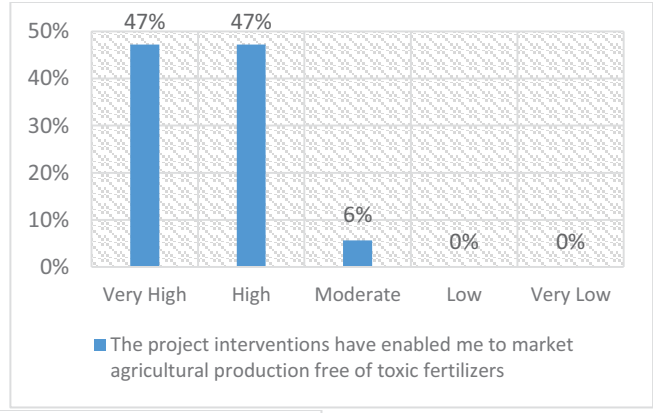
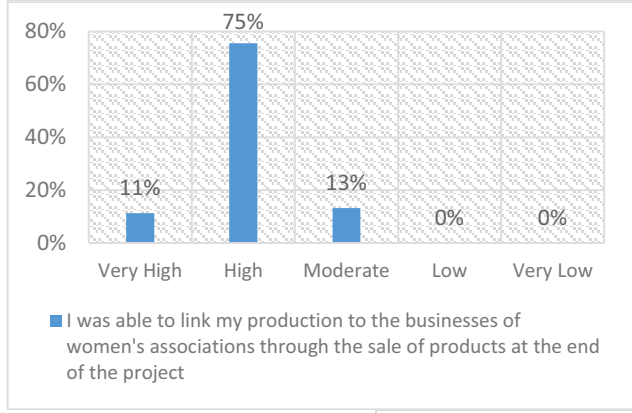
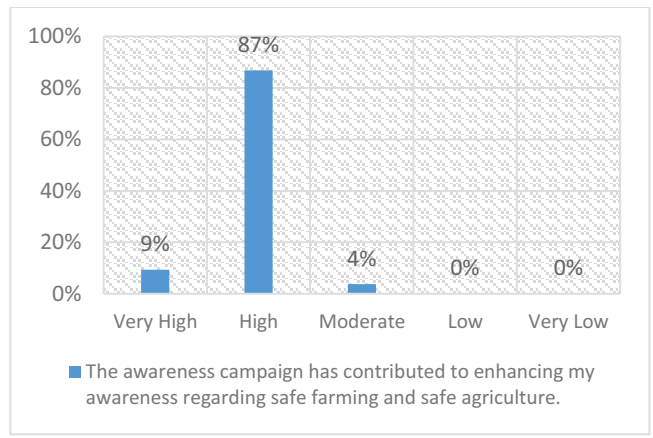
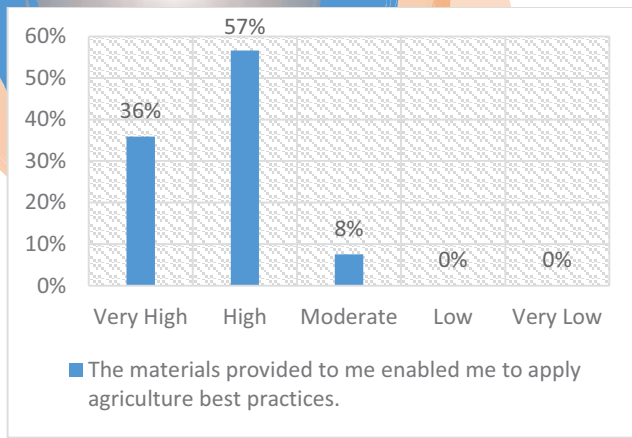


Figure 23. Project impact from the farmers, who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support, perspective

● **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

The results of the evaluation showed that the construction of the desalination unit has contributed to improving the quality and quantity of water available for irrigation (44% very high agreement, and 56% high agreement). Where these units have positively affected the diversification of crops planted by the farmers, and that the project has significant impact on improving the productivity of the farm. This in turn has improved the level of income of the farmers where 83% of them reported high agreement to this effect.

The interviews and FGDs with farmers revealed that the project affected them by increasing their production, diversification of agricultural crops, and increasing the level of income.

Quantitatively it is found that before the project intervention, none of the beneficiaries cultivated crops that need high quality water (with low salinity and nitrogen level), and only 33% used to cultivate less than

5 dunums with such crops. After the project intervention, 17% cultivate less than one dunum with crops that need high quality water, 67% cultivate 1-5 dunums, and 16% cultivate 5-10 dunums with these crops. For instance, the farmers could grow strawberry crops due to the availability of low salinity water, this has reflected positively on their livelihood through increasing their income.

On the other side and given the different challenges facing the farmers in the Gaza Strip; mainly the challenges resulted from the water crisis in the Gaza Strip. The project has come as an impactful response to decrease some of the farmers' suffering through providing them with a sustainable source of high quality water that is suitable to irrigating their farms. Indeed, the project has impacted the farmers at different levels, where all farmers reported that they did not have any functional irrigation networks prior to the project intervention, while they do now. As for the quantities of water obtained by the farmers, the project has also affected this in a positive manner as shown in the figure below:

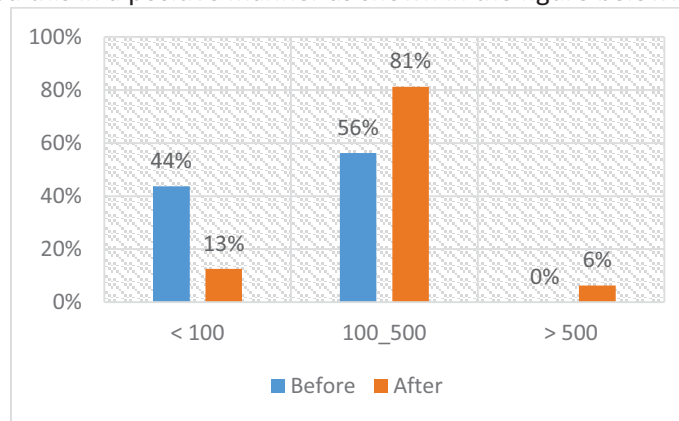
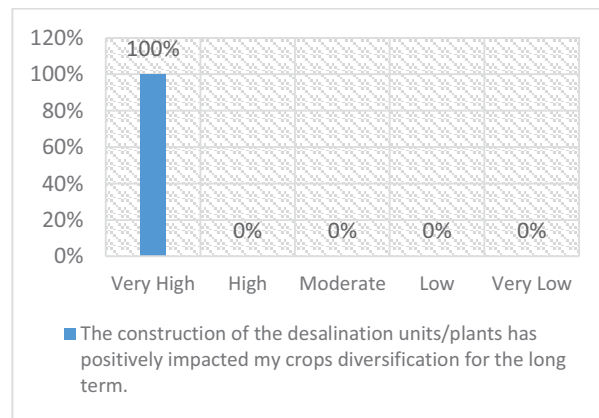
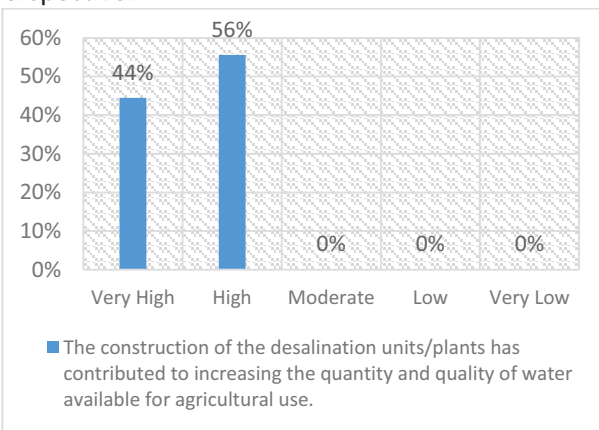


