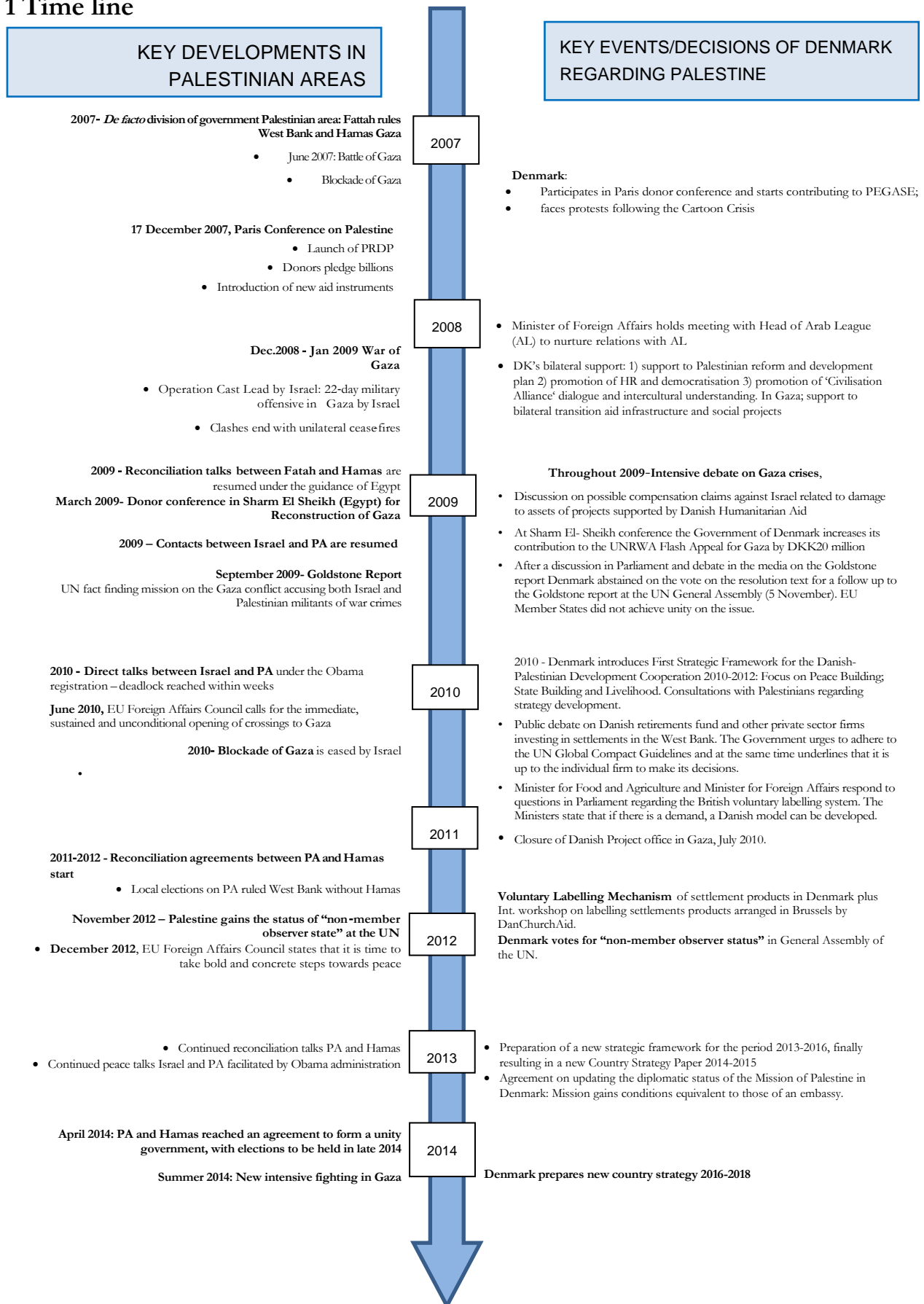


# Annex F Denmark-Palestine: Time Line, Debates and Strategies

## AF. 1 Time line



## **AF.2 Strategic Framework for the Danish-Palestinian Development Cooperation 2010-2012**

### **Preparation and consultation process**

In September 2009 steps were laid down in an internal note to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Development regarding the development of a new country strategy for Gaza and the West Bank.<sup>1</sup> The note also explained that there were no formal requirements in terms of a format for a country strategy for a non-programme country but that the strategy would seek to adhere as much as possible to the guidelines for Country Strategy Process from September 2007. Two days of consultations with the PA were planned for October 2010. The note further described the approval process in detail.<sup>2</sup>

Consultations on the new Strategic Framework took place with the Palestinian Authority in the fall of 2009. Two versions of a draft strategy were prepared (22 October and 10 November 2010). The final version (no date) incorporated comments to the November draft, further specifying the approach regarding the aid to Gaza in the context of the EU's decision regarding no-cooperation with Hamas, whereas Danish aid to Gaza should be considered as an alternative to Hamas's activities and additional information on restrictions regarding materials and humanitarian aid to Gaza. In addition, under the section of state-building, the role of civil society is included.

The Danida Board discussed and approved the Strategic Framework prior to the submission to the Minister and the presentation to the Parliament. The final Strategic Framework for Development Aid to Palestine 2010-2012 was distributed for information to the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee late 2009. There is only a Danish version of the Strategic Framework.

### **Main characteristics of the Strategic Framework 2010-2012**

The Framework stated that the overall strategic goal for the Danish engagement was to support the international community's efforts regarding a negotiated solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on a two-state solution with the establishment of a viable Palestinian State existing in peace with and security with its neighbours, primarily Israel. While a brief reference was made to Denmark's contribution to the EU policy to promote a solution to the conflict, the Framework concentrated on aid, in line with the guidelines for Country Strategies at the time.

