

Ex-post evaluation: Regional programme Palestinian Refugee Camps Middle East REPAC I and II, Palestinian Territories

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|---|--|------------------------------|------|
| Title | REPAC I and II | | |
| Sector and CRS code | Material relief assistance and services (CRS code 72010) | | |
| Project number | BMZ no. 2009 65 061; 2012 66 840 | | |
| Commissioned by | Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) | | |
| Recipient/Project executing | United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) | | |
| Project volume/ Financing instrument | EUR 7.5 million (REPAC I); EUR 6.67 million (REPAC II); BMZ budget funds | | |
| Project duration | May 2011 – October 2015 (Phase I) / April 2013 – February 2017 (Phase II) | | |
| Year of report | 2022 | Year of random sample | 2022 |

Objectives and project outline

The objective of the FC projects at outcome level was to improve access to and appropriate use of social and economic infrastructure for Palestinian refugees in and around selected Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan. The developmental objective at impact level was to improve the living conditions of Palestinian refugees affected by the ongoing crisis and to contribute to the preservation of peace and stability in and around selected Palestinian refugee camps in the programme areas.

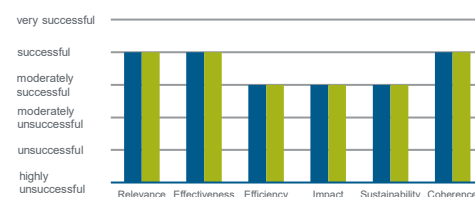
In an open programme approach, REPAC I and II included rehabilitation and new construction measures in the areas of housing, water supply and sanitation as well as basic education. The individual programme measures were identified through the participatory involvement of the beneficiaries within the framework of so-called “working groups” (WG), which developed and implemented “Camp Improvement Plans” (CIP) with support from UNRWA.

Key findings

Housing was a particularly high priority of the target group in all refugee camps. In addition to the social and economic infrastructure measures, a total of 554 accommodations were rehabilitated or built from scratch. As a result, it was possible to contribute to improving the living conditions of the target group, which is why the projects were rated as successful.

- Both projects addressed the core problem of the target group’s precarious living conditions in the intervention context and were suitable for counteracting this.
- The projects were consistent with the objectives of German DC and had a complementary effect on each other. By pooling the bilateral TC and FC measures, synergy effects could be used and meaningful complementarity of the DC instruments assured.
- The target values of all outcome indicators were achieved. REPAC I and II were able to make an important contribution to improving access to social and economic infrastructure.
- The self-help component (execution of the work by the beneficiaries themselves) had a positive impact on production efficiency. The large delays in the course of the project would have been partly foreseeable, but are not unusual for the intervention context.
- Although a stabilising or conflict-mitigating effect through the participatory CIP approach is still plausible, existing lines of conflict in the camps must be better taken into account in order to avoid unintended negative effects in future.
- Despite deteriorating general conditions in the intervention context, all financed measures continue to exist at the time of the evaluation and are used by the target group. The self-help component had a positive impact on the sustainability of the projects.

Overall rating:
successful



Conclusions

- The conception as open programmes in combination with the participatory CIP approach enabled a needs-based selection of measures and ensured the necessary legitimacy of the measures for the target group.
- The self-help component not only achieved better results in terms of construction quality, but also a higher level of ownership.
- Dependencies on the construction planning of complementary measures (e.g. infrastructure), outside the sphere of influence of the project executing agency, should be avoided.
- The underlying general conditions in Lebanon and Jordan continue to deteriorate, and Palestinian refugees will continue to rely on international aid in these countries in the future.

Rating according to DAC criteria

Overall rating: 2

Ratings:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Relevance | 2 |
| Coherence | 2 |
| Effectiveness | 2 |
| Efficiency | 3 |
| Impact | 3 |
| Sustainability | 3 |

Due to the same intervention context, the almost congruent implementation periods and the continuous joint reporting of REPAC Phases I and II, it is not possible to derive a sufficient degree of selectivity of the impacts; therefore a joint consideration and evaluation of both phases is carried out in this evaluation. The ratings are therefore identical and, overall, represent a good result that fully meets expectations. In view of the precarious living conditions of the Palestinian population within the refugee camps, the evaluation focused particularly on the OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness and impact.

General conditions and classification of the project

The majority of the Palestinian population – over 5.7 million – are refugees.¹ Around one third of them live in 58 refugee camps managed by UNRWA² in the Palestinian Territories (PT), i.e. in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Around 200,000 refugees also live in unofficial camps, while the remaining two thirds live in the cities of the host countries or in the immediate vicinity of the refugee camps.³ The living conditions in almost all refugee camps are characterised by cramped housing conditions due to high population density, insecurity due to the presence of illegal and armed groups, unemployment, poverty and poor sanitation and hygiene conditions.⁴

The Arab host countries formally have sovereignty over the refugee camps, as the land on which they were erected is usually state-owned or privately owned. As a result, refugees in the camps only have the rights of use for the housing built on the land. However, the available area has not increased since the camps were created and therefore cannot cope with demographic developments, which leads to an overpopulation of many camps. Moreover, the accommodation is often built without permission, without taking into account structural standards, or much too close together. Many of the private homes, healthcare facilities or schools are dilapidated; some are at risk of collapse. In addition, many refugee camps and their surroundings are assumed to have an increased potential for conflict due to poor living conditions, hygiene-related illnesses and insufficient prospects for the future of the residents.⁵

As of 2021, there were 479,537 Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon.⁶ Around 45% of them live in the country's 12 refugee camps. Palestinian refugees in Lebanon lack several basic rights; for example they are not permitted to work in various professions or own property in the form of real estate. Since they formally lack the citizenship of another state, Palestinian refugees cannot enjoy the same rights as other foreigners living and working in Lebanon.⁷ A total of 2,307,011 (as of 2021) Palestinian refugees live in

¹ According to the UNRWA definition, "Palestinian refugees" are persons and their descendants who, between 1 June 1946 and 15 May 1948 were ordinarily resident in Palestine and lost both their homeland and their livelihood as a result of the 1948 conflict.