Figure 24. Quantities of provided water for irrigation purpose

The following figures shows the responses of the farmers regarding the impact of the project from their perspective:



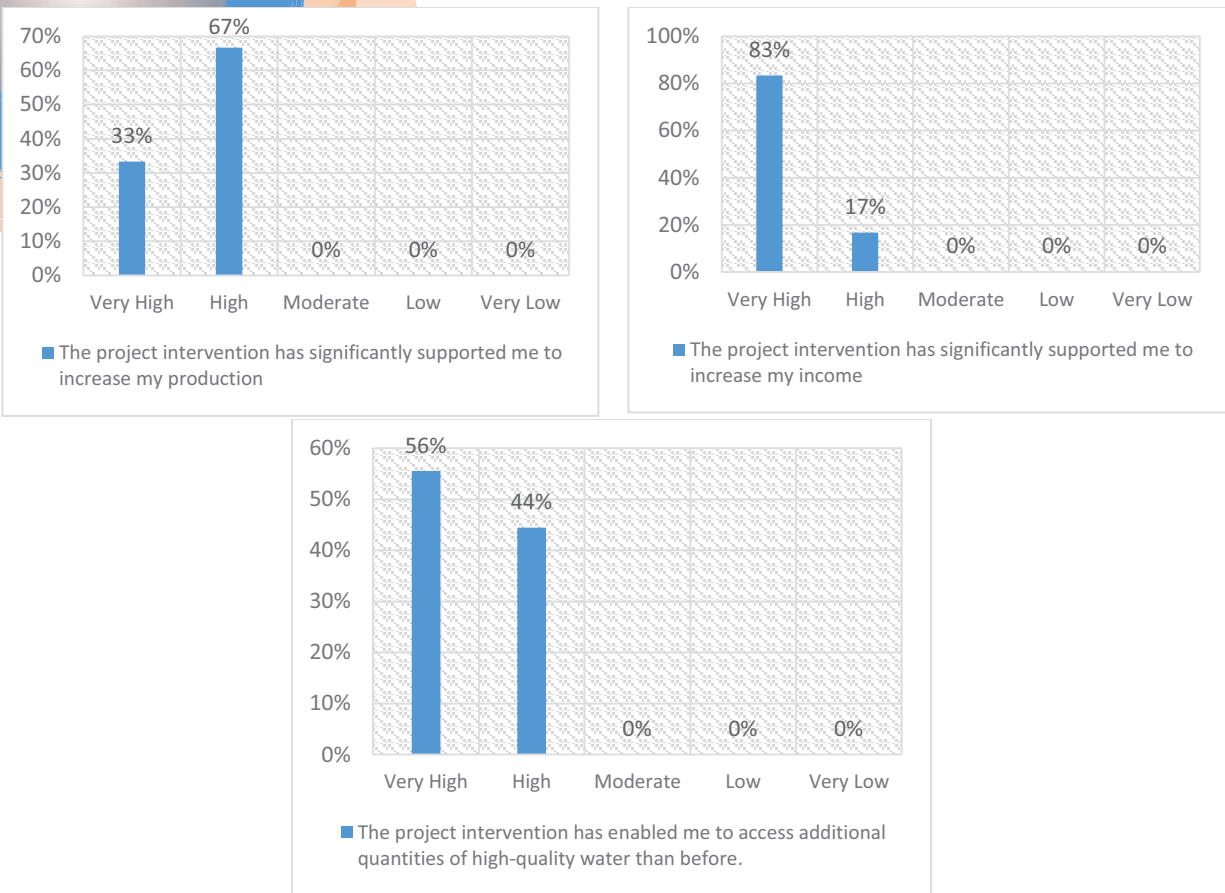


Figure 25. Project impact from the farmers, who benefitted from desalination plant, perspective

Sustainability of the Project Interventions:

Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:

The results of the evaluation showed that the activities of the project including tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings will still have a positive impact on the production of the farmers, same results were also showed regarding the sustainability of the training provided by the project. In addition to that, the farmers reported that, farmers reported that the awareness raising session and the tools and equipment provided by the project helped them apply safe agriculture practices.

Farmers also reported that the project interventions regarding the marketing of safe agriculture products and the use of safe pesticides will still have a positive impact on the project.

The results of the interviews and FGDs revealed that farmers believe that the project will be sustainable by continuing to use the distributed irrigation tools and networks. They also emphasized that there is continuity in the experiences that they gained through training courses.

The evaluator believes that the project interventions will still have positive impact on the lives of the beneficiaries in the future at different aspects, and will contribute to enhancing their socio-economic status.