The Strategic Framework presented a short analysis of the peace process that had come to a standstill. The analysis dealt with the political split between Fatah on the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza, the situation in Gaza after the 2008-2009 conflict, the Israeli blockade, the expansion of the Israeli settlements and the building of the wall, leading to reduced space for Palestinians. Also the economic situation in Palestine was presented. Coordination of aid was described as quite fragmented, although the PRDP 2008-2010 was expected to serve as a framework for donor coordination and harmonisation.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, MENA department, Note to Min. Re. Status for development of new country strategy for Gaza & WB, September 2009.

<sup>2</sup> The draft country strategy would be approved by the two Danish ministers, followed by the strategy being distributed to the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee in connection with the Committee's planned visit to Egypt, Israel and oPt including Gaza in October 2009. A copy of the strategy would also be presented to the Board of Danida and presented at a meeting with the resource base/group before finalisation of the strategy.

A short section on the experience with Danish aid so far was presented, pointing at difficulties, costs and risks in this vulnerable environment. It was claimed that Danish aid had a comparative advantage, compared to other donors, because of its decentralised administration and the high degree of flexibility. Three areas were highlighted as success stories: 1) business development in and around Jenin; 2) local government development and amalgamation processes (in particular Jenin, but also in Gaza) and; 3) human rights and rule of law.

It was concluded that the non-existing solution to peace, continued Israeli occupation as well as a continued lack of Palestinian reconciliation created huge challenges to the Danish aid. Therefore, it was expected that the need for humanitarian aid will further increase, while flexibility and a quick response capacity were deemed to be important.

The Strategic Framework presented the following three specific objectives for Danish aid to Palestine:

- **State-building** with a strong focus on the development of municipalities and support to human rights institutions and NGO activities. 30% of all funds would be allocated to this objective;
- **Improved livelihoods/living conditions for the Palestinian population** including both development and humanitarian assistance (decreasing dependency on humanitarian aid in Gaza was foreseen through economic growth and socioeconomic empowerment of youth and women, and continuing support to UNRWA). 60% of all funds would be allocated to this objective;
- **Peacebuilding** consisting of direct support to the peace process (such as support to the PLO Negotiations Affairs Department and support to the Temporary International Presence in Hebron) and indirect support (such as confidence building among parties through agricultural cooperation of various countries in the region and support to cultural heritage preservation activities in Palestine). 10% of the funds would be allocated to this objective.