² United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

³ KfW (2009): Programme proposal (PP) for the REPAC FC programme

⁴ Research services of the German Bundestag (2006): The Palestinian refugee camps in the Middle East.

⁵ KfW (2009): PP for the REPAC FC programme.

⁶ UNRWA (2021): UNRWA in Figures 2020 – 2021. Online: <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/about-unrwa/unrwa-figures-2020-2021>.

⁷ UNRWA (2022): Where we work – Lebanon. Online: <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon>.

Jordan, more than in any other host country.⁸ Around 18% live in the ten recognised refugee camps throughout the country and most, but not all, have full Jordanian citizenship.⁹ However, even in Jordan, the living conditions of Palestinian refugees in the refugee camps, especially in isolated and rural camps, are far worse than those of the population of the host country.¹⁰

As part of its efforts to promote peaceful development in the region, the German Federal Government commissioned KfW in 2011 to develop and implement a regional programme to improve living conditions in Palestinian refugee camps and neighbouring areas in the Middle East.¹¹ The “Regional Programme for the Improvement of Living Conditions of Palestinian Refugee Camps” (REPAC¹²) currently comprises twelve phases, some of which are still being implemented¹³, and is being implemented by the project executing agency UNRWA through exclusive grant financing from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and thus as a “single donor” project via Financial Cooperation (FC). In addition, all REPAC phases are integrated into the DC programme “Supporting Palestinian Refugees”. The project executing agency UNRWA was founded in 1949 on the basis of UN Resolution 302 with the mandate to ensure the provision of basic services for Palestinian refugees in the Middle East region. UNRWA’s mandate is limited in time and has been regularly renewed by the UN General Assembly since its establishment, currently until 30 June 2023.

Specifically, the REPAC projects include the development and expansion as well as the rehabilitation of social and economic infrastructure in selected Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan and Gaza in order to improve living conditions there and at the same time support self-determined development processes of the Palestinian refugee communities. In terms of implementation, the phases of the regional programme are divided into measures that are identified on the basis of participatory processes by camp residents or committees (e.g. REPAC Phases I, II & IV) and measures to meet immediate basic needs that are implemented on the basis of a top-down approach without prior participatory processes (e.g. REPAC Phases V & VI).¹⁴ The former category includes Phases I and II¹⁵, which are the subject of this evaluation and were implemented in a refugee camp in Lebanon (Rashidieh) and in two refugee camps in Jordan (Talbieh and Husn) from May 2011 to October 2015 (Phase I) and April 2013 to February 2017 (Phase II).¹⁶

Relevance

The refugee camps in Lebanon in particular are and have been the scene of long and intense disputes, which have in some cases led to significant destruction, traumatising experiences and a tense relationship in some regions both between refugees in the camps and between them and the population in the host countries, especially in the immediate vicinity of the camps. Conflicts arise mainly due to both rival party and religious affiliations. In addition, the refugee camps in Lebanon largely function as autonomous units, and the internal “police work” is left to the political leadership of the camp. Conflicts are usually settled at local level and follow customary rules and regulations rather than those enshrined in Lebanese criminal law. For this reason, fighting for the political control of the camps was not uncommon.¹⁷ The Palestinian refugees, who live in overcrowded camps in Lebanon and are hindered by a discriminatory policy of inclusive social participation, have also always been among the poorest people in the country.¹⁸ According to a UNRWA study, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are four times more likely to live in extreme poverty than

⁸ UNRWA (2021): UNRWA in Figures 2020 – 2021. Online: <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/about-unrwa/unrwa-figures-2020-2021>.

⁹ UNRWA (2022): Where we work – Jordan. Online: <https://www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan>.

¹⁰ KfW (2009): PP for the REPAC FC programme.

¹¹ UNRWA (2011): 1st Progress Report 07 Dec. 2011 – REPAC.

¹² REPAC – “Regional Programme for the Improvement of Living Conditions of Palestinian Refugee Camps”

¹³ KfW (2021): REPAC Mid-term Evaluation 2020/21.

¹⁴ UNRWA (2011): 1st Progress Report 07 Dec. 2011 – REPAC.

¹⁵ BMZ no. 2009 65 061 (Phase I); 2012 66 840 (Phase II). Year of random sample: 2022 (Phase I); Phase II was bundled together.

¹⁶ The formal project completion took place on 31 January 2020 with the project completion report (PCR).

¹⁷ KfW (2009): PP for the REPAC FC programme.

¹⁸ UNRWA (2022): Hitting Rock Bottom – Palestine Refugees in Lebanon Risk their Lives in Search of Dignity. Online: <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/press-releases/hitting-rock-bottom-palestine-refugees-lebanon-risk-their-lives-search>.

the Lebanese population.¹⁹ Currently (2022), a total of 93 % of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon live below the poverty line.²⁰ The recent economic crisis in Lebanon triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and poor governance are once again exacerbating the current socio-economic situation of many refugees.