The following figures show the responses of the farmers regarding the sustainability of the project from the point view of the farmers:

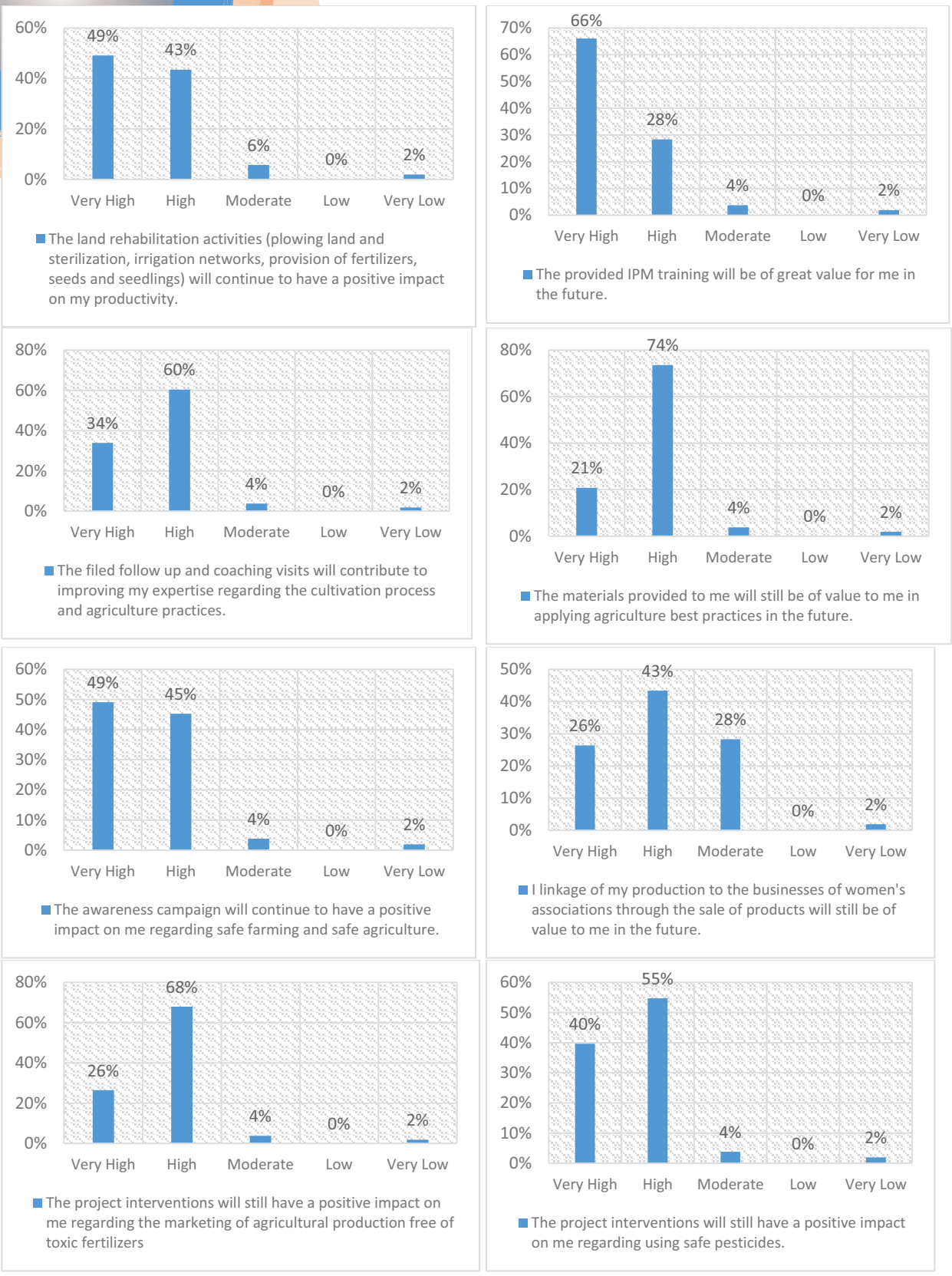


Figure 26. Project sustainability from the farmers, who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support, perspective

- Farmers who benefited from desalination plant**

The results of the evaluation showed that the construction of the desalination units will still have positive impact on the farmers in terms of improving their farm productivity, in addition to that, the provided field visits and the awareness sessions will also have a positive impact on the farmers in terms of sustaining their knowledge and expertise.

The results of the evaluation also showed that the provided tools and equipment will still have a positive impact on the lives of the beneficiaries in the future in terms of applying Good Agricultural Practices.

These results were confirmed by the results of the interviews and FGDs, where it was showed that farmers believe that the project will be sustainable by pumping the high-quality water to their farms

The evaluator believes that the nature of the interventions under this section will be sustainable for the farmers, and will continue to improve their current situation.

The following figures show the responses of the farmers regarding the sustainability of the project from the point view of the farmers:

