



Cash Transfers for Social Assistance - Investigative Working Paper

October 2016

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Introduction:

This investigative working paper aims to describe and analyze the environment and system of cash transfers for social assistance supervised by the Ministry of Social Development. The paper will rely on the results and recommendations stated in the report entitled “Areas of rationalization and austerity in Government Spending”, report on “Integrity and Transparency in the Cash Assistance Program in the Ministry of Social Affairs”, as well as the guide on “Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid”. The paper will also attempt to shed light on cash and social assistance provided by other institutions in Palestine.

The paper is based on a scientific investigative methodology by reviewing and updating diagnostic results concluded in previous reports. It will also observe changes, gaps, challenges and opportunities for development concerning the subject.

Conducting “interviews” with related parties constituted one of the tools used in this working paper with the purpose of studying and evaluating gaps and positive developments. In that regard, the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), the President’s Office (PO), Governors’ offices, Al-Waqf Ministry, the Palestinian Zakat Fund, and relative civil society originations (NGOs) are the institutions that were targeted for our interviews.

Another tool used in this working paper was data collection. Data was collected, categorized, and analyzed in order to prepare a complete report including conclusions, recommendations, and a general outline for trends that would serve as basis for an action plan for the upcoming phase.

Chapter One

Legal and Institutional Framework Governing Cash Transfers for Social Assistance

First: Legal Framework

The legal framework governing cash assistance includes laws and regulations set by the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), in addition to the inherited laws from the Jordanian rule in the West Bank (WB) and the Egyptian administration of the Gaza Strip (GS), which are valid until today, since they were never replaced by new laws.¹

In conducting desk review of legislations on cash assistance^{2,3} it was noticed that no new legislations have been passed since 2014 with the exception of the Decision by law No. 7 of 2015 on amending the Administration and Development of the Property of Orphans Law No. 14 of 2005 and its amendments.⁴ The law mentioned contained nothing new concerning cash assistance transfers; the other legal document is a Decision by Law N0 12 for 2015 on amending the Alimony Fund Law No 6 for 2006.⁵ Amendments stipulated in the Alimony Law concerns the management and resources of the Fund, and is not directly linked to the issue of cash assistance transfers for humanitarian aid.

As mentioned above, there is no specific legislation on social cash assistance or in-kind assistance. Legislations that include provisions on cash assistance can be summarized as follows:

- The Amended Palestinian Basic Law of 2003, which include general articles on social assistance.⁶
- The Palestinian Disability Rights Law No. 4 of 1999.⁷
- The Palestinian Child Law No 7, of 2004.⁸
- Council of Ministers Decision No. 4 of 2014 on Regulations for Alternative Families.⁹
- Council of Ministers Decision No. 10 of 2013 on the Foster Family System.¹⁰
- Council of Ministers Decision No. 366 of 2005 on Strengthening the Protection of Battered Women.¹¹

¹ Integrity and transparency in the cash assistance program in the MoSA, issued by AMAN, 2015, P.3.

² Website –alfatwa watashree’ Bureau, the Palestinian National Authority, date of research September 19, 2016.

³ Website –“Tracker/ al-Muqtafi” the judiciary system and legislation in Palestine, Birzeit University, Law Center, date of research September 19, 2016.

⁴ Decision by law No.7, for 2015, on amending the Administration and Development of the Property of Orphans Law No. 14 of 2005 and its amendments, on June 22, 2015.

⁵ Decision by Law N0 12 for 2015 on amending the Alimony Fund Law No 6 for 2006, on August 2, 2015.

⁶ The Amended Palestinian Basic Law of 2003, articles 22, and 29.

⁷ The Palestinian Disability Law No. 4, of 1999, article 10.

⁸ The Palestinian Child Law No.7, of 2004, article 31.

⁹ Council of Ministers Decision No. 4 of 2014 on Regulations for Alternative Families.

¹⁰ Council of Ministers Decision No. 10 of 2013 on the Foster family System, article No. 25.

¹¹ Council of Ministers Decision No. 366 of 2005 on Strengthening the Protection of Battered Women.

It is worth mentioning that in addition to the top mentioned laws there are a number of laws and regulations issued during the Jordanian rule that are theoretically still valid in the WB. However, these laws are old and inadequate and do not meet the current social protection needs of today. They also do not meet the needs of the poor due to the small amounts stipulated in these laws, in addition to their inapplicability in the GS¹². Below are a number of these laws:

- Ministry of Social Affairs Law No. 14 of 1956 and amendments.¹³
- The Social Assistance System No. 14 of 1959 and amendments.¹⁴
- Juvenile Aid System NO.48 of 1959.¹⁵
- Aid and Rehabilitation System No. 42, for 1963.¹⁶

¹² Integrity and transparency in the cash assistance program in the MoSA, issued by AMAN, 2015, P. 6.

¹³ Ministry of Social Affairs Law no. 14 of 1956 and amendments, articles 3, and 4.

¹⁴ The Social Assistance System No. 14 and amendments, articles 3, and 4.

¹⁵ Juvenile Aid System No. 48 of 1959.

¹⁶ Aid and Rehabilitation System No.42, of 1963

Second: Institutional and Regulatory Framework

The MoSD is the competent party in charge of social cash assistance, and in particular this file is under the responsibility of the General Administration for Combating Poverty and the social development directorates in the various governorates.

The institutional and regulatory framework governing cash assistance transfers includes a number of programs related to providing social assistance within the Ministry. It also includes a number of measures that govern distribution of cash assistance. In addition, there are procedures and measures followed by other institutions providing cash assistance in Palestine, namely: the President's office via governors, the *Zakat Committees, and charitable organizations.

Following is a description of the cash assistant program and procedures followed, noting that cash assistance in the MoSD is provided through the main program – the Cash Transference Program (CTP), and it is complemented through other mechanisms for the marginalized segment in society from the program due to exclusion errors.

Cash Transfer Program (CTP)

This program was launched in 2010 under the title “Cash Transfer Program”. It constitutes the main program in the MoSD which provides social assistance to poor and marginalized families. The program is managed by the Ministry and financed through national and international funds. The table below illustrates contribution, in Israeli Shekels (NIS), made by the various parties in financing the program, according to the 2016 MoSD data.¹⁷

Table No. 1: National and international funding to the cash transfer program (million NIS)

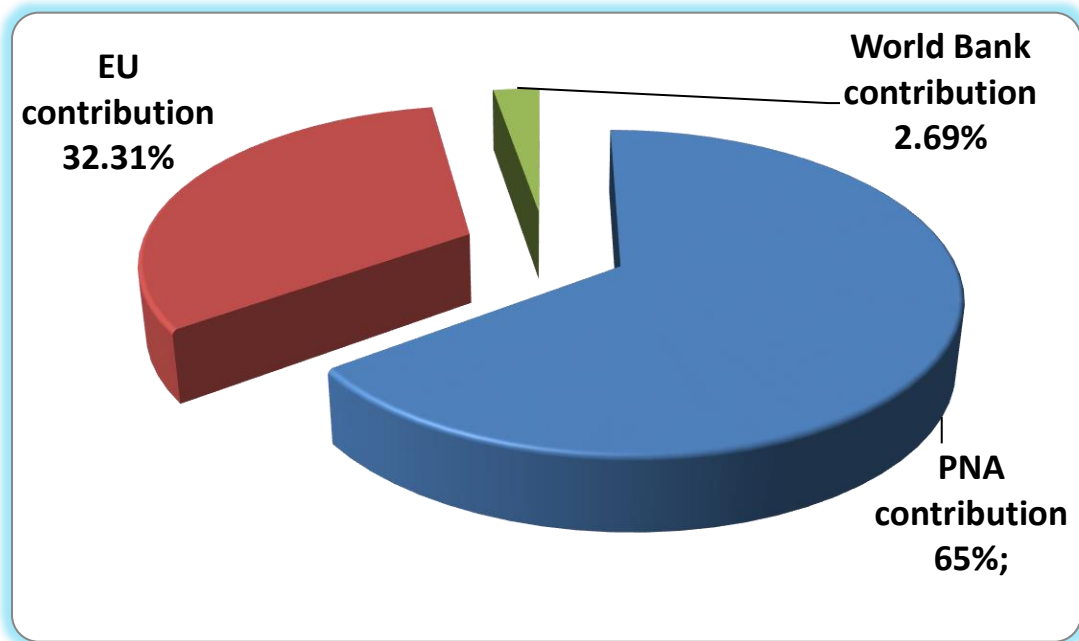
Total amount	PNA	European Union	World Bank
520	388	168	14
100%	65%	32.31%	2.69%

¹⁷ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

- Zakat: an obligatory payment made annually under Islamic law on certain kinds of property and used for charitable and religious purposes.