The socio-economic situation of Palestinian refugees is also poor in Jordan. Although most Palestinian refugees in Jordan do not live in camps, the situation of those living in the camps has always been precarious due to the very low incomes and high poverty rate. The poverty rate in the Palestinian refugee camps is estimated at almost 31 % (2021).²¹ The high number of job losses in various sectors and the income losses of poorer households due to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic will most likely lead to a general increase in the poverty rate in 2022. In addition, Jordan faces ever-increasing social and economic challenges due to the high number of refugees (around 2.3 million out of a total population of 10.3 million²²) hosted in the country and affected by long-term displacement.²³

The target group for all REPAC programmes included residents in and around Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the PT. However, in the specific case of Phases I and II, the target group was geographically limited to the population of the three chosen refugee camps in Lebanon (Rashidieh), and Jordan (Talbieh and Husn). The refugee camps were selected on the basis of previously agreed socio-economic and poverty-related criteria.²⁴ Within the scope of the REPAC projects, refugee camps were also only eligible for investments if a participatory Camp Improvement Plan (CIP) with UNRWA had already been created or implemented, financing for the implementation of a CIP had been secured or a similar participatory planning processes had already taken place. In exceptional cases, camps could be selected for a new accelerated CIP concept (“fast track”). This approach ensured a comprehensive and development-focused selection of investments and can also be assessed as appropriate from today’s perspective.²⁵ At the time of the project appraisal, the refugee camps El Buss and Dbayeh in Lebanon and Jerash in Jordan were initially planned. After reconsidering the criteria (urgent need for action, population size, poverty, unemployment and condition of the social infrastructure), Rashidieh in Lebanon (as a “fast track” project) and Talbieh and Husn in Jordan were ultimately prioritised.²⁶ This criteria-based selection appears appropriate from both the perspective at the time and from today’s perspective.

The objective of the FC measures defined at outcome level at the time of the project appraisal was “improved access to and appropriate possibilities of use of demand-based social and economic infrastructure for the population in and around Palestinian refugee camps”. Since this formulation of objectives can generally be regarded as appropriate from today’s perspective, it was only refined geographically to the selected refugee camps. The objective at outcome level underlying this EPE was therefore: “The objective of the projects at outcome level was to improve access to and appropriate use of social and economic infrastructure for Palestinian refugees in and around selected Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan”.

The target formulation set at impact level at the time of the project appraisal, “Development policy objective is the rapid and visible improvement of the living conditions of the population affected by the ongoing crisis in and around Palestinian refugee camps in the Middle East. This is intended to make a contribution to peacekeeping and stability in the camps and the region as a whole,” appeared too ambitious and was refined to the specific intervention areas of REPAC I and II and the contribution to peacekeeping was adapted to the realistically achievable geographical area. Ultimately, the attributes of the “quick and visible” improvement were removed, as “visible” would be more likely to be located at outcome level and a quick improvement is rated as inappropriate in view of the relatively time-consuming participatory approach of REPAC I and II. The development objective of the projects (impact level) underlying this EPE is

¹⁹ Chaaban et al. (2011): Socio-Economic Survey of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon. Report published by the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

²⁰ UNRWA (2022): Socio-economic Situation of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon Crisis Monitoring Report – High Frequency Survey Results – September 2022.

²¹ UNICEF (2021): Socio-Economic Assessment and Practices in Jerash Camp – May 2021.

²² World Bank (2022): Jordan – Population, total. Online: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=JO>.

²³ UNRWA (2022): Syria, Lebanon and Jordan 2022 Emergency Appeal Progress Report.

²⁴ KfW (2020): PCR.

²⁵ UNRWA (2011): 1st Progress Report 07 Dec. 2011 – REPAC.

²⁶ KfW (2020): PCR.

therefore: “Improving the living conditions of Palestinian refugees affected by the ongoing crisis and contributing to the preservation of peace and stability in and around selected Palestinian refugee camps in the programme areas.”