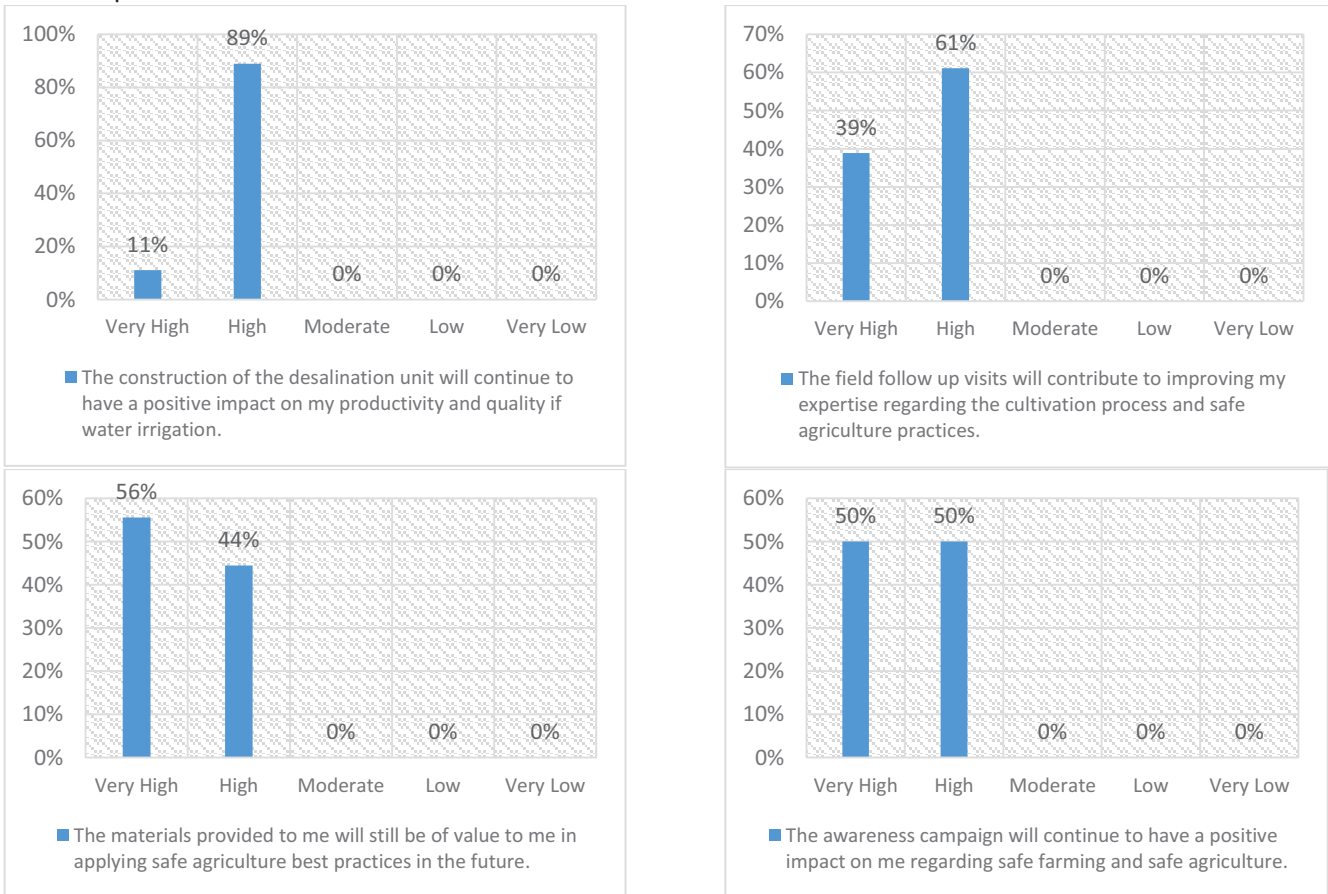


Figure 27. Project sustainability from the farmers, who benefited from desalination plant, perspective

Result 2: Access to new production and marketing chains of farmers and producers - Business Model Results.

General Information about the Beneficiaries:

The evaluation process targeted 3 WFPU as shown earlier. One of them is located in Bait Lahia, and the other two are located in Gaza City. All of the business owners are married, two of them are in the age group of 41-60 years, and one of them is in the age group of 20-40 years.

As for the number of family members of the surveyed WFPU, the results found that two of them have from 6-10 members, and the remaining one have from 2-5 members. The following figure shows the number of family members of the surveyed WFPU distributed according to gender and age:

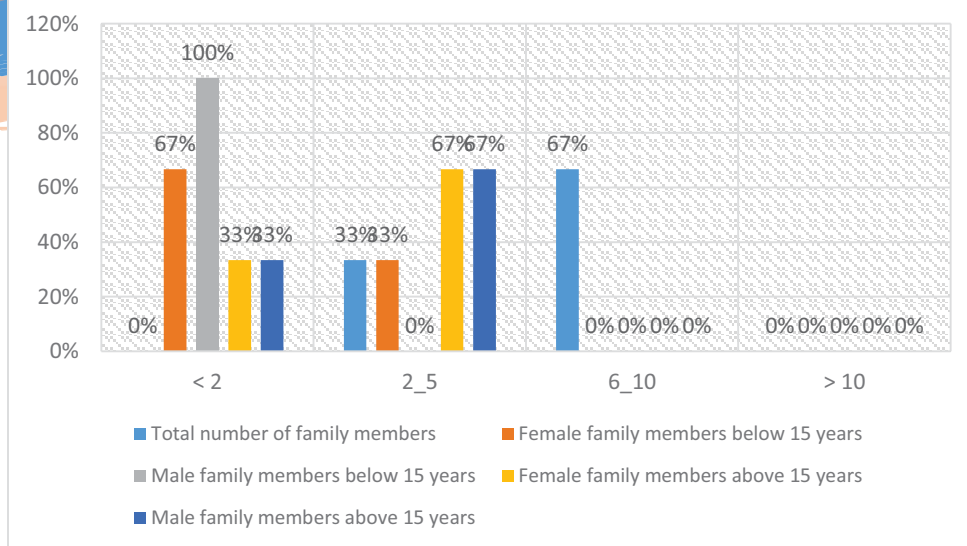


Figure 28. General Information About the women businesses

Income & Expenses:

The results of the evaluation showed that two of the WFPU have average monthly expenses that ranges between NIS 500-1000, and one of them has average monthly expenses of more than NIS 1,000. While on the other hand, one of them has monthly average income of NIS 500-1000, one of them has average monthly income of less than NIS 500, and one of them has monthly income of more than NIS 1000 as shown in the figure below:

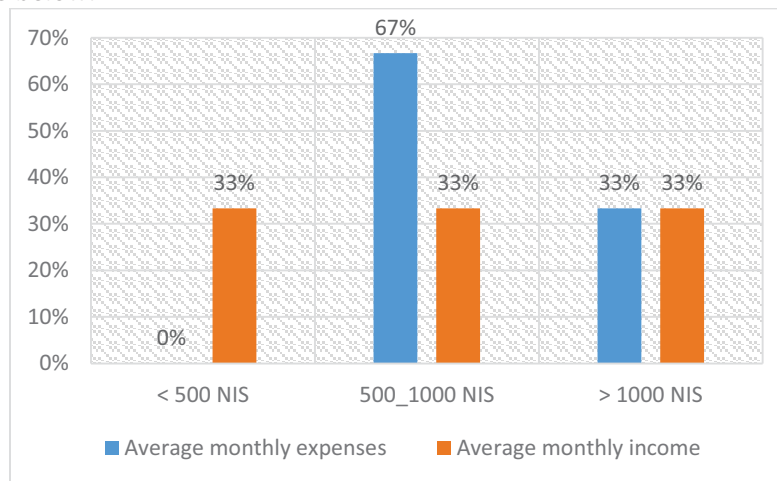


Figure 29. Income and expenses level of the three women businesses

In regard to the source of income, all of them reported that the main source of income is their own businesses, except for one of them who has other supporting source which is her husband's salary as he is working at the governmental sector. Where one of them reported that the income from the women business does not cover her expenses, while the other two women reported that the income from the women business does cover their expenses.

General Information about the Project

The results of the evaluation showed that all women have heard about the project in 2018 from different sources as shown below:

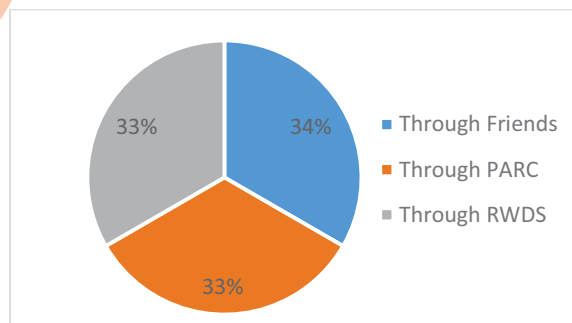


Figure 30. How did you hear about the project?

All of women showed that prior to the start of the project, they were familiar with the project nature and what it aspires to provide them, where all of them (100%) reported that the project will provide them with different trainings, logistics, and raw materials.