Figure No. 1

National and international funding to the cash transfer program (%)



The selection process of beneficiaries in the program is based on a mathematical equation, which consists of certain undeclared weights to measure the welfare level of a given family. The deciding point or final mark that grants eligibility is equal to the extreme poverty line “abject” poverty line. Any or all who earns this result is qualified for cash assistance, which ranges between 750-1800 NIS transferred every three months through bank transfers to the beneficiaries’ accounts.¹⁸

Stages of executing the CTP:

- **The reception stage:** this is when the case is presented to the Directorates of Social Development offices in the various directorates of Palestine. This is also when the initial assessment of the case is conducted by the reception employee at the directorate.
- **Target stage:** this is the stage an employee connects with a member from the needy family (i.e., targeted case) either when the individual/case comes to one of the directorates or when a field researcher pays a visit to the needy family’s residence. At this stage, the researcher fills out the official form with needed information, where later it is entered into the electronic system of the program.
- **Utilizing the selection tool stage (the equation):** this measuring tool determines if the case at hand is within the extreme poverty line or not, and therefore is initially deserving of assistance or not.

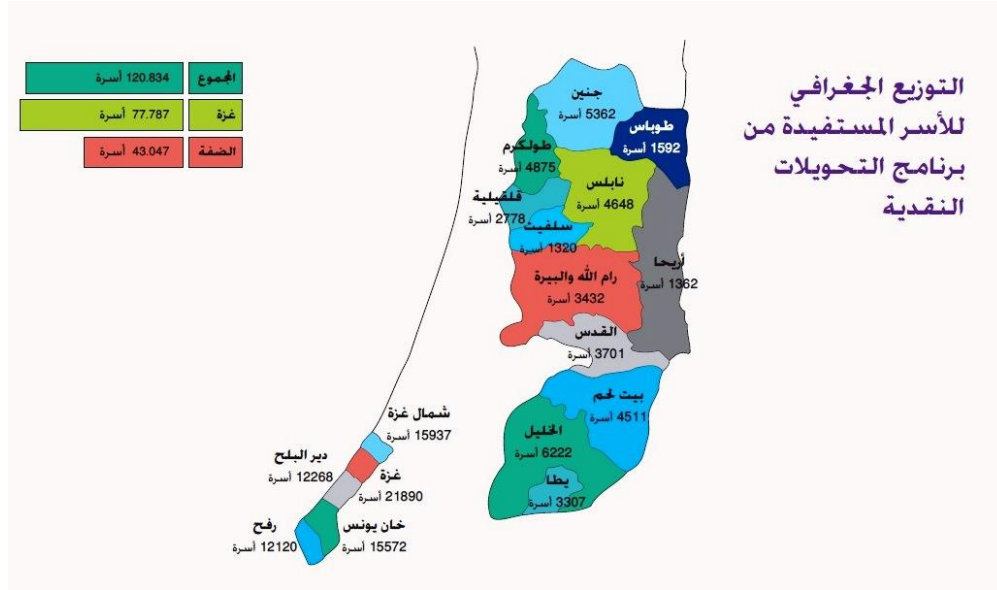
¹⁸ Integrity and transparency in the cash assistance program in the MoSA, issued by AMAN, 2015, P.6.

- **Field visit check stage:** this constitutes a field visit by the social researcher to poor families in order to confirm accuracy of the data given previously by families themselves in the form filling stage. Finally, data in the system is updated based on information provided during the field visit.
- **Registration stage:** this stage requires that the directorate contact eligible families in writing to request supporting documents that would reinforce the family's right to assistance. In addition, the family is asked to sign a declaration and pledge form.
- **Adoption stage:** once the registration file is completed (i.e., all data is entered in the system and supporting documents received) the researcher confirms the family's approval on the electronic system, after which the family is granted assistance.
- **Final stage:** money transfer of cash assistance to beneficiaries. This is executed by transferring the set amount to the beneficiary's personal checking account. However, it is possible for a beneficiary to commission someone else to receive the payment by presenting a power of attorney in that regard. It is important to note, however, that cash assistance payments may be paid directly and on time, or it might be postponed if funds are unavailable or if there is a delay in procedures.¹⁹

¹⁹ Integrity and transparency in the cash assistance program in the MoSA, issued by AMAN, 2015, P.8.

Figure No. 2

Geographic distribution of beneficiary families in the Cash Assistance Program²⁰



Geographic distribution of beneficiary families in the Cash Assistance Program (corner)

Total	120,834 families
Gaza	77,787 families
WB	43,047 families

Top : Jenin 5362 families; Tubas, 1592 families; Nablus, 4648 families; Tulkarem, 4875 families; Qalqelyia, 2778 families; Silfeet, 1320 families; Ramallah & Bireh, 3432 families; Jericho, 1352 families; Jerusalem, 3701 families; Bethlehem, 4511 families; Hebron, 6222 families; Yatta, 3307 families.

Northern Gaza, 15937 families; Gaza city, 21890 families; Deir Al-Balah, 12268 families; Rafah, 1220; Khan Younis, 15572 families.

Beneficiary families' data is subject to updating by the Ministry in accordance with the statistical equation. However, there are two possible errors that might occur. The first constitutes a wrong assessment, where undeserving families are included, and the other is the opposite...where deserving families are excluded. However, if detected, these are corrected afterwards.

²⁰ The MoSD Citizen's budget, 2016, issued by the MoSD in cooperation with Miftah institution.

The Emergency Assistance Program

Adopted by the MoSD, the Emergency Assistance Program provides cash assistance in emergency cases or to families that are affected as a result of an emergency, either by natural disaster, sudden death, wars, etc. or as a result of sickness, for example. This program financed from the PNA budget, where in 2016, allocation for this program was 6 million NIS, and the estimated allocation for 2017, is 7 million NIS. The amount of cash assistance granted to beneficiaries ranges between 1000-3000 NIS each²¹.

Cash Assistance Provided by Other Parties

First: Office of the President/ Governors Offices

Office of the President provides cash assistance in emergency cases through the offices of governors in various districts/governorates of Palestine; where 10% of the monthly operational budgets in each governorate are allocated for emergency cash assistance. This was achieved by an understanding between the MoF and the governorates. In addition, cash assistance for social emergency cases is provided directly by the office of the President. This assistance is of limited amounts and is given in humanitarian emergency cases only.²²

Study cases for each of the following governorates: Hebron, Ramallah and Bireh, Tubas, and Qalqeelyia, showed that the adopted procedures were the same, going through the director of the social department and the financial director in offices of the various governorates and ends with the approval of the governors. Assistant grants are taken from the monthly operational budgets with a rate not exceeding 10% of the mentioned budget.²³

The process begins by a citizen submitting an application to the Department of Social Affairs in a given governorate, where it is reviewed along with its supporting documents, after which it is passed on with the department's recommendations to the governor. Once approved, the application is referred to the finance department to be processed in line with the adopted financial procedures, where it's deducted from the monthly operational budget, as long as it is within the 10% margin allowed. The amount is paid by check in the amount approved to the first beneficiary only, ensuring that a copy of the identity card is filed; noting that the amount is usually no more than 500 NIS, depending on the situation.²⁴

It is worth noting that the social department also engages in the process of research, data auditing to ensure that information is accurate and proper documents are attached to the assistance application form. Confirmation is carried out by contacting local government units (LGU) and social development

²¹ MoSD, Khaled Al-Barghoti, General Manager of the General Administration for Combating Poverty.

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²³ Special interview with Mr. Mahmoud Ahmad, financial director- the governor's office, the Ramallah and Bireh Governorate, on September 25, 2016.

²⁴ Special interview with Mr. Bassam Blasmeh, financial director- the governor's office, Qalqeelyia, on September, 22, 2016.

directorates²⁵; as well as through consultations with partner organizations within the social committee at the level of the governorate. Then it is passed to the governor for approval before it is sent to the financial department to process the transaction of the assistance in coordination with the department.²⁶

Based on reports from governorates offices where our interviews were conducted, the amount of cash assistant provided in 2015 by the Hebron office, for example, reached 2,170,000 NIS through (3,726)²⁷ transactions, as illustrated in table 2 below:

Table No. 2

Cash assistance paid by the governor's office in Hebron in 2015²⁸

No	Assistance Item	No of transactions	Amount
1	Individual -max. of 500 NIS	640	28,000
2	Contributions to institutions	62	122,000
3	Compensations for damages inflicted by the Israeli occupation	241	355,000
4	Projects that support shops in the old city	1368	720,000
5	Project that supports families in the old city	1050	378,000
6	Project that support families living in areas adjacent to colonies and the apartheid wall	305	122,000
7	Emergency project	60	85,000
8	Development Fund and Revival of the Old City Project		360,000
Total		3726	

The amount of direct assistance paid through the Ramallah and Bireh Governor's office accounts for 17,000 NIS each month, with an annual average of 204,000 NIS.²⁹

²⁵ Special interview with Mr. Nayif Jabr, Director of the Social Department at the Qalqeelyia Governor's office, on September, 22, 2016.