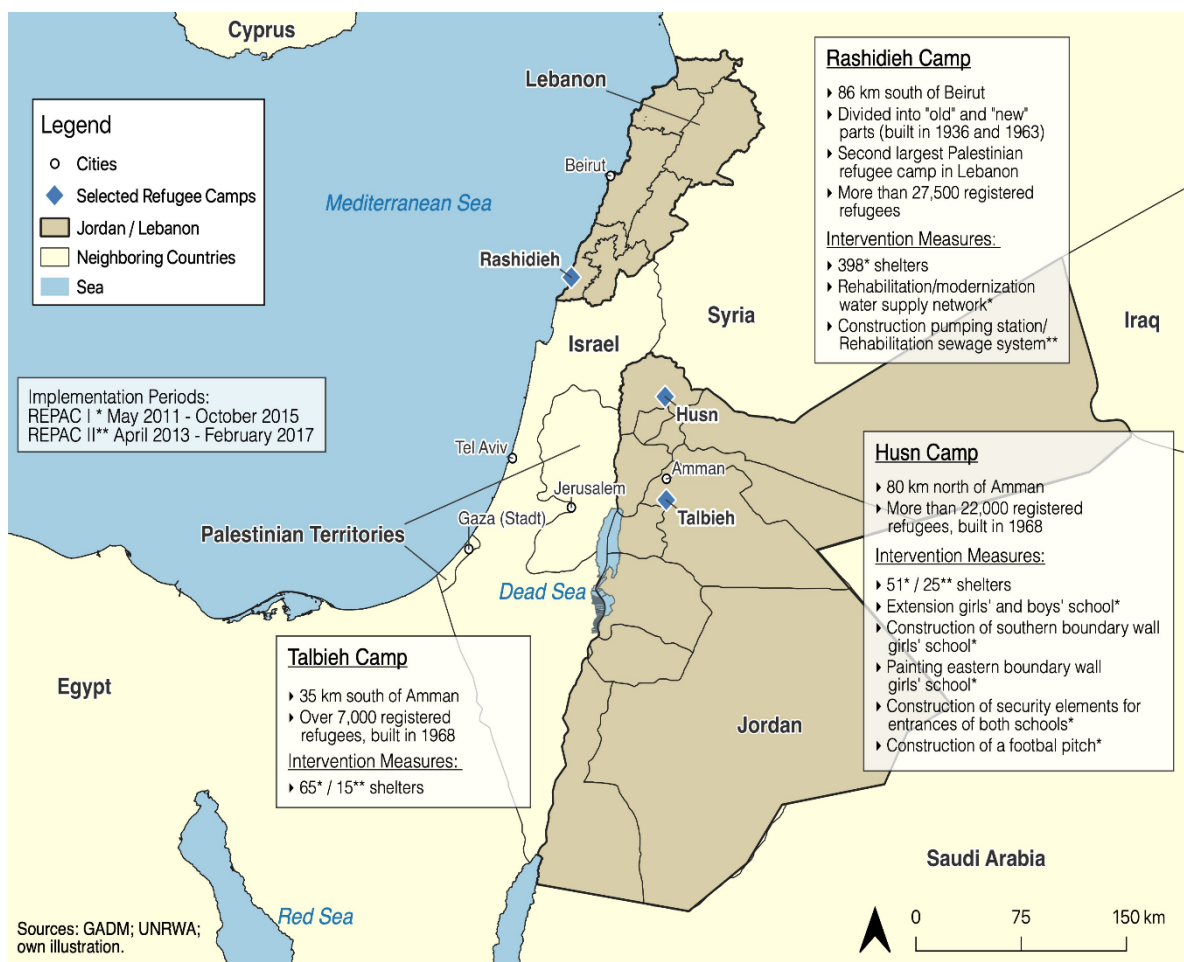


Figure 1: Overview map of the programme area with financed individual measures from both phases.

The impact chain underlying the projects was based on the assumption that the implementation of the planned measures in the area of social and economic infrastructure leads to an improvement in the target group's living conditions. Depending on the infrastructure measures selected in each case, this should be expressed, among other things, in improved living, hygienic and/or health conditions, which can contribute to a reduction in corresponding diseases. This appears plausible from both the perspective at the time and today. Figure 1, in addition to an overview of the entire programme area, lists the individual measures under REPAC I and II.

Due to their originally temporary nature, none of the refugee camps are designed for long-term use and, in addition to the severe decline in accommodation and public infrastructure, they also suffer from overcrowding.²⁷ Access to adequate housing in particular is closely linked to the subjective perception of quality of life, as this is linked to securing livelihoods, health, education, safety and social and family stability.²⁸ The provision of education infrastructure can contribute to an improved learning environment and thus to promoting social development opportunities. The target group was to help shape the selection of measures through the participatory approach. Among other things, this was intended to strengthen civil society structures and self-government capacities in the refugee camps and avoid conflicts in connection with the implementation of the projects. As a result, and also due to an improvement in living conditions

²⁷ UNRWA (2012): Project Progress Report No. 3.

²⁸ Barakat, S. (2003): Housing reconstruction after conflict and disaster. Humanitarian Policy Group, Network Papers, 43, 1–40.

and a reduced potential for frustration and aggression, a potentially stabilising impact of the projects also appears plausible. From today's perspective, it can also be stated that the core problem of precarious living conditions in the Palestinian refugee camps was correctly identified and the project approach was conceptually suitable for addressing this problem and improving living conditions for the target group.

The operationalisation of the projects as open programmes²⁹ was also intended to ensure that rapidly changing general conditions and needs in the fragile context could be addressed and given the necessary flexibility, which is also assessed as appropriate from today's perspective. In combination with a participatory approach, the aim was also to ensure that the actual needs of the target group could be adequately taken into account. In addition, the approach was suitable for a de-escalating effect due to the high level of transparency in the selection of measures. The projects also included a self-help component in which the refugees could participate in the completion of their accommodation or carry it out themselves or have it carried out, e.g. tiling, painting or repair work, provided that this was not crucial for the safety of the accommodation.

The objectives and measures of the projects were also in line with Jordan's "Vision 2025" development plan, which aims to improve infrastructure and promote education and health³⁰, among other things, and contributed to the Jordanian government's efforts to support UNRWA in maintaining its services for Palestinian refugees. In Lebanon, where the government's own efforts are facing major challenges, international donors are helping the country, for example, with the Lebanon Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)³¹ or the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) 2022³², which are also in line with the objectives of the two REPAC projects. As a UN organisation, UNRWA is also bound by international norms and standards. The projects were also able to make contributions to SDGs 1 "No poverty", 4 "Quality education" and 6 "Clean water and sanitation". As a result, they also corresponded to the United Nations' development goals.

From the perspective of the time as well as today, the conception of the projects was based on a central core problem of the intervention context: the precarious living conditions of the target group. By focusing on the rehabilitation or creation of and access to social and economic infrastructure, the projects were fundamentally suitable for counteracting this core problem. The participatory approach also offered the opportunity to align measures with the most urgent needs of Palestinian refugees and thus to offer the financed social and economic infrastructure a suitable acceptance space within the target group. Overall, we therefore rate the relevance of the projects as good.