Information about the WFPUs:

The three women businesses are Bent El Balad, Snunu Restaurant, and Bent El Sharq Production Unit. The following table shows the main information about the three women businesses:

Table 2 Information about the WFPUs

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
Business sector	Food Processing	Food Processing	Food Processing
Is the business formally registered?	Yes	No	Yes
Registration information	2019 from the MoH	--	2018 from the MoNE
What license you are planning to obtain, and from what organization?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipality License - Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities license 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Health - Municipality License - Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities license 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipality License
Business management	The owner	Family business	The owner
Main products/services offered by the business.	Jam, Cookies, Maftool, Pastries, and other food products	Sandwiches, meals, beverages, and deserts	Pastries, cake, deserts, Maftool, Spices, and dairy products
Data of establishment	2018	2019	2018
Targeted market segment	Local market	All Gaza citizens	Women workers
Monthly revenues	NIS 700	NIS 20,000	NIS 1,500
Main expenses for the business	NIS 300	NIS 13,000	NIS 3,000
Monthly profitability margin	NIS 400	NIS 7,000	NIS 1,500

The evaluation also showed that the main contributions of the project to the women businesses included providing women with the required tools and equipment to enable the women effectively manage their business. The results also showed that the 3 women are satisfied with the support provided by the project. When asking about the quality of the support provided, Bent El Balad along with Bent El Sharq Production Unit reported that the quality of the support provided was excellent, while Snunu reported that it was of moderate quality. The women also reported that the project has helped them develop business plans for their businesses. In addition the project supported them to effectively apply the business plans. In regard

to the support of the project in the legal issues, they have official permission from the MoE to market their products with their own label containing the name of the project in the local market, supermarkets, shops, etc...

Capacity building to 65 women in processing, quality control, packing, labelling.

As shown in the project’s documents and through the interviews with projects owners, the target women received 13 days of technical training (each day 5 hrs) along with other participants working in similar projects from partner CBOs (who have good previous experience with PARC). The training focused on the fields of food processing, food presentation, hygiene practices, storing processing, quality assurance, packaging, labelling, and branding. As found in the evaluation results, the women reported their great satisfaction with this training as it helped them produce more attractive and high quality products. This in turn increases their sales and number of customers.

Market Analysis & Potential Customers

The results of the evaluation found that after the project intervention, the three business women have applied successful business plans. As for the targeted market for these businesses, the results of the evaluation showed that Bent El Balad is targeting the local community as a whole, Snunu is targeting employees and students, while Bent El Sharq is targeting women workers.

Regarding the perception of the three women businesses for current and potential demand, the results of the evaluation showed that as a general response, there is a great potential for the food sector in the Gaza Strip, where the main source of recreation for the Gazans is restaurants.

As for the assessment of the competition facing the three women businesses, the results of the evaluation showed that Bent El Balad is facing tough competition from nearby cooperatives, while Snunu is facing competition from nearby restaurants, and Bent EL Sharq is facing competition from bakeries. While the three women businesses showed that they are distinguished from their competitors in different ways, where Bent El Balad showed that they focus their competition on the price, hygiene, and providing the customers with suitable place, while Snunu is focusing on hygiene and good treatment, and Ben El Sharq is focusing on the quality of the products as its main competitive advantage.

The results of the evaluation also showed that the support provided by the project has enabled the women businesses from accessing new market channels and enabled them from targeting new customers.

Operations:

The following table shows the responses of the women businesses regarding the operations aspect:

Table 3. Operational aspects

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
Describe your product/service in details	The business manufacture Jam, Cookies, Maftool, Pastries, and other food products with high quality	The restaurant prepares and offer Sandwiches, meals, beverages, and deserts to its varying customers in a comfortable environment	The business provides Pastries, cake, deserts, Maftool, Spices, and dairy products with high quality to women workers

Are there any quality control measure you follow in the delivery of the product/service? If yes, what are they?	Yes, hygiene standards	Yes, hygiene standards and presenting the products in the best shape	Ensuring that the provided products are fresh and are made of high-quality inputs
Do you face any constraints facing the delivery of the products/services?	There is no transportation means	No	There is no transportation means
What is the type of the technical support/ training/ coaching did you receive to support your operation?	Training regarding packaging techniques	Project management training, cost assessment training	Quality standards training, marketing training, E-marketing, and business management

SWOT Analysis:

Table 4. SWOT Analysis

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goodwill - Good treatment - High quality products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good management - Good relationship network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good experience - Relationship network - Good location
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High rent cost - Unavailability of official registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unavailability of official registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a possibility to develop the unit through the introduction of additional food products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding and opening other branches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of new products and distributing the products to other areas in the Gaza Strip
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electricity blackouts - Unavailability of good storing facilities for the raw material

Marketing Aspects

Table 5. Marketing aspects

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
What are the marketing policies you apply in your business?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brochures - Facebook page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media
Are there any efforts aiming to strategically improve the marketability of your business? If yes, please describe it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through the continuous development of the product presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through focusing on presenting the quality aspects of the products

How do you price your products/services (pricing strategy)?	- Cost + profit margin method	- Cost + profit margin method	- Cost + profit margin method
What is the base you use to price your products/services?	- Cost + profit margin method	- Cost + profit margin method	- Cost + profit margin method
What marketing channels do you use?	- Social media - Schools - Supermarkets	- Social media - Focusing on customer loyalty to ensure advocacy of customers	- Public relations - Direct marketing - Schools - Social media
What are your promotional policies?	- Food exhibits - Brochures - Social media	- Brochures - Social media	- Brochures - Social media