The choice of the three strategic objectives and areas of assistance was not presented in relation to specific criteria, but reference was made to past experiences.

### **Changes to the strategic framework 2010-2012 during implementation**

The framework was regularly referred to by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in response to questions from MPs.

In May 2010, MENA suggested adjustments to the strategic framework to the Minister for Foreign Affairs with regard to the bilateral aid to and the future Danish presence in Gaza.<sup>3</sup> The note recommended a restructuring of the bilateral aid to Gaza including the 'Support to Municipal Development and management in the Middle Gaza (SMDM)'. Denmark funded this programme in Gaza since 1999<sup>4</sup>, but support was put on hold in early November 2009. Due to of a stricter interpretation of the EU's non-cooperation policy towards Hamas it was recommended and decided in early 2010 to suspend the Danish bilateral aid to Gaza.<sup>5</sup> This decision to provide only support to Gaza via the UN and NGOs and to abandon bilateral assistance to Gaza is presented in the context of Denmark's overall contribution to improving the living conditions of the population in Gaza. The

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<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MENA department, Note to Min. Re bilateral Aid to Gaza - restructuring and future Danish presence, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MENA department, Note to Min. Re. Bilateral transition aid to Gaza/WB 2006-09 annex 2, 12 June 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, DRAFT Strategy Framework for DK-Pal Development Cooperation 2010-2012, 10 November 2009.

note also indicated that not only humanitarian aid would be given, but the activities would also have a clear development aim.<sup>6</sup>

### **AF.3 Denmark-Palestine Country Strategy Paper 2014-2015**

#### **Preparation and consultation process**

Planning for a new strategic framework for the period 2013-2016 started in 2012.<sup>7</sup> In July 2012, a strategy mission by MFA staff and the head of the Representative Office of Denmark in Ramallah to the oPt took place. The purpose of the mission was to consult the PA on the political and economic context for the continued cooperation and the future Danish priorities in Palestine. In a note<sup>8</sup> to both Ministers, the outcome of these discussions was summarised and ways forward for the strategy were presented. Finalisation of the new strategy was planned for October 2012.

From the autumn of 2012 onwards, the strategy was further elaborated and various consultations took place during a period of one year.<sup>9</sup> It was decided to postpone previous deadlines. In April 2014, a draft Danish-Palestinian Partnership Paper, 2013-2016 was approved by the Ministers, before presentation to the programme committee in September 2014. However, this Paper was still based on the old guidelines for Country Strategies, focusing on development assistance. In the summer of 2014 new staff in the DRO took up its positions and became engaged in the process. Although there was agreement that the Partnership Paper would not be redrafted completely to follow the new guidelines, it was recognised that the political line related to the overall goals should be strengthened by emphasising the focus on Area C and East Jerusalem, mentioning the voluntary labelling of settler products and clearer statements on democratic principles and human rights to Palestinian decision-makers. The DRO also made a plea for further streamlining of the programme (less support areas than initially proposed), toning down the emphasis on Gaza and some other shifts in the portfolio. Only one NGO, DanChurchAid, presented a formal reaction to the new draft policy framework and stressed the importance of an increased focus on Israeli authorities and their obligation to protect populations in the occupied territories. Furthermore, DanChurchAid stressed the necessity of offering alternative scenarios to the two-state solution, such as a prolongation of the status quo or a one-state solution.