Relevance rating: 2

Coherence

In terms of internal coherence, Germany has been supporting Lebanon since 2006³³ as part of development cooperation (DC) in various priority areas. The reconstruction of Palestinian refugee camps is also a focus of German DC in Lebanon, a country that has received more refugees (approx. 1.3 million in 2021)³⁴ than any other state in the world in relation to its population (approx. 6.7 million in 2021).^{35,36} In the wake of the Syrian crisis, the commitment was further expanded and Lebanon has been one of the

²⁹ In this context, an open programme means that, at the time of the PA, it is not yet finalised which concrete measures are to be implemented. The individual programme measures are only identified in the course of implementation, based on current circumstances and the needs of the target group.

³⁰ Government of Jordan (2015): Vision 2025 – A national Vision and Strategy.

³¹ KfW (2021): REPAC Mid-term Evaluation 2020/21.

³² Previously: LCRP 2015–2016; 2017–2021; Government of Lebanon, UNDP, UNHCR (2022): Launch of the 2022 Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP). Online: <https://lebanon.un.org/en/186879-launch-2022-lebanon-crisis-response-plan-lcrp-government-un-and-partners-appeal-us-32>

³³ DC was initially discontinued in 2003 after Lebanon reached the status of an "Upper Middle-Income Country". Cooperation resumed after various armed conflicts.

³⁴ World Bank (2022): Refugee population by country or territory of asylum – Lebanon. Online: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SM.POP.REFG?locations=LB>.

³⁵ World Bank (2022): Population, total – Lebanon Online: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=LB>.

³⁶ Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) 2022: Countries – Lebanon. Online: <https://www.bmz.de/de/laender/libanon>.

partner countries with which the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has been pursuing long-term common development goals since 2020, whereby cooperation should primarily contribute to stabilisation and conflict prevention, but also to medium to long-term economic development.³⁷

German-Jordan DC celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2019, with cooperation focusing on the areas of water and sanitation as well as (vocational) education and employment.³⁸ Another focus here, however, is on supporting refugees and host communities, with increased focus on supporting Syrian refugees and Jordanian communities in the north of the country since 2012.³⁹

REPAC I and II thus contributed to the objectives of German DC by promoting the reconstruction of Palestinian refugee camps on the one hand and supporting refugees through participatory processes and pro-employment effects on the other.

The projects evaluated here were complementary to each other. Even though the geographical focus of both phases was identical and the rehabilitation or construction of new housing was also a priority in both phases, an additional focus was placed on water supply and sanitation systems in Rashidieh, while more education projects were implemented in Husn.

The REPAC projects were very closely linked to two other German DC regional programmes: Firstly, the Regional Social and Culture Fund for Palestinian Refugees and the population of the Gaza Strip (S&C Fund; BMZ no. 2009 24 530), which was implemented by UNRWA and GIZ and continued after 2015 through the follow-up project “Facilitating Social Participation of Palestinian Refugees (FASPAR)” (BMZ no. 2014 21 932). Secondly, the secondment of peacebuilding experts to UNRWA by the Civil Peace Service (CPS) as part of the “Opportunities for Ex/Change” (OfEC) project.⁴⁰ Together, these three regional programmes formed the overarching DC programme “Supporting Palestinian Refugees” (SPR), which aimed to improve the living conditions of Palestinian refugees in the Middle East region.⁴¹ The regional programmes mutually reinforced each other by responding coherently to the needs identified and prioritised by refugees themselves, which was made possible by the establishment of a strategic partnership between UNRWA’s Infrastructure and Camp Improvement Programme (ICIP) and the BMZ.⁴² In addition, the Talbieh camp already had initial experience with participatory selection processes, which were supported by GIZ and directly by the BMZ. UNRWA had also already started developing similar processes in Husn and Rashidieh.⁴³ REPAC I and II enabled the further development of these processes and enabled the meaningful continuation of previous efforts to establish these processes.

However, there were also synergies with other FC and TC projects in the REPAC phases evaluated here. Together with the FC project “Syria: Immediate measure for infrastructure measures in Palestinian refugee camps in the Middle East region” (BMZ no. 2008 65 972) and “Lebanon: Water supply rehabilitation III” (BMZ no. 2007 65 875) as well as the TC project “Regional Social and Culture Fund for Palestinian Refugees/Gaza” (BMZ no. 2009 24 530), the ZfD measure “Psychosocial support and reintegration of groups particularly affected by violence”, the SFF measure to “Advise UNRWA on participatory planning in Palestinian refugee camps, CIP II” (BMZ no. 1995 35 279) and the direct support of UNRWA by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ no. 2007 07 075), REPAC I and II contributed to improving the social and economic living conditions of the Palestinian refugees in the region.⁴⁴

In terms of external coherence, UNRWA took over the overall coordination and implementation of programme activities. These were carried out on the one hand via UNRWA headquarters and on the other hand via the participatory approach. At the same time, the project’s connection to the UNRWA Department for Infrastructure and Camp Improvement and the involvement of the respective country offices and

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) 2022: Countries – Jordan. Online: <https://www.bmz.de/de/laender/jordanien>.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ KfW (2018): Joint reporting (BE) on the DC programme “Supporting Palestinian Refugees”.