²⁶ Speical interview with Mr. Ahmad Mahasneh, Director of the Social Department at the Tubas Governor's office, on September, 27, 2016.

²⁷ Interview with Ms. Iman Abu-Areesh, Director of the Social Department at the Hebron Governor's office, on September, 26, 2016.

²⁸ Interview with Ms. Iman Abu-Areesh, Director of the Social Department at the Hebron Governor's office, on September, 26, 2016.

²⁹ Speical interview with Mr. Mahmoud Ahmad, Director of the Finance Department at the Ramallah &Bireh Governor's office, on September, 25, 2016.

And in Qalqeelyia, it reached 90,600 NIS for 2015.³⁰ While the number of cash assistance beneficiaries in the Governorate of Tubas reached 200 cases.³¹

Second: The Palestinian Zakat Fund

This institution provides cash assistance through the Fund and the Central Zakat Committees in the various governorates with focus on six key areas: sponsoring orphans, sponsoring and assisting families, cash and in-kind assistance, seasonal and varied assistance, sacrificial lambs on Muslim holidays, student sponsorship.

According to data received from the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, the Fund provided 26,412,600 NIS³² in cash assistance, during the first half of 2016. The money was distributed through six focal channels as illustrated in table 3 below noting that these statistics are for the WB only,

Table No. 3

Distribution of expenditures for the Palestinian Zakat Fund during the 1st half of 2016 in the WB (NIS)

Orphans Sponsorships	Families Sponsorships and Assistance	Cash & In-Kind Assistance	Seasonal and various Assistance	Sacrificial Lambs	Students	Total
13,888,029	2,344,143	7,901,639	252,248	1,090,000	936,542	26,412,600

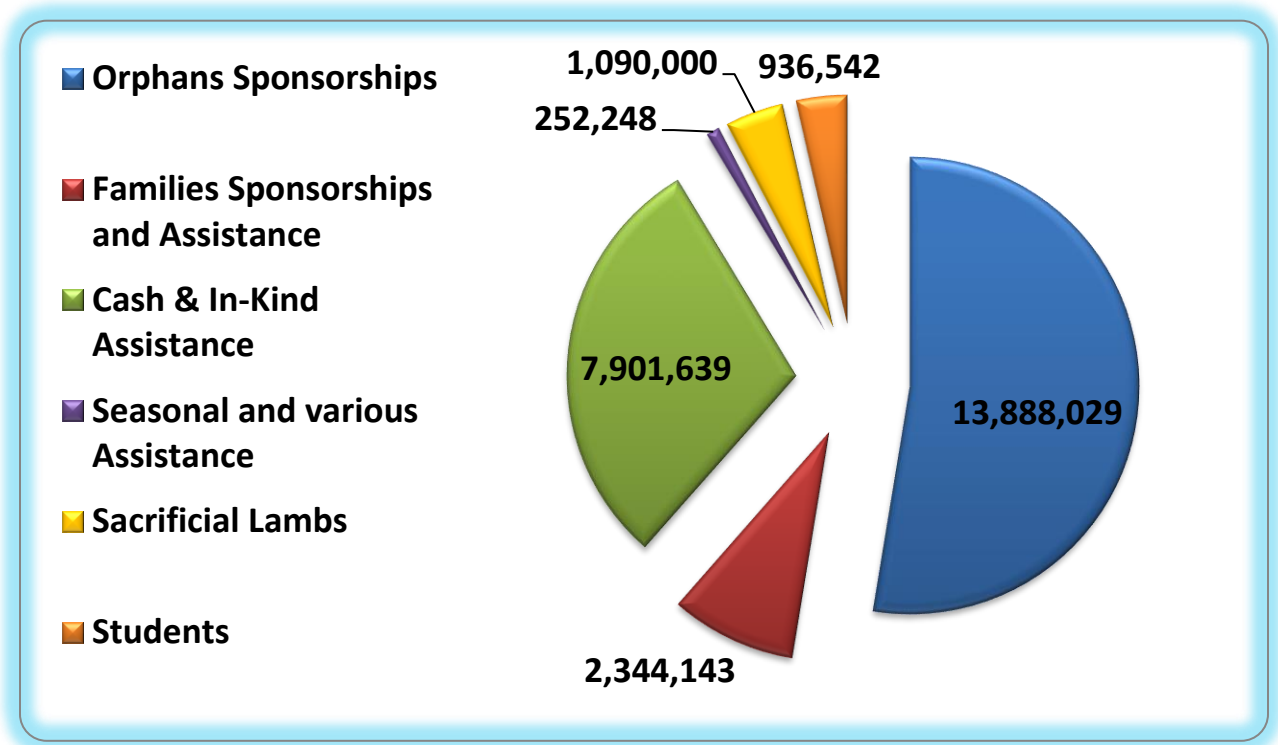
³⁰ Speical interview with Mr. Bassam Balasmeh, Director of the Finance Department at the Qalqeelyia Governor's office, on September, 22, 2016.

³¹ Speical interview with Mr. Ahmad Mahasneh, Director of the Social Department at the Tubas Governor's office, on September, 27, 2016.

³²The Palestinian Zakat Fund's financial report January 1, 2016-June 30, 2016.

Figure No.3

Distribution of expenditures by the Palestinian Zakat Fund during the 1st half of 2016 in the WB (NIS)



Third: Charitable Organizations (Human Appeal Int. UAE- “Model”)

The Human Appeal International- UAE was established in 1984 in Ajman in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). However, its work in Palestine began in 1989, which developed at a fast speed until it became a priority of the organization receiving the highest rate of assistance. The organization’s office in Palestine is registered as an international NGO with the Palestinian Ministry of Interior (Mol) under no. (F-0128-QR). The work of the Human Appeal International-UAE constitutes implementation of projects in a variety of fields across the following sectors: health, education, social, relief, development, orphan and family sponsorship³³

Expenditures of projects and activities carried out by the Human Appeal International-Palestine in 2015 amounted to **18,471,735 U.S. dollars** benefiting 1,581,739 individuals.³⁴ The projects and activities were distributed among the following key areas:

1. Health sector
2. Education sector
3. Relief sector

³³ The Human Appeal International-Palestine, annual report 2015, P.3.

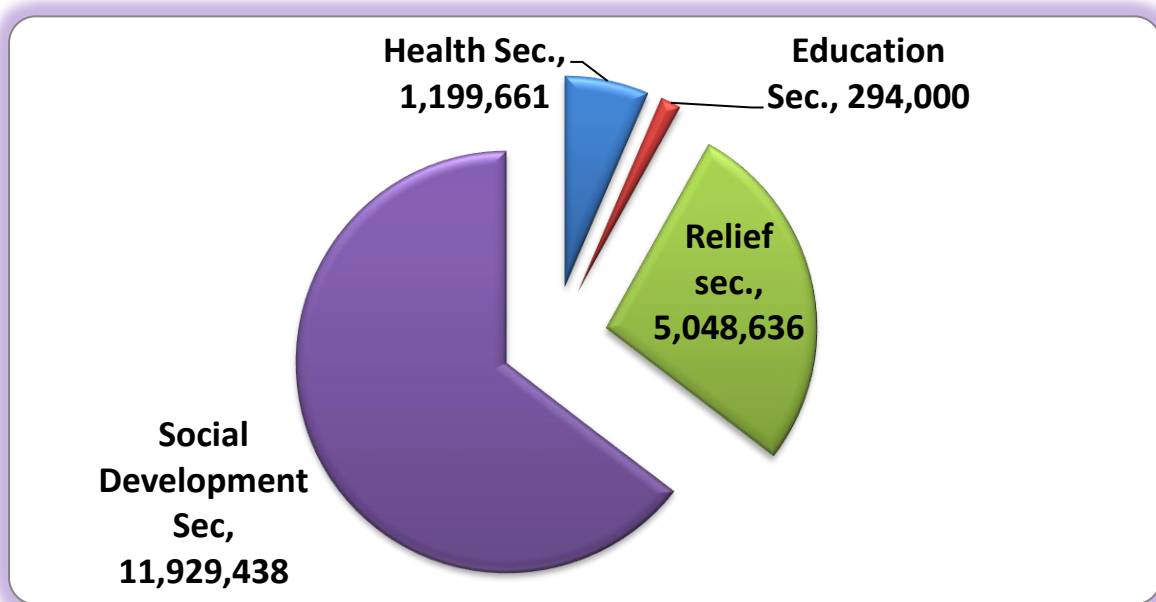
³⁴ The Human Appeal International-Palestine, annual report 2015, P.12.