In September 2013, the Programme Committee, based on the various inputs, decided that the policy note should only cover two years, given the uncertainty of the political context and the fact that the new guidelines for country policy notes would not apply. The programme committee also suggested revisions to the text regarding the focus on a more limited number of sectors. In line with the DRO observations, it was recommended to exclude the rule of law component and to limit the strategic objectives to two, namely state-building and equal economic opportunities. Furthermore, the two strategic objectives could be more clearly presented in the context of the overarching goal.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, MENA department, Note to Min. Re bilateral Aid to Gaza - restructuring and future Danish presence, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, MENA department and Danish Representative Office (DRO), Background note to Min of Dev. Re. Danish-Palestinian Partnership 2014-2015, 20 January 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, MENA staff department, Note to Min. Re strategy mission and way forward, 26 July 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, MENA department, Exchange re. DK-Pal strategy 2013- postponement of finalization, October 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Programme Committee, Summary Conclusions of the Meeting on 8 November on the Danish-Palestinian Partnership 2014-2016.

In December 2013, the ‘Danish-Palestinian Partnership, 2014-2015’ was presented to the Council for Development. Some members of the Council commented on the relevance of including additional future scenarios related to the outcome of the current peace negotiations, the Danish engagement and the views that the two-state solution would not be a realistic outcome.<sup>11</sup>

The strategy was then presented for discussion in the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee in January 2014.<sup>12</sup> In February 2014, the strategy was submitted for final approval to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation as the last part of the approval process.<sup>13</sup> After this approval the new strategy was formally published as the “Denmark-Palestine Country Strategy Paper 2014-2015”.

In addition to the Partnership document, a Transition Programme document was drafted. The Transition Programme was a more detailed document on the development (and humanitarian) assistance to Palestine. The latest version of the Transition Programme team dates from 29 May 2014 and includes the comments of an Appraisal Mission that took place from 27 April to 7 May 2014. While there are many similarities between the two documents, the Transition Programme refers explicitly to specific new projects (or extensions of previous projects) for which a total budget of DKK 274 million is available.

### **Main characteristics of the new strategy 2014-2015**

The Country Strategy presents the overall political goal of the Danish engagement: “to support the realisation of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict encompassing the State of Israel, and an independent, democratic, sovereign and contiguous of Palestine, living side by side in peace and security”. This overall objective would include “the recognition of Palestine as a state when appropriate”.<sup>14</sup>

The Transition Programme’s strategic objective is “to support the realisation of an independent Palestinian State within the framework of a two-state solution with a robust economy, sustainable institutions and good governance at national and municipal level”. This objective is slightly different from the Country Strategy objective, presented above, which is referring directly to the conflict, while the Transition Programme focuses more on building the Palestinian state. The Country Strategy refers more explicitly to the peacebuilding process and states that “It is essential that the activities supported by Denmark will provide benefits for Palestinians irrespective of the outcome of the current peace talks”.<sup>15</sup>

Both documents present background analysis, including the peace process, and the so-called “dominant political framework conditions” including the effects of the occupation, especially continued settlement construction and growing territorial integration of the West Bank, in particular East Jerusalem and Area C, into Israel. Furthermore, the documents point at limiting internal Palestinian factors, notably the split between the PA on the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza.

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<sup>11</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, MENA department and Danish Representative Office (DRO), Note to FA and Dev Min. Re. Final approval (by Ministers) of Danish-Palestinian Partnership 2014-2015 + minutes from Council on Dev Policy, 24 February 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>14</sup> Denmark-Palestine Country Strategy Paper 2014-2015, p.3.

<sup>15</sup> Ibidem.

Two specific strategic objectives are presented in the Partnership document and are elaborated in some more detail in the Transition Programme:

1. **Palestinian State-building and citizens' rights** as a means to support good governance, democracy and human rights;
2. **Equal economic opportunities** through stimulation of economic development, growth and livelihood.

Thus, the peacebuilding objective does not appear anymore as specific objective in the Country Strategy and the Transition Programme. Nevertheless some activities carried out under the peacebuilding will be continued under the two new objectives, as will be shown below.