Development Needs

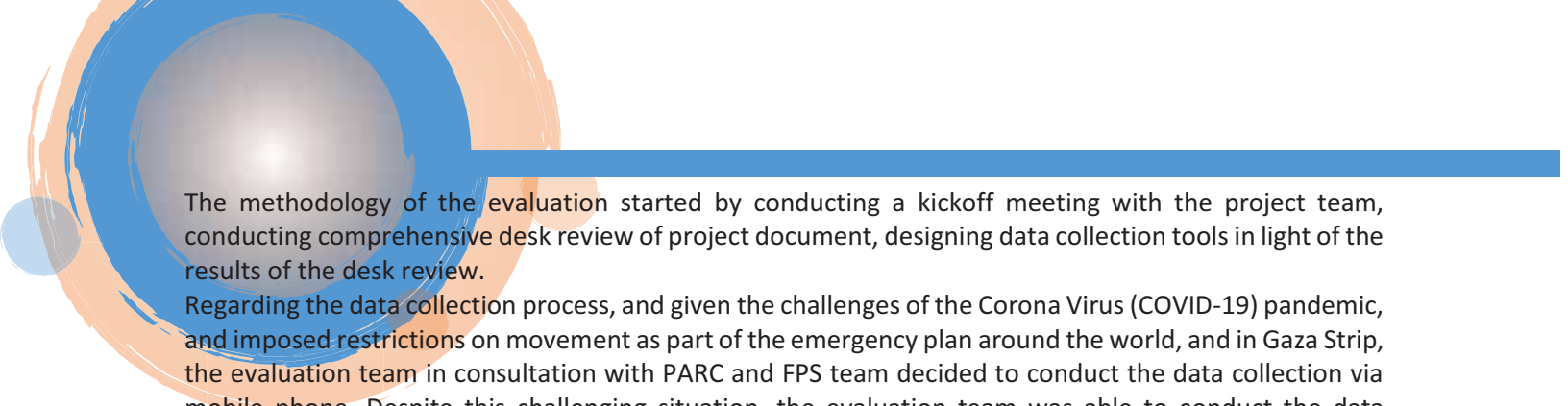
Table 6. Development needs

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
What are your development needs?	- Provision of raw materials with high quality - Buying a new location to minimize the rent cost	- Provision of raw material - Provision of additional tools and equipment for the restaurant - Expanding the business	- Provision of raw material - Provision of transportation vehicle
Were the funds allocated by the project sufficient to meet your development needs/implement your business plan?	- No	- Yes	- No
What are the achieved outcomes/results from applying the business development plan?	- Building new relations - Goodwill - Better organize the business	- Goodwill - Ensuring business sustainability	- Goodwill - New experiences

6. Conclusion:

The report in hand aimed to analyze the processes, dynamics and linkages behind the success/setbacks of the project titled "Supporting the Income Generation and Productive Capacity of Male and Female Farmers in the Gaza Strip" in order to better understand the lessons learned and good practices to inform future programming.

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Evaluation Methodology of Spanish Cooperation (2001) and the revision of the Management Manual of Evaluations of Spanish Cooperation (2007), as well as the Guide for evaluation of Convenios, projects and actions of cooperation for development of AECID (2012), where the evaluation team conducted the evaluation according to different considerations to ensure the quality of the evaluation.



The methodology of the evaluation started by conducting a kickoff meeting with the project team, conducting comprehensive desk review of project document, designing data collection tools in light of the results of the desk review.

Regarding the data collection process, and given the challenges of the Corona Virus (COVID-19) pandemic, and imposed restrictions on movement as part of the emergency plan around the world, and in Gaza Strip, the evaluation team in consultation with PARC and FPS team decided to conduct the data collection via mobile phone. Despite this challenging situation, the evaluation team was able to conduct the data collection as planned in the inception report.

The evaluation has reached different results as the following:

 **Relevance of the Project**

- **Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The assessment of the project relevance from the point view of the farmers showed positive results, where the project was able to identify their needs and to design the activities according to the identified needs. This was also confirmed by the results of the interviews and FGDs. Farmers reported that the implemented activities have contributed to improving their current situation at different levels.

- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant also showed that the project was successful in identifying their needs and designing the activities in a manner which responded to the identified needs. Very positive responses were gathered from the farmers regarding the relevance of the project activities to their needs.

 **Effectiveness of the Project:**

- **Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The results of the evaluation showed that the project interventions have contributed to rehabilitating the lands of the farmers through the provision of different services including (Tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings). In addition to that, all of the farmers reported that the technical training and field visits were effective and helped them acquire new knowledge and practices. Thus, it is apparent that the project was successful in meeting its intended plans and objectives to large extent.

- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

The results of the evaluation showed that the project has helped the farmers improve their productivity, and that the construction of the desalination unit has helped farmers increase the variety of crops they cultivate. In addition to that, the field visits also contributed to improving the skills and abilities of the farmers regarding irrigation practices and using safe agriculture practices. The results also showed that the tools delivered to the farmers have helped them apply Good Agriculture Practices, and that the awareness raising campaign has helped improve their knowledge and expertise in regard to safe agriculture practices.


 **Project Efficiency:**

- **Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The results showed that the funds allocated for the project were sufficient, and that the project team was able to provide the needed trainings in an efficient manner. Moreover, the results showed that the quality of the resources allocated for the project were sufficient and with high quality.

- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

The results showed that the funds allocated for the project were sufficient, where all of the farmers reported that these funds were sufficient to a high degree. It was also reported that the project team was able to provide different services in such an efficient manner. Moreover, the results of the evaluation showed that the quality of the resources allocated for the project were sufficient and with very high quality.



Impact of the Project:

- **Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The results of the evaluation showed that the activities of the project including tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings have contributed to enhancing the productivity and income of the farmers and hence have impacted the lives of the farmers at a very high degree. The same results were revealed in regard to the field visits which proved its positive impact on improving the skills and knowledge of the farmers regarding Good Agricultural Practices. Farmers also reported that the provided assistance by the project has enabled them to apply Good Agricultural Practices, and that the awareness raising campaign helped increase their awareness regarding safe agriculture practices.

- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

The construction of the desalination unit has contributed to improving the quality and quantity of water available for irrigation, which affected the diversification of crops planted by the farmers, and that the project has significant impact on improving the productivity of the farm. This, in turn, has improved the level of income of the farmers.

-  **Sustainability of the Project Interventions:**

- **Farmers who benefitted from land rehabilitation and technical support:**

The results of the evaluation showed that the activities of the project including tillage and sterilization, irrigation networks, provision of fertilizers, seeds and seedlings will still have a positive impact on the production of the farmers on the long run. Same results were also showed regarding the lasting impact of the training provided by the project given that the farmers' knowledge and capacity have been increased and this will be an asset for farmers to build on. For instance, the farmers reported that the awareness raising campaign and the tools and equipment provided by the project helped them apply safe agriculture practices. In addition to that, the marketing of safe agriculture products and the use of safe pesticides will also still have a positive impact on the farmers.

- **Farmers who benefitted from desalination plant**

The results of the evaluation showed that the construction of the desalination units will still have positive impact on the farmers in terms of improving their farm productivity. In addition to that, the provided field visits and the awareness sessions will have a positive lasting impact on the farmers in terms of developing their knowledge and expertise.

-  **Business Model Results:**

-  **Information about the WFPUs:**

The evaluation targeted three women businesses which are Bent El Balad, Snunu Restaurant, and Bent El Sharq Production Unit. The following table shows summary of the evaluation results.

-  **Market Analysis & Potential Customers**

The results of the evaluation found that after the project intervention, each of the three business women has a well-established business plan.

Bent El Balad is targeting the local community as a whole, Snunu is targeting employees and students, while Bent El Sharq is targeting women workers. From the point of view of the women business, there is a great potential for the food sector in the Gaza Strip, where the main place for recreation for the Gazans is restaurants.

Regarding the competition facing the women business, the results of the evaluation showed that Bent El Balad is facing tough competition from nearby cooperatives, while Snunu is facing competition from nearby restaurants, and Bent EL Sharq is facing competition from bakeries. While all of them use different techniques to overcome competition.