4. Social Development sector

Table 4
Budgets and number of beneficiaries of the Human Appeal International-UAE projects in Palestine for 2015³⁵

Sector	Health Sec.	Education Sec.	Relief sec.	Social Development Sec	Total
Budget \$	1,199,661	294,000	5,048,636	11,929,438	18,471,735
Beneficiaries	189,408	27,333	1,137,728	164,270	1,518,739

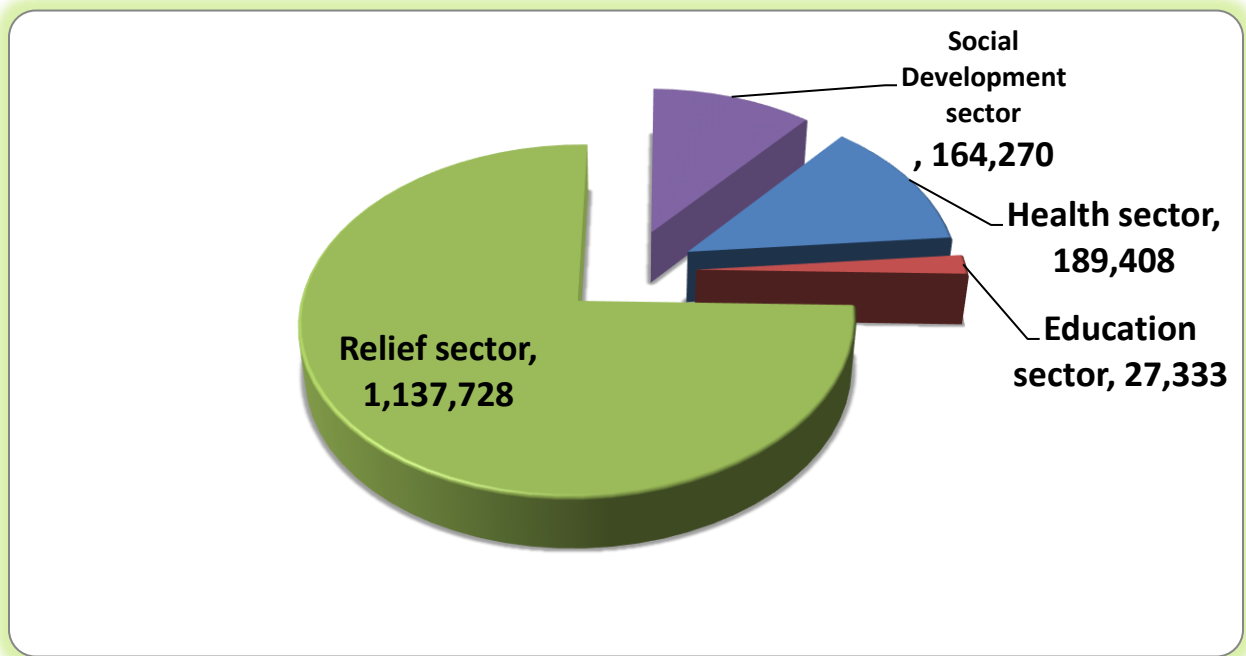
Figure No. 4
Budgets for the four sectors who benefited from projects of the Human Appeal International-UAE-Palestine in 2015 (U.S. dollars)



³⁵ The Human Appeal International-Palestine, annual report 2015, P.12.

Figure No. 5

No. of beneficiaries in the four sectors of the Human Appeal International-UAE-2015



It is important to note that there are other international and local institutions that provide cash assistance; namely the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) whom we contacted for the purpose of this study, but did not receive any information as of the writing of this report.

Chapter Two

Update on Developments/Gaps in the Cash Transfer System

First: Legal and Legislative Framework

The problem of the absence of a legislation, law, or system to govern the process of cash assistance is still standing. Until now, no specific legislation for social assistance has been issued, as recommended by the Coalition of Integrity and Accountability-AMAN during the past years.³⁶ ...³⁷

On a more positive note, there are policies, instructions and decisions regulating the cash assistance project. In addition, a draft procedural guide for the cash transfer program has been prepared. Furthermore, preparation is in progress by the Council of Ministers to launch a joint electronic gate for social assistance.³⁸

As for direct cash assistance provided by the office of the President and Governors' offices, the procedural guide at the governors' offices regulates cash assistance.³⁹ However, the Palestinian Zakat Fund and Zakat Committees cash assistance operations are regulated by internal laws that are based on the specific Zakat system regulating the Jordanian Zakat Fund. This system is approved and ratified by the Minister of Awqaf.⁴⁰ While the Human Appeal International-UAE-Palestine, who is a mediatory institution and not a direct provider of cash assistance works by applying traditionally existing practices. It's work primarily deals with Zakat committees and registered charitable organizations through contracts that are subject to the approval of the central headquarters in the UAE.⁴¹

In practice, existing legislations governing the Cash Assistance Program have not been linked to the Child⁴² Law or the Disability Rights Law.⁴³ In addition, no steps have been taken to complete drafting relevant laws such as the Senior Citizens Law, and Juveniles Law.

³⁶ Integrity and transparency in the cash assistance program in the MoSA, issued by AMAN, 2015.

³⁷ Report on "areas of austerity and rationalization in government spending", AMAN 2015 publications.

³⁸ Special interview with Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Programs Advisor, on October 11, 2016, MoSD headquarters., Ramallah.

³⁹ Special interview with Mr. Abd-Almin'm Farahat, Director of coordination and follow-up at the governorates affairs commission, the President's office, Ramallah, on September 19, 2016.

⁴⁰ Special interview with Mr. Hassan Tahboub, General Director of the Palestinian Zakat Fund, on September 25, 2016, at the headquarter of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Ramallah.

⁴¹ Special interview with Mr. Ibrahim Rashid Abu-Alhayja', commissioner for the Human Appeal -UAE in Palestine, on October 4, 2016, Jenin office.

⁴² Palestinian Child Law No. 7 of 2004.

⁴³ The Disability Rights Law No. 4 of 1999.

In that regard, the MoSD seeks to integrate the Cash Assistance Program with the Disability Rights Law, as preparations to institutionalize and launch a special system for the disabled, complete with a personal identity card is currently in progress; the launching is expected to take place in 2017.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

Second: Institutional and Regulatory Framework

The MoSD has developed its work mechanisms concerning cash assistance at the institutional and regulatory levels, exemplified by reducing the error of inclusiveness⁴⁵ through excluding families that were included by mistake (i.e., families that were undeservingly included in the system were taken out). The exclusion process was based on assessment results of the Follow-up Committee in a given directorate, in addition to conducting consultations with local social protection networks located in the various areas of Palestine. The Ministry also worked on reducing the error of exclusion⁴⁶ through a mechanism, which allows for selecting families that are between the extreme poverty line and national poverty line, with a small margin for exceptions such as: if the family has a disabled person, senior citizen, chronically ill, orphaned, or a family whose only breadwinner is a woman. As mentioned above, this is used in addition to the assessment and confirmation of the follow-up committee as well as consultations with the social protection networks. This solution was reached to enhance the role of the social researcher.

In the past, the exclusion and inclusion rates reached 30%, while currently it has been reduced to 20% due to several reasons, most important of which are:

- Experience curve among workers and social researchers at the MoSD.
- Implementation of administrative measures by the internal follow up committees in the various directorates on methods of studying cases.

And according to the 2016 World Bank report, the rate of efficiency and effectiveness in social assistance of the Ministry ranked 66%, which is a high percentage at the global level. This means that for each one NIS spent, 66 Agoras (100 agoras make one shekel) go to combating poverty in Palestine.⁴⁷

Targeting equation

The equation by which cash assistance is determined at the MoSD is based on factors that are inherently characterized as relatively stable, such as the National Survey on Family Spending and Consumption. This survey was last conducted in 2010 by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), but the Bureau has begun carrying it out again at the beginning of October 2016 in order to update it. It is expected to be completed in 2017; hence the equation will also be updated accordingly. Moreover, all target tools will be updated in cooperation with the PCBS, academic institutions, and experts on combating poverty. The Ministry is also planning to partner with UNRWA on the subject with support

⁴⁵ Previously defined in the text.