The Strategy explicitly mentions that Denmark wants to continue combining development assistance and humanitarian assistance, while providing support to the reform agenda of the PA as reflected in the National Developments Plans on the one hand and to Palestinian civil society on the other hand. Nevertheless, the Strategy does not articulate in detail the linkages between the two specific objectives, the criteria for the choice of these objectives and the linkages to the overarching goal.

Both documents include sections on results achieved and risk assessments. The Partnership document states that “Denmark strongly supports the efforts spearheaded by the US to ensure a negotiated solution to the conflict”. In addition, the political engagement of Denmark is presented as part of the EU context, indicating that “the EU and Denmark have a fundamental interest in the region, given the continued conflict that is a major source of lost economic opportunities and a regional security threat”.

#### **AF.4 Preparation of the new Country Strategy Paper 2016-2018**

As this evaluation has a learning purpose, a brief outline is provided of the steps taken so far in the new country strategy formulation process to facilitate feeding evaluation lessons into this process. The new Guidelines for the Development of Priority Country Policy Papers and for Country Programmes dating from January 2013 are applied.<sup>16</sup>

The appraisal mission of the Transition Programme in May 2014 recommended a six-year planning framework with grant allocations every three years (2016-2018 and 2019-2021) with a continued focus on state-building and economic development. The engagements in the context of these two objectives are considered to be “relevant and robust enough to be implemented with or without a two state solution and with or without a unified Palestinian government”.<sup>17</sup>

A draft Synopsis of the Policy Paper for Danish-Palestinian Partnership 2016-2018 was made public for consultation on 7 October 2014. The attached Process Action Plan aims for finalisation in April-May 2015. The synopsis stresses that the Danish support must focus on a limited number of key objectives and be carried out in close cooperation with other partners, while it should build on existing development cooperation. In addition, the cooperation with the EU is a cornerstone of the Danish engagement and a flexible approach is necessary.

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<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Guidelines for Country Programmes, July 2013. <http://amg.um.dk/en/~media/amg/Documents/Technical%20Guidelines/Guidelines%20for%20programmes%20and%20projects/Country%20Programmes/The%20Danida%20Guidelines%20for%20Country%20Programmes.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Danish-Palestinian Partnership Programme 2014-2015, Appraisal Report, June 10, 2014.

## AF.5 Overview of areas of support according to the strategic frameworks

In the following table, the classification of the various areas of assistance in the strategic frameworks is presented.

**Table AF.1 Areas of support related to the specific objectives mentioned in the strategic frameworks**

Areas of support	Strategic framework 2010-2012	Country Strategy Paper 2014-2015	Synopsis 2016-2018
<b>State-building</b>			
Local government	Decentralisation and local democracy	Municipal development and local governance	Municipal Development Programme
Rule of Law	Good governance/Rule of Law		--
			Human Rights
Ombudsman and civil society	Development of civil society focussing on HR, democracy and anti-corruption. Palestinian Ombudsman (ICHR)	HR civil society organisations  Palestinian Ombudsman (ICHR)	HR civil society organisations  Palestinian Ombudsman (ICHR)
Direct financial support to the PA		PEGASE	Consolidation of PA's public finances via PEGASE
Area C		Area C land reclamation support	Area C
<b>Peacebuilding</b>			
International monitoring missions	TIPH in Hebron		TIPH in Hebron (?)
PLO Negotiations Affairs Department	PLO Negotiations Affairs Department		PLO Negotiations Affairs Department
East-Jerusalem Fund	East-Jerusalem Fund, including support to cultural and social activities		Cultural support
Peace promotion related to water	Peace promotion and conflict prevention related to water	--	--
<b>Improved livelihood/living conditions for the Palestinian population /Economic development</b>			
Economic recovery in Gaza	Income-generating projects in Gaza	Economic recovery in Gaza	Small and medium sized enterprises in Gaza
Private sector development	Private sector development with a focus on Jenin		Agro-business value chain

Areas of support	Strategic framework 2010-2012	Country Strategy Paper 2014-2015	Synopsis 2016-2018
UNRWA	UNRWA	UNRWA	UNRWA
<b>Humanitarian Aid through NGOs</b>			
Humanitarian assistance			
Danish NGOs providing humanitarian aid to Palestine	Danish NGOs providing humanitarian aid to Palestine	Danish NGOs providing humanitarian aid to Palestine	Danish NGOs providing humanitarian aid to Palestine

Support provided to specific objectives:

State-building support.