SWOT Analysis:

As part of the evaluation, the three women businesses were assessed in terms of SWOT analysis, the results are mentioned below:

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good reputation - Good treatment - High quality products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good management - Good relationship network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good experience - Relationship network - Good location
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High rent cost - Unavailability of official registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unavailability of official registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a possibility to develop the unit through the introduction of additional food products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding and opening other branches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction of new products and distributing the products to other areas in the Gaza Strip
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor economic situation in the Gaza Strip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electricity blackouts - Unavailability of good storing facilities for the raw material

Marketing Aspects

The evaluation team has also assessed the marketing aspects of the three women businesses, the results were as the following:

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
What are the marketing policies you apply in your business?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brochures - Facebook page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media
Are there any efforts aiming to strategically improve the marketability of your business? If yes, please describe it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through the continuous development of the product presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, through focusing on presenting the quality aspects of the products
How do you price your products/services (pricing strategy)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost + profit margin method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost + profit margin method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost + profit margin method
What is the base you use to price your products/services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost + profit margin method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost + profit margin method 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cost + profit margin method
What marketing channels do you use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media - Schools - Supermarkets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media - Focusing on customer loyalty to ensure advocacy of customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public relations - Direct marketing - Schools - Social media
What are your promotional policies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food exhibits - Brochures - Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brochures - Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brochures - Social media

Development Needs

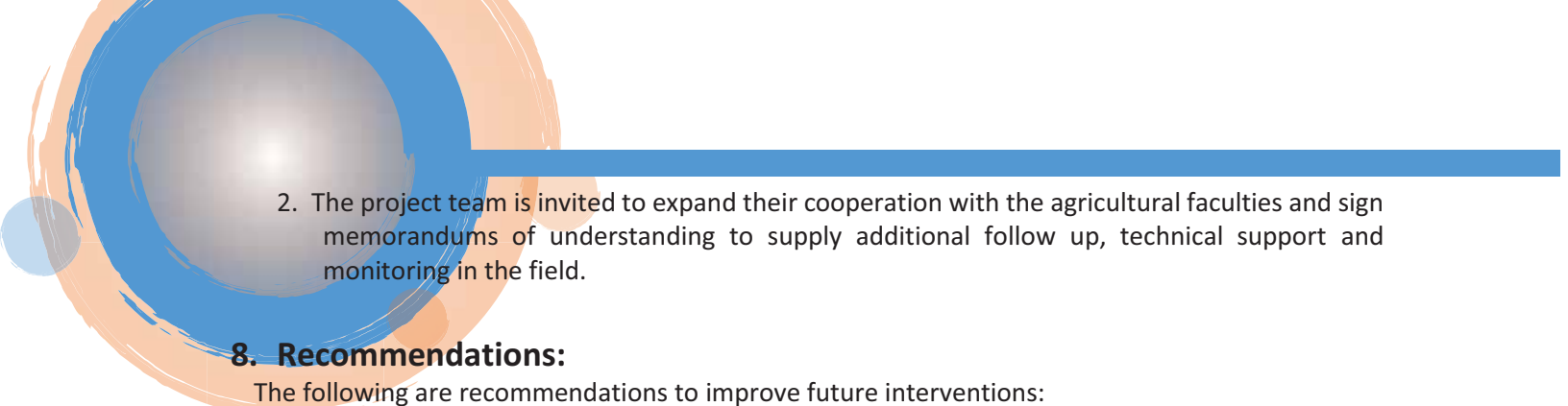
Regarding the development needs of the three women businesses, the evaluation revealed the following:

Name of the business	Bent El Balad	Snunu Restaurant	Bent El Sharq Production Unit
What are your development needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of raw materials with high quality - Buying a new location to minimize the rent cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of raw material - Provision of additional tools and equipment for the restaurant - Expanding the business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of raw material - Provision of transportation vehicle
Were the funds allocated by the project sufficient to meet your development needs/implement your business plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No
What are the achieved outcomes/results from applying the business development plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building new relations - Goodwill - Better organize the business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good reputation - Ensuring business sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good reputation - New experiences

7. Lessons learned

The following are lessons learned to enrich the learning process and improve future interventions:

1. A holistic approach, while more costly, might be the best option to overcome the layers of complexity in the Palestinian context. This implies that any interventions especially in the most marginalized areas exposed to Israeli control thorough crossing must find the best combination of material and non-material inputs. A successful package of support, while varying from one individual to the other and to some extent from one region to another, must include the following major components:
 - A) material support including equipment, machinery and other fixed assets. Other consumables such as seeds, animal feed, fertilizers and pesticides are important but must be targeted as complementary to the basic support.
 - B) Training and capacity building, but mostly field vests and extension. This must be regular and sustainable through the MoA where field offices must be equipped with the needed staff to do this work.
 - C) Networking with similar producers/farmers, the markets and other relevant institutions; such connections must empower the beneficiaries to become more independent.
 - D) Encourage collective work, coordination and networking when cost-effective; this is especially helpful to avoid overcrowding, price deflation and control from traders and brokers.
 - E) Work with the PA, its agencies and with the international community through advocacy, improved coordination and lobbying to improve the surrounding environment and deal with the structural impediments imposed by the Israeli authority in Gaza Strip.

- 
2. The project team is invited to expand their cooperation with the agricultural faculties and sign memorandums of understanding to supply additional follow up, technical support and monitoring in the field.

8. Recommendations:

The following are recommendations to improve future interventions:

1. The project team is invited to continue working with their commended approach adopting interactive and engaging methodology.
2. The project team can integrate a clear Theory of Change (ToC) in the project design along with the logical framework approach to describe the targeted behavioral change at the farmers and decision-making levels.
3. The project team is recommended to further clarify the logical relation between the project interventions and the overall expected results of the project.
4. The project team is recommended to further encourage communal cooperation (cooperatives) between the beneficiary groups by introducing a governance system to sustain the different project components.
5. While the targeting of women was clear in some actions like WFPU, and women benefited from the different actions. It must be noted that gender mainstreaming and transformation in gender roles and as such achieving gender equality and equity must be viewed from a more holistic point of view. For example, it is not sufficient to target women (in the form of support for project), but further actions including at the household, community and even national levels must be addressed. As such, a more careful assessment of the gender implications of the project activities must be carried out and the next project design must move a step further from (targeting women) to (gender analysis and mainstreaming), with an eye on achieving gender equality in the public and private sphere.