⁴⁶ Previously defined in the text.

⁴⁷ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

from the World Bank and ESCWA, taking into consideration the multi-dimensional concept of poverty; as well as the ability to measure social deprivation and material poverty.

Confidentiality of the target tool

The target equation is kept confidential keeping its weights scale unknown to the public. It is also not circulated internally among the Ministry's staff. Knowledge of this information is limited to: the Minister's Advisor for Programs and the Director of Information Technology at the Ministry. The underlying reason for this strict secrecy is the belief that its strength, possibly, lies in keeping it confidential. It is believed that revealing information of the equation and its weights may present risks that would interfere with the principle of equal opportunities; such risks are exemplified by the following:

- The possibility that families would provide data compatible to the equation, hence impacting objectivity and accuracy.
- The possibility that it may affect the social researcher's objectivity towards some families, or may manipulate the data at hand.

Despite all of the above, it is possible in the future to disclose the details of the equation, but under the condition that a control system with advanced monitoring and control tools is in place, hence accountability would be feasible.⁴⁸

Presently, there is still a relative deviation and differences between social researchers' perspectives and results of the equation. However, this deviation has declined due to the social researchers' role in identifying mechanisms to deal with the errors of inclusion and exclusion through the internal follow up committee in each directorate.

In regard to the stability of the cash transfer program, the MoSD is currently working to develop and clarify the concept of social work as it relates to researchers, which entails sharpening their skills in reviewing cases; analyzing the families' situations, defining families' social services needs, and finally enhancing their skills in preparing specific action plans for social intervention that are suitable for each family.

In addition, orientation and training sessions were held for social researchers, although this not insufficient. Therefore, further training will be conducted in 2017 for researchers on the concept of management of special conditions related to social cases.

It is worth noting that logistical support such as cars and other means necessary for researchers to visit families to update and verify data remains inadequate. It is therefore important to point out the need to

⁴⁸ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

provide such means due to the significant impact they have on the effectiveness and efficiency of the work, as well as on rationalizing public funds especially as it related to transportation means.

Updating beneficiaries' data:

Beneficiary data in the Cash Assistance Program at the MoSD is updated periodically. This procedure is a routine action conducted every two years and consistent with the Ministry's policies, but not an adopted law. In 2016, presentation of beneficiaries' files was adopted; however, only 60% of beneficiaries' data was updated during the first three quarters of the year. This shows that it might be possible to update 85-90% of the data by the end of this year. This is the level of updating that was supposed to be executed maximum every two years.

The concept of an emergency situation:

The concept of an emergency situation deserving of assistance was defined. In that regard, the MoSD has a list of classifications of emergency assistance issued by a decision from the Social Development Minister.

Duplications of giving/receiving cash assistance

In practice, there is no duplication in cash assistance in the MoSD. However, it is possible to grant emergency assistance under specific severe circumstances where it is too difficult for the family to withstand, which is unlinked to the cash assistance included in the CTP. However it is possible that the same family assisted in the emergence to be also paid from the Cash Transfer Program.⁴⁹

There is also the program for orphaned children. Although there is only one database for all the programs, each program has its own specificity. This does not however cancel the possibility of duplications of cash assistance provided by parties other than the (MoSD, such as the Zakat Fund, governors' offices, and or charitable organizations, especially in light of the large number of people benefiting from each party. As obvious, the existence of several parties providing cash assistance reinforces the chances for duplications, especially since the shared electronic link has not been completed; neither is the electronic gate for cash assistance.

The electronic gate (portal) project for cash assistance is still in the establishment stage:

The MoSD is currently working to launch an electronic gate for cash assistance. However, until the writing of this paper, the system has not been completed. Presently, there is a computerized system,

⁴⁹ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

although also incomplete, but is linked to several ministries, namely: MoI, MoH, MoE, MoF and Ministry of Awqaf; noting that an agreement was reached with the Awqaf Ministry to finalize the computerized link. Also there is an exchange of information with the UNRWA and Palestinian universities.

However, the Governorates Affairs office in the President's quarters and governors' offices are still unconnected electronically with the MoSD or with any other related institution.⁵⁰ These institutions have their own database for cash assistance they provide; however, it remains possible to detect if a family or individual has previously received cash assistance, including the date and amount received through the financial database adopted in the various governorates.

As for the Palestinian Zakat Fund and Zakat committees in the governorates, these entities are not connected electronically to other related institutions. However, recently the MoSD and the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in order to be connected electronically together, while at the same time coordinating with the MoI in its capacity as the competent institution granting licenses to relevant NGOs.⁵¹ In addition, The Human Appeal International-UAE, Palestine has expressed desire to join in connecting electronically with relevant institutions and ministries.⁵² In this regard, the MoSD welcomed the principle of partnership with charitable organizations providing social and cash assistance in Palestine. It also welcomed the idea of creating a joint database for cash assistance to be computerized with all partners including charitable organizations in order to unify assistance within the cash assistance electronic gate through a regulated mechanism that ensures access to the desired information as needed without infringing on the privacy of the beneficiaries.⁵³

Periodic cash assistance disbursements

Cash transfers at the MoSD are paid once every three months. Monthly payments are not permissible at this time due to the lengthy procedures of the European Union (EU) related to the program, which take 70 days. The Ministry has contacted the EU to consider the possibility of reducing the period to two months because of its impact on non-accumulation of debt on poor families. In this regard, the EU representatives promised to try and reduce the time as requested.

As for the Governors' offices, assistance is disbursed monthly. The assistance is provided for the person one time only to ensure reaching as many people as possible with the exception of some cases which

⁵⁰ Special interview with Mr. Abd-Almin'm Farahat, Director of coordination and follow-up at the governorates affairs commission, the President's office, Ramallah, on September 19, 2016.

⁵¹ Special interview with Mr. Hassan Tahboub, General Director of the Palestinian Zakat Fund, on September 25, 2016, at the headquarter of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Ramallah

⁵² Special interview with Mr. Ibrahim Rashid Abu-Alhayja', commissioner for the Human Appeal –UAE in Palestine, on October 4, 2016, Jenin office.

⁵³ Special interview with Mr. Khaled Tmeizi, NGOs General Director at the MoSD, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

call for intervention for a second time⁵⁴, with condition that at least six months have passed after the last payment.⁵⁵

And in offices of some governorates, payment is given once a year.⁵⁶

Cash assistance distributed by the Palestinian Zakat Fund include regular periodic payments, seasonal and the once a year disbursements.⁵⁷

Special interventions on behalf of the marginalized groups: children, disabled individuals, senior citizens, orphans and widows:

The MoSD hopes to succeed at achieving all interventions needed for these groups through the activation of the disability card besides providing the usual services for the neediest groups among those mentioned above, which include protection, care and rehabilitation. In addition the Ministry provides sponsorship grants for 4000 orphans, which is 50 dollars a month paid on an annual basis. In addition, the Ministry is working to expand the number of the Child Sponsorship Program's beneficiaries by adding few thousand individuals. The scope of services provided by the MoSD is expected to expand during the next few years depending on results concluded by the situation management, which the Ministry has already begun to direct its compass towards in line with the Ministry's transformation from social affairs to social development.

In practice, there is positive discrimination in favor of the marginalized. For example, according to the (PCBS) data, the rate of households headed by women is about 15%, while the percentage of households who depend on the Cash Transfer Program that are headed by women is about 40%. In addition, the number of individuals with disability who benefit from assistance is 12%.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Interview with Ms. Iman Abu-Areesh, Director of the Social Department at the Hebron Governor's office, on September, 26, 2016.

⁵⁵ Special interview with Mr. Mahmoud Ahmad, financial director- the governor's office, the Ramallah and Bireh Governorate, on September 25, 2016.

⁵⁶ Special interview with Mr. Bassam Blasmeh, financial director- the governor's office, Qalqeelyia, on September, 22, 2016.

⁵⁷ Special interview with Mr. Hassan Tahboub, General Director of the Palestinian Zakat Fund, on September 25, 2016, at the headquarter of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Ramallah.