⁴¹ UNRWA (2011): 1st Progress Report 07 Dec. 2011 – REPAC.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ KfW (2020): PCR.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

the relevant national authorities prevented the duplication of activities and ensured that the various donor activities were pooled.⁴⁵ While the relationship between UNRWA and the Jordanian authorities is characterised by good and intensive cooperation, the relationship between UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities is comparatively less strong. With the support of various other donors (e.g. EU, USA, JICA, SDC), UNRWA was also able to implement many other projects, which also aimed to improve access to and use of infrastructure and housing as well as the environmental and health conditions of the Palestinian refugees in the Middle East.⁴⁶

With regard to internal coherence, REPAC I and II were largely aligned with the objectives of German DC in Lebanon and Jordan. The phases considered were also complementary to other FC and TC projects in the intervention context and embedded in a higher-level DC programme. By pooling the bilateral TC and FC measures, synergy effects were used and meaningful complementarity of the DC instruments was assured. With regard to external coherence, the projects were integrated into the activities of other donors in the context of the intervention. Coordination via UNRWA also enabled appropriate donor coordination to be achieved. The coherence can therefore be assessed as good in summary.

Coherence rating: 2

Effectiveness

The project objective underlying this EPE at outcome level included improved access to and appropriate use of social and economic infrastructure for Palestinian refugees in and around selected Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan.

| Indicator | Target value | Actual value at final inspection (2020) | Actual value at EPE (2022) |
|--|--|---|------------------------------|
| REPAC I | | | |
| (1) Utilisation of the implemented infrastructure projects: a) The housing units (Husn, Talbieh and Rashidieh) b) The schools (Housn) c) The water supply network (Rashidieh) d) The football pitch (Husn) | 80% (12 months after completion of construction) | Achieved. a) 100% b) 100% c) 100% d) 100% | Achieved according to UNRWA. |
| (2) Condition of the infrastructure and its equipment: a) The housing units (Husn, Talbieh and Rashidieh) b) The schools (Housn) c) The water supply network (Rashidieh) d) The football pitch (Husn) | 80% are in good condition | Achieved. a) 80% b) 100% c) 80% d) 100% | Achieved according to UNRWA. |

⁴⁵ KfW (2009): PP for the REPAC FC programme.

⁴⁶ UNRWA (2016): REPAC Project Progress Report No. 10.

| Indicator | Target value | Actual value at final inspection (2020) | Actual value at EPE (2022) |
|---|--|---|------------------------------|
| REPAC II | | | |
| (1) Utilisation of the implemented infrastructure projects: a) The housing units (Husn and Talbieh) b) The sewage pumping station and the sewerage system (Rashidieh) | 80% (12 months after completion of construction) | Achieved. a) 100% b) 84% | Achieved according to UNRWA. |
| (2) Condition of the infrastructure and its equipment: a) The housing units (Husn and Talbieh) b) The sewage pumping station and the sewerage system (Rashidieh) | 80% are in good condition | Achieved. a) 80% b) 80% | Achieved according to UNRWA. |

The measures were implemented in the Rashidieh refugee camp in Lebanon and the Husn and Talbieh refugee camps in Jordan. Specifically, a total of 398 shelters and the rehabilitation or modernisation of the water supply network in Rashidieh were financed as part of **Phase I**. UNRWA also implemented an awareness campaign to promote the efficient use of water. The refurbishment and construction of shelters made it possible to reach 1,903 people, while all residents of the camp (31,478) benefited from the connection to the water supply network. All work relating to the water supply network was completed on 10 November 2013. Furthermore, under Phase I a total of 51 (Husn) and 65 (Talbieh) shelters were rehabilitated and a girls' school was expanded by 9 classrooms and a boys' school in Husn by 8 classrooms. The shelter rehabilitation benefited 282 (Husn) and 598 (Talbieh) people, while the school extensions were intended for a total of 681 and 591 pupils respectively. In addition, funding was provided for the construction of a football pitch in Husn and the construction of the southern part of a boundary wall and painting work on the eastern boundary wall for the girls' school there. Security elements for the entrances were also implemented for both schools in Husn.⁴⁷

In **Phase II**, the most extensive measure was the construction of a wastewater pumping station and the rehabilitation of the sewage system in Rashidieh, which benefited 31,478 people. In addition to the renovation of the sewerage system, the original plans included the construction of two wastewater pumping stations and a main pumping station in the "new camp" built by UNRWA from 1963 (for around 80% of the camp area) and a smaller pumping station in the "old camp" built by the French government back in 1936 (for the remaining 20% of the camp area). However, the latter could not be implemented despite several attempts to find a solution, as no agreement could be reached with regard to the location. The resistance of individual families to the construction of the pumping station on the site provided for this purpose was immense and a suitable alternative plot could not be found. However, after UNRWA had adapted the design accordingly, around 84% of the residents could still be connected to the new wastewater network via the main pumping station. For the remaining 16%, a technical solution was sought in the subsequent phases. Since the defined target value under Phase II for the utilisation and condition of the wastewater pumping station was 80%, the relevant indicator was still achieved at the time of the final inspection despite the design adjustment made. In addition, further shelters were rehabilitated in Husn (25) and Talbieh (15) (138 people reached in each case). Furthermore, REPAC II improved the learning environment in both girls' and boys' schools in Husn, which benefited 510 children in total.⁴⁸

The reconstruction of shelters through self-help also led to the creation of jobs for workers, contractors and suppliers within the refugee camps. According to UNRWA, around 21 local workers were employed

⁴⁷ KfW (2020): PCR.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

per shelter measure. In addition, the rehabilitation work, some of which was carried out independently, contributed to the qualification of the employees thanks to the experience gained.⁴⁹