Annex (I)

Minutes of Meeting

External Evaluation of Project AECID

“Supporting the Income Generation and Productive Capacity of Male and Female Farmers in the Gaza Strip”

Details of the meeting:

Date of the meeting:	24th February 2020
Time of the meeting:	15:00 – 16:00
Place of the meeting:	Development Pioneers Company for Consultations
Participants:	Hani Al Ramlawy – PARC Wessam Al Moamer – Pioneers Bahaa Zaqout – Pioneers Hend Abed – Pioneers

Main points of discussion:

The meeting was started by Mr. Hani Al Ramlawy, where he presented a detailed description of the project interventions. The meeting also involved reassuring the data mentioned in the ToR and the submitted technical proposal. In details the following points were agreed upon:

- Pioneers is to continue the desk review phase as per the classifications stated in the ToR
- PARC & FPS are to facilitate the delivery of any missing documents or other related records, reports, or information
- Pioneers is to submit the inception report no later than 2 weeks from the date of the meeting, where the inception report should include the proposed data collection tools
- PARC & FPS should review the submitted inception report and the submitted data collection tools within 1 week after the delivery of the first draft inception report and data collection tools

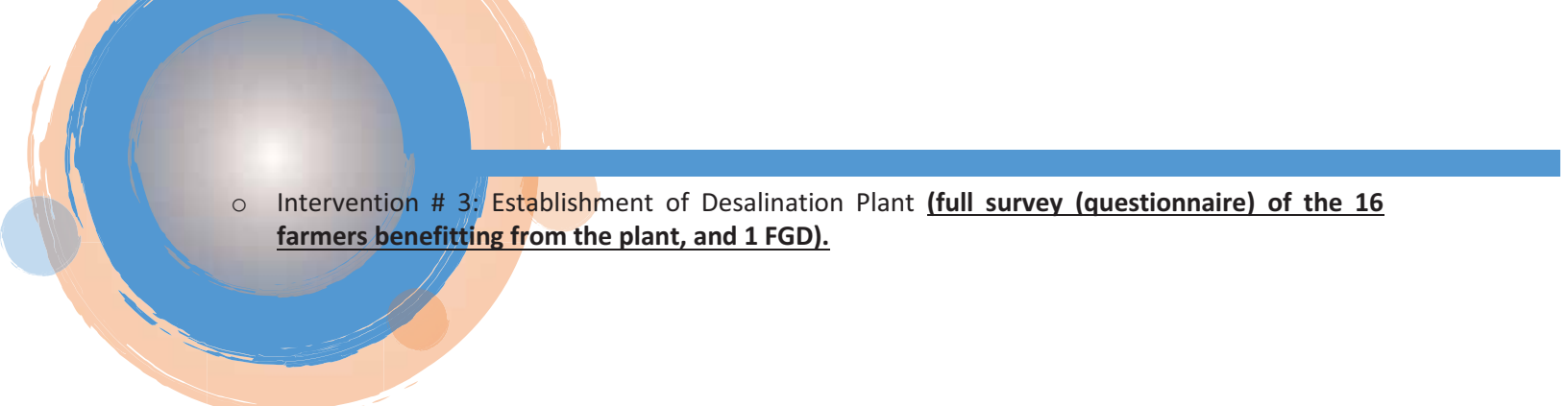
The structure of the inception report:

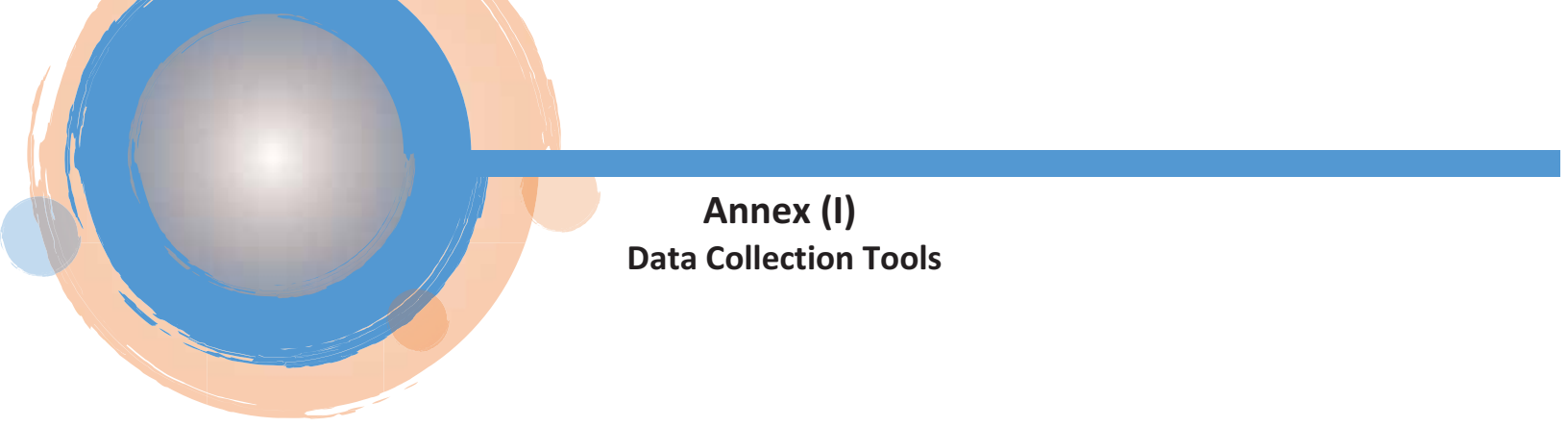
The two parties agreed that the structure of the inception report will be as follow:

- Introduction about the project
- Brief summary of the socio-economic situation at the national and local context, where the regional context is irrelevant
- Brief summary of the performance of the NGO in the socio-economic field, where **PARC & FPS should provide Pioneers with the needed documentations in that regard including the related interventions and mission related to socio-economic interventions of the institution**
- Identification of the key actors at HQ level as specified in the ToR (desk officer responsible for country, head of department, regional director, officer responsible for relations with AECID, etc.) and in the field (OTC/AECID, Delegation of FPS in Jerusalem, PARC in West Bank/Gaza). **PARC & FPS should provide Pioneers with the list of actors at HQ level as mentioned.**

Regarding the data collection phase, and the sample of the study, the following were agreed upon:

- Pioneers is to design data collection tools according to the key project interventions which are:
 - o Intervention # 1: Land Rehabilitation and Technical Support to Farmers (total population 60 female and male farmers, **Pioneers is to conduct 3 interviews and 2 FGDs in Rafah and 3 interviews 2 FGDs in Khan Younis**) in addition to survey to 60 farmers distributed according to the proportion of farmers in Rafah & Khan Younis.
 - o Intervention # 2: Economic Empowerment for women (**3 WFPUs, Pioneers is to develop a model for each WFPU to evaluate the projects.**)

- 
- Intervention # 3: Establishment of Desalination Plant **(full survey (questionnaire) of the 16 farmers benefitting from the plant, and 1 FGD).**



Annex (I)

Data Collection Tools