⁵⁸ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

Third: Integrity, Transparency, and Accountability Environment in Cash Assistance

Analysis of the Integrity Environment

Procedural guide for cash assistance:

The MoSD has a draft procedural guide on cash assistance, which is currently being discussed at the Ministry prior to its approval and ratification. Within the same context, there is no specific system issued by the Council of Ministers on cash assistance. However, there is a group of instructions issued by high officials at the ministry and the competent public administration in line with powers granted to them.⁵⁹

There is also a procedural guide that is authorized centrally by the Governors Affairs Commission in the President's Office⁶⁰ that is used in processing cash assistance provided by governors' offices, in addition to other approved cash assistance forms.⁶¹

In the mean time, the Palestinian Zakat Fund relies on its internal system which is derived from the Jordanian Zakat Fund system. The Palestinian system is approved and ratified by the Awqaf and Religious Affairs' Minister.⁶²

As for the Human Appeal International-UAE in Palestine, which is a mediatory institution, and not a direct provider of cash assistance, it applies existing practices that are traditionally followed. Its contracts with other organizations are subject to the approval of the central headquarters in the UAE.⁶³

Appointing social researchers:

Appointments in the MoSD is conducted according to specializations and procedures adopted by the PNA. In addition, terms of reference has been added specifying certain qualifications carried out in cooperation with the General Personnel Council (GPC); no exceptions are made in appointments at the MoSD.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

⁶⁰ Special interview with Mr. Abd-Almin'm Farahat, Director of coordination and follow-up at the governorates affairs commission, the President's office, Ramallah, on September 19, 2016.

⁶¹ Special interview with Mr. Ahmad Mahasneh, Director of the Social Department at the Tubas Governor's office, on September, 27, 2016.

⁶² Special interview with Mr. Hassan Tahboub, General Director of the Palestinian Zakat Fund, on September 25, 2016, at the headquarter of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Ramallah.

⁶³ Special interview with Mr. Ibrahim Rashid Abu-Alhayja', commissioner for the Human Appeal –UAE in Palestine, on October 4, 2016, Jenin office.

⁶⁴ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

National Guide on Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid Operations⁶⁵; Codes of Conduct:

The MoSD has reviewed the “National Guide in Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid”. It also distributed it to the various administrations in the Ministry. The Ministry welcomes this guide and instructions within, noting that it had adopted the Code of Conduct and Ethics in Public Employment.⁶⁶

In governorates’ offices providing cash assistance, the Code of Conduct and Ethics in Public Employment was also adopted. In addition, some governorates, Hebron and Tubas⁶⁷..⁶⁸ for example, have adopted the National Guide as well as distributed it to its employees including those working in social departments. Other governorates’ offices also welcome its adoption in order to promote integrity and transparency.⁶⁹

The Palestinian Zakat Fund did not adopt the National Guide, but shows readiness for adopting it along with providing training for staff and workers on applying its provisions.⁷⁰

In the Humanitarian Appeal International-UAE-Palestine, a specific code of conduct was developed for those working with the organization. The organization nevertheless welcomes adoption of the Guide on Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid Operations.⁷¹

Staff training on the concept of corruption, indicators, and methods of reporting it:

The MoSD held training on the concept of corruption, although employees are in need of further training. In addition, training on the same subject was held by the GPC, the State audit and Administrative Control Bureau (SAACB), the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), as well as other institutions, for employees working in governorates offices to familiarize them with the concept of corruption and the codes of conduct.⁷²

⁶⁵ Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid operations-AMAN publications, 2014.

⁶⁶ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

⁶⁷ Special interview with Mr. Ahmad Mahasneh, Director of the Social Department at the Tubas Governor’s office, on September, 27, 2016.

⁶⁸ Interview with Ms. Iman Abu-Areesh, Director of the Social Department at the Hebron Governor’s office, on September, 26, 2016.

⁶⁹ Special interview with Mr. Mahmoud Ahmad, financial director- the governor’s office, the Ramallah and Bireh Governorate, on September 25, 2016.

⁷⁰ Special interview with Mr. Hassan Tahboub, General Director of the Palestinian Zakat Fund, on September 25, 2016, at the headquarter of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Ramallah.

⁷¹ Special interview with Mr. Ibrahim Rashid Abu-Alhayja’, commissioner for the Human Appeal –UAE in Palestine, on October 4, 2016, Jenin office.

⁷² Special interview with Mr. Bassam Blasmeh, financial director- the governor’s office, Qalqeelyia, on September, 22, 2016.

On another positive note, the Palestinian Zakat Fund has requested training and workshops to be held on raising its employees and workers' awareness of corruption, its indicators, and methods of reporting it.⁷³

In addition, the Humanitarian Appeal International UAE-Palestine confirmed that it conducts training on the concept of corruption, and issues internal decisions that reinforce integrity, transparency, and combating corruption in the work environment.⁷⁴

Analysis of the Transparency Environment

Standards and Criteria for Cash or Emergency Assistance

Stemming from its belief that criteria and standards for the Cash and Emergency Assistance Program should be made public, the MoSD has it posted on its official website and has distributed it to directorates and ministries.⁷⁵ The Ministry also pointed it out in the special edition of the 2016 Citizen's Budget for the MoSD; prepared by the Ministry in cooperation with MIFTAH.⁷⁶ While the Humanitarian Appeal International-UAE-Palestine distributes it in paper publications and on its website.⁷⁷

Number of the cash assistance beneficiaries

The MoSD publishes the number of beneficiaries, as well as additional information every three months period. This information was also published in the 2016 Citizen's Budget for the MoSD. The Ministry is also working on updating its website, where most recently it has posted its social protection sector's strategy. The process of updating the website with required information and documents, such as the Ministries reports is ongoing. However, distribution of the Ministry's reports to the various administrations and directorates is done as needed.

The Guide for Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid and the Code of Conduct and Ethics in Public Employment were not published on the Ministry's website, but hopefully it would be in the near future.⁷⁸

⁷³ Special interview with Mr. Hassan Tahboub, General Director of the Palestinian Zakat Fund, on September 25, 2016, at the headquarter of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Ramallah.

⁷⁴ Special interview with Mr. Ibrahim Rashid Abu-Alhayja', commissioner for the Human Appeal –UAE in Palestine, on October 4, 2016, Jenin office.

⁷⁵ The MoSD website: <http://www.mosa.pna.ps>

⁷⁶ The MoSD citizen's budget 2016, issued by the MoSD in cooperation with MIFTAH.

⁷⁷ The Humanitarian Appeal International UAE-Palestine website. <http://www.hai.ps>

⁷⁸ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

Governorates offices vary in their publication of beneficiaries' numbers on their websites or through their news reports, noting that they all prepare detailed reports on the issue and send it to the Governorates Affairs Commission in the President's quarters.

The Zakat Fund also prepares detailed reports but does not have a website. While the Humanitarian Appeal International UAE-Palestine publishes the number of beneficiaries on its website and is included in its printed annual reports, which gets distributed to institutions.

Analysis of the Accountability Environment

Reporting cases and suspicions of corruption in cash assistance to the competent courts:

The MoSD has adopted strict measures against anyone proven to have committed violations related to corruption acts. Some of these measures included suspension from jobs, ultimatums for dismissals, as well as relocations of suspected employees. It also has referred two cases to the Ant-Corruption Court, which were rejected on basis that the cases were more in violation of procedures rather than corruption. These cases were not cash transfer specific, but the Ministry would not be hesitant to refer any file that is suspected of corruption to the ACC.⁷⁹

The Zakat Fund had referred two cases to the Anti-Corruption Court. However, until the writing of this report, no further action has been taken in that regard.⁸⁰

Also the Humanitarian Appeal International UAE-Palestine had referred cases on suspicion of corruption to the competent parties.⁸¹

Moreover, the MoSD is currently working on attaching an annex paper to the pledge signed by beneficiaries of cash assistant, which illustrates the specific conditions for cash assistance. In addition, it is considering the possibility of developing an additional document entailing legal consequences if conditions are violated.⁸²

Internal control units

The MoSD has an internal control unit tasked with following up on many issues including social transactions. It also issues reports and distributes them to relative parties. However, the number of

⁷⁹ Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

⁸⁰ Special interview with Mr. Hassan Tahboub, General Director of the Palestinian Zakat Fund, on September 25, 2016, at the headquarter of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Ramallah.

⁸¹ Special interview with Mr. Ibrahim Rashid Abu-Alhayja', commissioner for the Human Appeal –UAE in Palestine, on October 4, 2016, Jenin office.

⁸² Special interview with Mr. Ayman Sawalha, Minister of Social Development Program Advisor, on October 11, 2016, the MoSD headquarters, Ramallah.

employees in this unit is inadequate; hence the department is in need to expand the number and specializations working in it..

In governors' offices, however, there are control units that periodically carry out monitoring and control tasks on the social department and all other departments,⁸³ in addition to the auditor from the MoF.⁸⁴

The control unit in the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs carries out control tasks on the Zakat Fund and Zakat committees.⁸⁵

The Humanitarian Appeal International UAE-Palestine relies on legal and financial advisors for follow up and control over cash assistance.⁸⁶

Complaint units:

The MoSD has established complaints units in the various directorates. Complaints are received through the complaint boxes located on the premises. Complaints are also received centrally at the Ministry, as well as electronically through the Ministry's website. In addition, complaints are received via the President's office, governors' offices, human rights organizations, and some partner organizations.