Peacebuilding support.

Economic development support.

Humanitarian assistance.

Human rights.

This overview provides insight in the choices made so far. One new area of support was added during the implementation of the 2010-2012 Framework, namely the Danish contribution to PEGASE, which figures in the 2014-15 Strategy. Some other areas of activities remained rather small or insignificant and were not mentioned anymore in the new strategy such as the peace promotion related to water and private sector development (see also portfolio analysis in Annex G). Good governance/rule of law was a clear area of support that was abandoned in the strategy from 2014 onwards. Peacebuilding has been an important pillar of the Danish engagement so far, but is not recognised formally as a separate specific objective anymore from 2014 onwards, although the main areas of support are being continued under the state-building objective. Under the economic development objective for quite some time humanitarian support was combined with economic recovery support to Gaza via an Oxfam project. Earlier private sector development initiatives remained rather small.

The overview shows that there is quite some continuity in the areas of support mentioned in the strategic frameworks, despite change in the formulation of the objectives. Although intentions to reduce the areas of support have been expressed, the overview shows that the areas of support underwent only marginal changes.

## AF.6 Comprehensiveness of country strategies so far

The Strategic Framework 2010-2012 and also the Country Strategy Paper 2014-15 were still based on old Danida guidelines for strategies for programme countries receiving development aid even if Palestine was not formally considered as a programme country. In January 2013, a comprehensive package of new guidelines was issued for 1) Country Policy Papers, which are meant to be comprehensive policy papers.<sup>18</sup> The policy papers are Denmark's documents and they are not negotiated with the country in question, although the content is subject to dialogue and hearing of relevant stakeholders and partners in the priority country; and 2) Country Programmes that set out the content of the development programmes on the ground that are carried out in a given priority country. The guidelines are made for all Denmark's priority countries, which are quite diverse.

<sup>18</sup> They aim to provide a "single integrated presentation of Denmark's policy towards a given priority country which encompasses Denmark's entire engagement and strategic direction in a country, i.e. foreign and security policy, development cooperation climate policy and commercial relations." Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and Danida, Guidelines for the development of Policy Papers for Denmark's relations with Priority Countries, January 2013.



Consequently, the composition of the policies with the countries must be similarly diverse according to the guidelines that indicate that for fragile countries foreign and security policy will carry greater weight in the Policy Paper. It is also possible that for fragile states the Strategy and Programme typically run for three years while the cycle is five years for a developing country. These are the only specifications for fragile states in the new guidelines.

For Palestine, where development assistance is politically motivated it was clear that the previous guidelines for country strategies were not very appropriate for the specific situation. As the new guidelines were issued in January 2013, when the preparation of the new Country Strategy 2014-2015 was already well advanced, the old guidelines were still applied. This led to some shortcomings.. Especially the integration of political and development objectives did not get much attention. Commercial relations were not dealt with. In principle, the new guidelines should allow to overcome these shortcomings.