As part of the on-site visits carried out on project completion in 2015 and 2018, all housing units and school facilities visited in Jordan and all accommodation in Lebanon were fully functional and were used appropriately by the target group. For the wastewater component in Rashidieh, the sewage system was fully functional while the pumping station was completed, but had not yet been put into operation due to a lack of connection. All rehabilitated or newly built shelters were still in good condition more than one year after completion and were inhabited by the families (target group).⁵⁰ As part of the EPE, 7 (REPAC I) and 5 (REPAC II) years after completion and commissioning of the financed infrastructure, the current status of the individual measures was once again queried with the project executing agency. Due to a lack of secondary data sources, UNRWA's anecdotal evidence was exclusively used to assess the condition and use at the time of the EPE. According to UNRWA, all shelters, schools and the football pitch were in good condition at the time of the evaluation and were used by the target group. The financed measures in the water supply and wastewater disposal department were also in full use and in good condition.⁵¹ Accordingly, all indicators were achieved both at the time of the final inspection and at the time of the EPE. As Rashidieh is located directly on the coast, the camp is often exposed to extreme weather events, which requires regular repairs. Formal responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the government infrastructure is partly unclear in Lebanon and UNRWA sees the working groups in the camps as primarily responsible here. While in Jordan one of the pumping stations had undergone maintenance work in the meantime, which had already been carried out by UNRWA.

The selection of measures was based on participatory processes in which all people in the target group were directly involved or represented within so-called working groups. The working groups were formed by representatives of refugees, camp committees, various civil society organisations and other key local stakeholders. As a rule, existing structures of the respective camps were used.⁵² This enabled the most urgent needs to be identified and prioritised accordingly. The selection criteria included: priority and urgency for the community, mitigation of immediate life-threatening conditions, mitigation of health risks, improving educational opportunities, creating income opportunities, favouring vulnerable members of society, and sustainability of benefits.⁵³ The provision or rehabilitation of living space was one of the camp residents' most important priorities. To this end, UNRWA carried out physical and socio-economic surveys in order to select the accommodation eligible for intervention in a transparent manner.⁵⁴

While shelters can only be used by the respective families and therefore do not benefit the community in the broader sense, the measures in the area of water supply and wastewater disposal in particular represent significant improvements to the quality of life of the entire target group. For example, health risks that could have arisen due to contamination of the drinking water sources or that arise due to contact with contaminated wastewater are minimised. With regard to shelters, it can also be concluded that the impact of housing rehabilitation on the beneficiary families is immense. Particularly vulnerable population groups such as women or people with disabilities were not explicitly prioritised in these phases, but also benefited from the selected measures⁵⁵. The measures in the area of primary education and leisure time can also benefit all children equally through the selection of a boys' and girls' school and through the new football pitch. The intended target group was therefore reached through the selection of measures and was able to profit equally from both projects.

UNRWA's position in the refugee camps, however, was not without controversy. On the one hand, UNRWA is the largest employer for refugees and central providers of social transfer services, which are generally free of charge. On the other hand, UNRWA was accused of taking a less needs-based and

⁴⁹ UNRWA (2016): Project Progress Report No. 10.

⁵⁰ KfW (2020): PCR.

⁵¹ Although current satellite images (Google Earth Pro, 2022) confirmed the continued existence of some infrastructure projects (football pitch in Husn and pumping station in Rashidieh), conclusions on use cannot be drawn based on the images.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ UNRWA (2012): 2nd Progress Report.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ UNRWA generally tries to take female households and people with disabilities into account when selecting shelters, for example.

participatory approach, thus encouraging refugees to become more dependent.⁵⁶ UNRWA's development strategy at the time of the project appraisal included a change of course, which was also to be supported by REPAC I and II. Retrospectively, according to statements in the interviews, greater acceptance of the measures and the work of UNRWA within the target group was achieved, especially through the participatory selection process and the close involvement of the target group in the working groups. As part of the projects, UNRWA took over the overall coordination and implementation of all programme activities. This included coordination with the relevant government agencies, selection of refugee camps, support in establishing the individual working groups, management of the participatory selection process at refugee camp level, planning of the individual measures, tendering for construction services, supervision of works and provision of equipment (e.g. in schools).⁵⁷ Overall, the implementation by UNRWA can be assessed as effective. UNRWA's many years of experience, local and cross-border networking and proximity to the target group were used profitably and made the organisation a competent implementation partner.

REPAC I and II were able to make an important contribution to improving access to social and economic infrastructure for Palestinian refugees in the selected refugee camps. Since the planned activities were carried out as intended and the functionality and use of the facilities is ensured both at the time of the final inspection and at the time of the evaluation, the effectiveness is rated as good.

Effectiveness rating: 2

Efficiency

The identification, planning and construction activities for Phase I were carried out in the period from May 2011 to October 2015. In Phase II, the measures were implemented in the period from April 2013 to February 2017. The original implementation period was 33 months in Phase I and 30 months in Phase II. The significant delays were due, among other things, to the volatile security situation, restricted and delayed approvals for material introduction by the Lebanese Army (LAF) in Rashidieh, problems with establishing the CIP due to conflicts between political camp factions, protests by refugees who felt disadvantaged, and the delayed completion of complementary infrastructure by the Lebanese government.⁵⁸ Due to the context of the intervention, delays during implementation could have been expected at the time of the project appraisal, which is why the time schedule is rated as too ambitious from today's perspective. However, the projects had no influence over the many reasons for the delays.

Implementation of the participatory processes also took some time, as the concept was partly new in the refugee camps and, as a result, various political, economic and social problems occurred. The local UNRWA employees dealt with various problems on a daily basis and had to develop a common basis for agreement with the camp community in order to facilitate the implementation of the project activities.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the alternative of a top-down process in this case would not have been the right approach in spite of potential time savings. This can be explained firstly by a lack of involvement of the target group and thus a lack of legitimacy of the measures on the part of the beneficiaries, which in turn would have further increased the potential for conflict. Secondly, a top-down approach could not have facilitated any learning experiences with regard to self-government structures in the camps and could have led to a feeling of paternalism within the target group.