As illustrated in the table below the MoSD received (399) complaints in 2015; (292) of those were addressed and solved, while (12) of them are saved and (95) are undergoing follow up. In 2016, however, and up to the date of this report, the Ministry received, (512) complaints, (64) of those were addressed and solved, while (1) complaint is saved and (447) are undergoing follow up.

Table 5⁸⁷

Summary of complaints statistics in the MoSD in 2015 and 2016 including follow up details

Year	Complaint			Total	Rate of complaints linked to cash assistance
	Follow-up	Addressed	Saved		
2015	95	292	12	399	%78.2
2016	447	64	1	512	%85.3

⁸³ Interview with Ms. Iman Abu-Areesh, Director of the Social Department at the Hebron Governor's office, on September, 26, 2016.

⁸⁴ Speical interview with Mr. Ahmad Mahasneh, Director of the Social Department at the Tubas Governor's office, on September, 27, 2016.

⁸⁵ Special interview with Mr. Hassan Tahboub, General Director of the Palestinian Zakat Fund, on September 25, 2016, at the headquarter of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, Ramallah.

⁸⁶ Special interview with Mr. Ibrahim Rashid Abu-Alhayja', commissioner for the Human Appeal –UAE in Palestine, on October 4, 2016, Jenin office.

⁸⁷ Complaint unit, the MoSD, 2016

The table above reveals effective follow up on complaints, exemplified by the number of complaints addressed as well as the number of those received. It also indicates that the rate of complaints related to cash assistance is high for 2015 in comparison with the total; we also notice that there is an increase in 2016, in both the number and rate. This is an indication of the interest MoSD's takes in addressing complaints. It is also exemplified through its analysis of the received complaints and the underlying reasons. Details of these complaints are found in the various governorates offices including the nature of the complaints, and their distribution, as illustrated in figure 6 below.

Figure 6

Number and status of complaints received by the MoSD in 2015

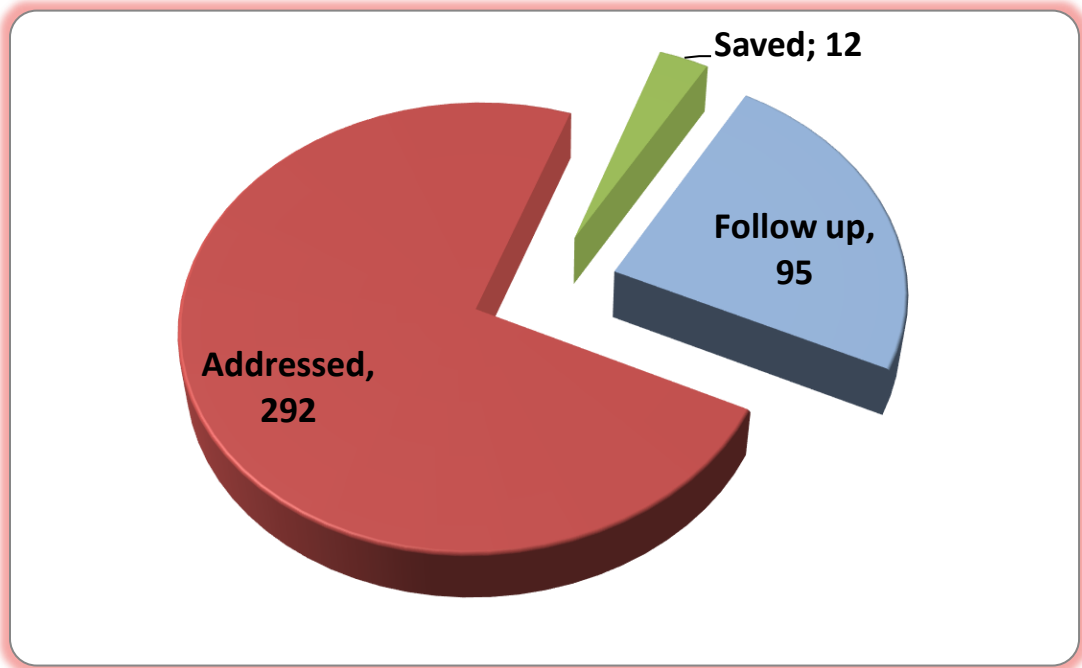
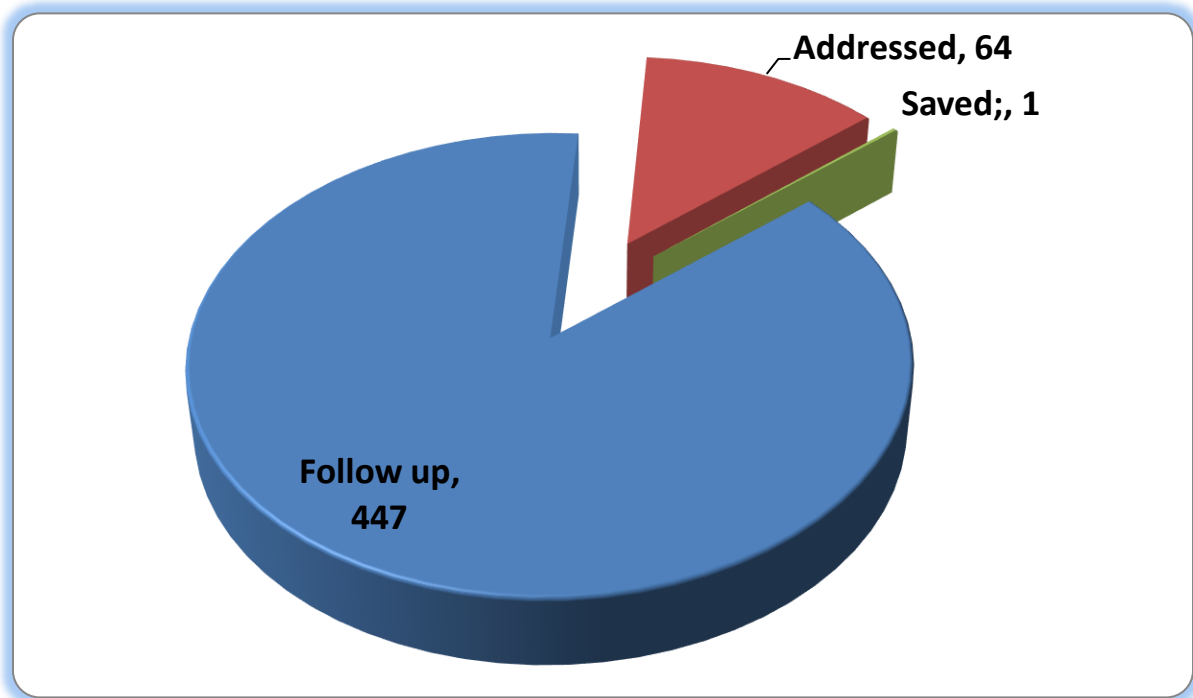


Figure 7

Number and status of complaints received by the MoSD in 2016

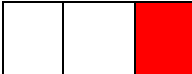

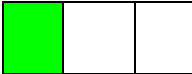




Moreover, the governors' offices receive all types of complaints from the public whether on cash assistance or other issues through their complaints units and legal departments located in the various governorates. In addition, the Zakat Fund also has a complaint unit that is well activated.


Chapter Three


Conclusions and Recommendations; General Framework for Directions of the Up-Coming Phase; Action Plan


In light of the analysis results of the report on developments/gaps in cash transfers operations, this diagnostic paper reached the following conclusions:


- Absence of a regulating legislative framework for cash assistance operations, as no specific  legislations has been issued for this purpose. This situation does not meet recommendations previously published in AMAN's 2015 report "Integrity and Transparency in Cash Assistance Operations in the MoSD"; lack of clear and systematic connection between relative laws such as "the Palestinian Child Law, and Disability Rights Law with the current Cash Assistance Program.
- The array of institutions providing cash assistance in Palestine and lack of a computerized  electronic link between them leading to duplications in cash assistance at times, and deprives others at other times, hence creating confusion in the provision of cash services. In addition, the electronic gate/portal has not been launched until the date of this paper; and therefore "chaos in cash assistance" remains, for now.
- The MoSD has been able to develop the specific cash assistance's institutional and regulatory  system, exemplified by reducing inclusion and exclusion errors.(I.e., excluding unqualified families entered in the system by mistake and including those families excluded due to the same reason). This was done by applying a mechanism that measures and distinguishes between the extreme poverty line and the national one with a margin, while utilizing expertise gained by workers and social researchers. The Ministry also applied a number of administrative measures on follow up committees in the various directorates, which will improve auditing of cases.
- In order to enhance transparency, integrity and accountability in the cash assistance sector, the  cadres working in this area remain in need of training and rehabilitation. This applies at the level of case management as well as at the level of awareness in regard to the concept of corruption, its manifestations, and methods of reporting it. There is also a need for logistical support such as vehicles among other means to enable researchers working with the MoSD to make field visits, confirm information, and update data due to its significant impact on the quality of work. Other needs include: rationalization of spending (mid and long term); increasing the number and specializations of staff in the monitoring control department at the MoSD to comply with tasks related to the Cash Assistance Program and other related programs.