The Strategic Framework 2010-2012 mentioned the need for flexibility in planning and in the 2014-2015 Country Strategy the need for a flexible approach is stressed again. This is in line with the principles for engagement in fragile states. However, the strategic papers do not elaborate in detail how the flexible approach would be shaped in practice. While in the period prior to 2009 many small bilateral projects were started in reaction to the Cartoon Crisis, during the evaluation period 2009-2014 there were less projects and activities. Contrary to the situation in 2009 and before when many projects were started to respond to the Cartoon Crisis; in later years there are few examples of flexible response at the side of the MFA/MENA and DRO. An exception is the support to PEGASE that was started in 2012 in relation to a Danish budget increase for Palestine, and which was included in the 2014-2015 strategy. Denmark also paid attention to providing flexibility to its implementing partners, for example, through core funding agreements for the Independent Commission for Human Rights and to NGOs through the Human Rights/Good Governance NGO Secretariat. The Secretariat also managed a small grant facility to allow for funding of well-justified, urgent activities (maximum USD 50,000). Nevertheless, these are forms of flexibility for implementing partners, but not at the level of the DRO or in Copenhagen. MENA has the possibility to fund some small-scale activities such as workshops, and this was done apparently to a limited extent. After 2009, the analysis of the portfolio and additional interviews do not show conclusive evidence of a flexible approach applied by Denmark in Palestine.

## **AF.7 Specific areas of support**

### **State-building**

For most of the evaluation period, the Danish state-building support was focused on local government with some additional attention to civil society support. The Strategic Framework 2010-2012 considered the state-building support as a natural complement to the peacebuilding support. State-building was said to focus on the build-up of Palestinian democratic and administrative institutions, and civil society, as well as Courts and Police that should live up to minimum international standards. At the same time it was considered crucial that the PA could be able to deliver services to people and thus would be a real alternative to religious-based groups. The direct funding to the PA remained limited until 2012 and only included some rule of law support, but increased with the Danish contribution to PEGASE. The linkages to the political solution are in most cases, at best, only indirect.

### **Support to local government**

Denmark has already provided support to local government for quite a long period. In various interviews with key Danish stakeholders it was stated that the support to local government was based on the assumption that irrespective of the outcomes of the peace process local government would remain, and therefore deserved to be supported. In practice, during the Second Intifada that started in 2000, local governments were the only functioning authority in Palestine. Another reason that was mentioned for this support was the desire to help provide services to the citizens and promote local democracy. It is interesting that the choice for one of the main areas of Danish support for more than a decade was not directly linked to the overall objective, but took pragmatically different scenarios into account.

### **Civil society support**

Support to civil society was considered an essential component of democratic statehood in the Strategic Framework 2010-2012. Therefore, the cooperation with so-called democratic institutions such as the Palestinian Ombudsman/ ICHR was considered as a crucial element next to the support to the development of civil society focusing on independent NGOs that address human rights issues, democracy and anti-corruption. During the evaluation period Denmark continued focusing on human rights NGOs with increasing emphasis on this issue compared to other good governance issues. Denmark wanted to give a specific purpose to its support to civil society in a context where NGOs tended to focus on a wide range of topics.

### **Support to the rule of law**

Rule of law institutions such as courts and police living up to minimum international standards were considered as a prerequisite of effective state-building in the Strategic Framework 2010-2012. Cooperation with university law departments was considered important to broker knowledge and influence the training of judiciary personnel. In practice, however, only the EUPOL COPPS programme focusing on the police was supported.

### **Peacebuilding**

Support to peacebuilding was framed as a contribution to American, EU and other internationally accepted peace initiatives and roadmaps supporting the two-state solution. The diversity of initiatives that were to be supported under peacebuilding can be explained by the fact that they addressed a range of different aspects related to maintaining the trust of the population in a possible positive outcome of negotiations and creating the conditions for balanced negotiations results. One of these aspects was identified in the development of adequate negotiation capacity and skills on the Palestinian side. Another one was avoiding that further occupation of the territory would compromise the two-state solution, and specifically keeping a Palestinian presence in East Jerusalem. A third one was reduction of conflict over water. At the same time, Denmark wanted to remain involved in international conflict prevention and/or monitoring missions such as TIPH.

However, the diversity of initiatives included under peacebuilding is also explained by the inclusion of pre-existing activities developed in the context – or in connection with – broader Danish initiatives and strategies. One of these was the Arab-Danish partnership, aimed at fostering dialogue, partnership and mutual understanding between Denmark and MENA countries.<sup>19</sup> The Centre for

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<sup>19</sup> Retrieved on October 16, 2014 from: <http://denmark.dk/en/society/government-and-politics/development-cooperation/danish-arab-partnership/>.