- The MoSD did not adopt a specific procedural guide for cash assistance. What is presently at  hand is a draft guide in need of approval and ratification. Also, the Ministry did not fully adopt the “National Guide for Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid” in all its institutions that provide cash services, noting that all of these institutions welcome the idea, as well as some of them have adopted parts of or the entire guide. However, the Ministry did review the guide and circulated it among the various administrations as well as issued instructions clarifying its content.

- **Transparency:** Transparency in the area of publishing numbers of beneficiaries is in need of  further development. In addition, there is a need for all parties providing assistance to disseminate data and information on the number of beneficiaries and money distributed. They also need to activate and constantly maintain their websites.

- **Transparency:** the MoSD in cooperation with MIFTAH issued the specific MoSD 2016 Citizen’s  Budget. This constitutes an advanced step towards transparency in regard to providing citizens with data and information on programs run by the Ministry.

- **Accountability:** Addressing complaints received by the MoSD had shown positive improvement  exemplified by the large number received; the various areas by which complaints were submitted (distribution) in addition to the number of complaints addressed and solved, which accounted for 73.2% in 2015, while some have been saved and others are being processed.

- **Transparency:** there are expenses for compensations listed under the item of transferrable  expenditures in the public budget for the past 10 years under MoSD’ budget account. The MoSD, however, has no information on these expenses and are not part of its programs. According to data provided by the MoF, compensations for the 2005 appointments (discharges unrelated to the Ministry) are deducted from this item; 1,500 NIS are paid to 11, 850 individuals adding to (213,300,000 NIS⁸⁸) yearly. This expense was listed under social transfers for the MoSD without consulting the Ministry, noting that it is not part of the cash transfer program at the ministry, as mentioned. The MoSD has reservations regarding bearing responsibility for these expenses.

⁸⁸ Citizen’s Budget 2013, a publication of AMAN in cooperation with the MoF. 2013.

Recommendations

- The need for a sectoral strategy for combating poverty in Palestine to be issued and approved by the Council of Ministers.
- The need to create a legal framework, for regulating cash assistance programs in Palestine, by the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). And since the PLC has been paralyzed for the past 10 years, it is the Council of Ministers duty to draft a specific law for cash assistance in consultation with relative parties. This is especially vital since this item receives large amounts of money from the public budget for programs run by the MoSD. It also consumes a significant share of funds allocated to the Palestinian people, whether through the Zakat Fund or local and international charitable organizations.
- The need to apply/link legislations stipulated in the Palestinian Child's Law, and the Disability Rights Law to cash assistance programs, and to also activate the disability card through the MoSD.
- The need for the MoSD to adopt the procedural guide on cash assistance.
- The need for the MoSD to develop and update tools used for selection of families and individuals deserving of social assistance including the target equation tool in cooperation with the PCBS, academic institutions, poverty experts, and specialized social researchers.
- The need for the Council of Ministers to launch the electronic gate for cash and social assistance, which aims at facilitating connections between institutions that provide social services, hence preventing duplication and achieving justice in distribution. It also will enhance coordination between official and civil society institutions working in this field.
- The need for the MoSD to activate the computerized link between the various official and civil society institutions working in social and cash assistance, and to share data and information through a regulated mechanism that ensures access to information as required.
- The need for all parties working in the field of social and cash assistance to publish their reports for more transparency. They must also activate and consistently update their websites, and to post the National Guide for Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid along with the Code of Conduct and Ethics in Public Employment.
- The need for the MoSD to train and rehabilitate staff working in cash assistance at the professional and personal levels in management of social cases, and in awareness about corruption, its manifestations , and methods of reporting it.
- The need for the Finance and Planning Ministries to provide logistical means such as vehicles needed to facilitate social researchers work to visit families, as well as confirm and update data. To also rationalize funds.
- The need to adopt the National Guide in Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Aid, and to implement the code of conduct on all those who work in cash assistance in the various institutions.
- The need to increase the number of employees working in the internal audit and control units in charge of social assistance as well as to refine their skills.
- The need for the MoSD to multiply its targeting tools used for categorizing social cases.

- The need to encourage development perspectives in the MoSD, and to activate work in social services through reinforcing case management as a way of work in the MoSD.
- The need for MoSD to continue to promote partnership in cash assistance as well as in the entire social development process.
- The need for the “MoF” and Planning to remove expenditures related to the compensations of the 2005 appointments (discharges) from the item of social transfers under the responsibility center of the MoSD, noting that the Ministry has no details as to where this money is spent and confirms that leaving it under the mentioned item in the public budget only exaggerates the MoSD’s budget unjustly, since it does not serve the Ministry’s beneficiaries.
- The need for the MoSD and other relative institutions to work on developing a methodology for combating the multidimensional poverty which includes:
 1. Economic poverty “monetary”
 2. Social poverty “Deprivation”. This includes education, health, employment and work conditions, residence, and personal safety, access to information, security, personal freedoms, social protection, social engagement, ownership and use of assets.
- The need for the competent courts including the Anti-Corruption Court to rule in cases accused of corruption in cash assistance.

General Framework for Direction and Suggested Work Plan

Based on the aforementioned presentation and analysis it is vital that an action plan and a general direction framework are developed in order to properly address existing gaps in the management of social and cash assistance operations. This will promote the rationalization and austerity of government spending policy without compromising the rights of the poor and the marginalized. It will also reinforce the environment of integrity, transparency, and accountability in social and cash transfers.

The suggested general directions and action plan constitute three main focal points:

I: The legal framework governing social assistance cash transfers

There is a dire need for developing a legal and legislative framework to regulate the social assistance cash transfers operations. This is feasible through the development and approval of a comprehensive law that contains all provisions needed as a reference for carrying out the job. It should be carried out in consultations with related parties. Or at least to speed up the preparation and adoption of the “system for social assistance cash transfers” issued by the Council of Ministers. It is also necessary to link existing relative legislations with the specific law or system for the social assistance cash transfers.

II: Regulatory and institutional framework for cash transfers

There is a dire need to launch the joint electronic gate for social and cash assistance, and to include all database on assistance within it, whether by the MoSD or other relative institutions in this field. In addition, it is also necessary to activate the computerized link between all institutions working in the field in order to enhance cooperation and coordination between these institutions, and to prevent duplications in granting assistance. Furthermore, it is necessary to: create a national and comprehensive database for cash assistance; to continue to train and enhance skills of social researchers; to improve logistical means in order to be able to achieve a higher degree of accuracy and objectivity in granting cash assistance; inclusion and exclusion of families; and to increase the number of target tools for social cases.

III: Promoting an environment of integrity, transparency and accountability in social and cash assistance

Integrity environment: there is a vital need to enhance an integrity environment in cash assistance operation at the MoSD. This is possible through the adoption of a specific procedural guide on cash assistance, as well as the adoption of the National Guide on preventing corruption in humanitarian aid by all institutions working in the field of social assistance. It is also necessary to conduct training and awareness raising workshops for employees working in this field on the concept of corruption, its manifestations, and methods of reporting it.

Transparency environment: it is vital that the reports on cash assistance be published in order to that transparency is promoted by all parties working in this field. It is equally important to activate the official websites of these institutions and to ensure that it is updated on time with relative information. Moreover, it is important that the MoF refrain from including financial expenditures that are unrelated to the Ministry or its programs under its responsibility center, hence creating a state of uncertainty and inflating the MoSD's budget unjustly.

Accountability environment: It is important to increase the number and specializations of employees working in the monitoring and control unit in the MoSD due to the large scope of supervision entrusted to them. Moreover, it is important to strengthen the current approach of the MoSD in dealing with complaints in terms of effectiveness and efficiency in follow up and achievements. Finally, it is important that the competent courts speed up the process of ruling in cases involving violations or corruption in humanitarian aid.



Cash Transfers for Social Assistance-Working Paper

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