Culture and Development, whose programme to develop cultural and social grassroots initiatives in Palestine was also included under the peacebuilding objective, is a key actor of the Danish-Arab partnership. The Danish House in Palestine is another example of an initiative inspired by the tradition of Danish-global south civil society cooperation enhanced by the Policy for Danish support to Civil Society.<sup>20</sup> The Danish House was supported under the peacebuilding objective as well.

The area of peacebuilding consisted of many different activities. The focus on peacebuilding was not for all activities equally clear. However, most activities had in common that they focused on various forms of dialogue at different levels and between different partners. This dialogue was regularly linked, but not in all cases, to the conflict and/or peace initiatives.

### **Economic development**

The Strategic Framework 2010-2012 mentioned a double aim for the economic development activities: Fighting poverty via private sector development and preventing radicalisation.<sup>21</sup> The focus was on income generating projects for the poorest and most fragile group and on development of the private sector e.g. via local efforts such as a trade fair in Jenin. The underlying assumption was that through economic development Palestinians would be less vulnerable to radicalisation and this would contribute to the peace process in an indirect way.

### **Humanitarian aid and CSO support**

For the two remaining areas, namely the humanitarian support and the support via CSOs with framework agreements, other decision-making procedures applied, which explain the lack of direct linkages between the overall objective and these areas of support. The funding of CSOs via framework contracts was not linked to any country strategy at all, but to criteria related to the overall planning and performance of CSOs.

Humanitarian aid was centrally managed to a large extent from Copenhagen, but was, in principle, provided based on an assessment of needs of Palestinians. UNRWA provided assistance and protection for some 5 million Palestinian refugees. This is the majority of Palestinians. The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) estimated the population of the West Bank at 2.7 million and of the Gaza Strip at 1.7 million, a total of 4.4 million in mid-year 2013.<sup>22</sup> NGOs also provided humanitarian assistance to these Palestinians in need, notably in the Gaza strip. Palestinian refugees are defined as “persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict.”<sup>23</sup> One third of the registered refugees lives in refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, while two thirds live in and around the cities and towns of the host countries, and in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. UNRWA responds to the needs of the refugees and provides all kinds of basic services including education and health care. The situation of the Palestinian refugees is closely linked to the conflict. Therefore, humanitarian aid has become structural and now exists since 65 years. As the peace process has come to a standstill, the situation of humanitarian assistance remains unchanged. Nevertheless, there is increasing debate among humanitarians on the continuation of humanitarian

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<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark. (2014). Retrieved on September 15, 2014 from: <http://um.dk/en/danida-en/partners/civil-society-organisations/>.

<sup>21</sup> In line with the Reconstructed Theory of Change, humanitarian assistance is dealt with separately.

<sup>22</sup> Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, The Statistical Yearbook of Palestine, 2013.

<sup>23</sup> UNRWA. (2014). Retrieved on October 3, 2014 from <http://www.unrwa.org/palestine-refugees>.

assistance without insufficient political action by the same countries providing that assistance. Addressing the constraints of the occupation through political dialogue with Israel and the PA is being asked for.<sup>24</sup> There are increasing complaints regarding the violation of international humanitarian law and the subsidisation of the Israeli occupation through humanitarian assistance. Another issue raised is the reconstruction of demolished Palestinian property, often funded by aid, in Gaza or Area C and whether international donors should continue funding these reconstructions. In Denmark, these issues have also been raised and stakeholders including the MFA and DRO are very much aware of them. In the recent strategic discussions, and as reflected in the 2014-2015 Country Strategy, the importance of addressing Area C issues was emphasised.

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<sup>24</sup> Ross Mountain, Humanitarian aid for Palestinians shouldn't be necessary, 22 September 2011. Mountain, R. Humanitarian aid for Palestinians shouldn't be necessary, 22 September 2011.