Due to the project's design as an open programme, the actual costs for the individual measures only resulted during implementation, but were limited by the existing budget. The total costs of the FC measures amounted to EUR 12.5 million (EUR 7.5 million for Phase I and EUR 5 million for Phase II). These included UNRWA's standard management fee of 7 %, as well as implementation costs for the development of the CIP, design, tendering and construction supervision, among other things, which at 7.5 % were below the forecast 8.8 %. The construction measures accounted for around 84 % and 2 % for consulting services. The implementation costs, including UNRWA's management fee, were therefore acceptable at 14 %⁶⁰ despite the extended project term. The cost structure and the management fee of 7 % (both

⁵⁶ KfW (2009): PP.

⁵⁷ KfW (2020): PCR.

⁵⁸ KfW (2020): PCR.

⁵⁹ UNRWA (2014): Project Progress Report No. 6.

⁶⁰ KfW (2020): PCR.

phases) appear appropriate in view of the complex general conditions in the fragile context of the projects and are comparatively lower than those of other UN organisations.

Originally, the project appraisal envisaged the use of an international consultant, who was to assist UNRWA in the creation and validation of reports and in the management of the participatory selection process. The costs were estimated at around 10 % of the financing contribution at the time and were to be financed by the FC contributions. Contrary to expectations, the tasks of the consultant were significantly reduced during the implementation of the projects, as UNRWA itself was able to develop the CIPs due to many years of experience and further support from GIZ. Accordingly, the tasks of the consultant mainly related to monitoring and reporting as well as the monitoring of compliance between KfW and UNRWA. Funds of around USD 1 million were saved and used for investment measures.

There were differences in construction quality and construction costs between shelter measures in Jordan and Lebanon, at least partly due to the self-help component. The construction work in Jordan was carried out by commissioning construction companies. In accordance with the UNRWA award and categorisation processes, smaller contractors were selected from the same camps that had been prioritised as part of the project via the Developer Initiative. This enabled more Palestinian refugees to be employed and benefit from the projects. However, at the time of the final inspection, around 20 % of shelters visited in Jordan had problems with damp walls inside the buildings due to leaking roofs and insufficient pitch of the flat roofs.

In Lebanon, some rehabilitation measures, such as the rehabilitation of bathrooms and washrooms, were not designed to be accessible, although their users belonged to groups of people with reduced mobility. At KfW's request, UNRWA adapted the weather protection and roof construction of the shelters as well as the accessible design for the REPAC follow-up phases.⁶¹ In Lebanon, the construction work was carried out by the project beneficiaries under their own direction and responsibility (so-called "self-help" approach). In addition to construction supervision and cost control, UNRWA took on a stronger accompanying role here. In addition to good construction, the only refugee camp in Lebanon financed by REPAC I and II (Rashidieh), showed that the accommodation was designed much more individually by using individual and comparatively high-quality materials, e.g. for flooring, wall tiles, fittings and kitchen cabinets. At the same time, this was accompanied by a reduction in construction costs. The lower unit costs for shelters in Rashidieh compared to Husn and Talbieh can be explained by lower material and labour costs in the Lebanese refugee camps, but also by the "self-help" approach, which required a high level of personal contribution from those affected.⁶² In addition, the beneficiaries' own funds were also partially included in the "self-help" approach. At the Rashidieh camp, 398 residences were rehabilitated or built from scratch. This is a significant increase compared to the plans at the start of the project (278 residences) and can be attributed to significantly lower construction costs (average USD 10,600/residence instead of the USD 13,500/residence originally planned).⁶³

As part of Phase I, in Jordan a boys' and girls' school at the Husn Camp were also expanded by 8 and 9 classrooms, respectively. The schools were able to start in 2014 at the girls' school and in 2015 at the boys' school. At the time of the final inspection, the construction quality of the school facilities was good overall and the furnishings of the rooms were good to very good. The design of the schools followed the UNRWA school building standards at the time, which were regarded as comparatively cost-effective on a regional scale. For the new school buildings, an average unit price of 491 USD/m² (441 EUR/m²) gross floor area was achieved, which was thus within the price range estimated during the project selection (EUR 400 – 450 EUR/m²). The realised average unit price was also within the cost range of similar projects in Jordan and the region and is assessed as appropriate at the time of the evaluation.⁶⁴

In addition, Phase I financed the rehabilitation and modernisation of the existing water supply network in Rashidieh (Lebanon) with a sum of approximately USD 437,000 and the construction of a football pitch in Husn (Jordan) with approximately USD 87,000. Under Phase II, the modernisation of the sewage system in Rashidieh was prioritised and selected as the largest measure. For this purpose, an FC volume of

⁶¹ KfW (2020): PCR.

⁶² KfW (2020): PCR.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ USAID and FC schools in Jordan: approx. 450 – 550 EUR/m²; UNICEF schools in Lebanon: approx. 500 EUR/m².

around USD 4.5 million was planned, and around USD 4.3 million was spent. However, the pumping station could not be connected to the public network for several months because the planned sewage treatment plant of the municipality Tyre, which was under construction at the time and was intended to treat wastewater from Rashidieh, was not completed on time by the Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction. The new wastewater system in Rashidieh could only be properly connected to the public network in mid-2019 when Tyre’s municipal sewage treatment plant was completed and commissioned.⁶⁵ In this case, dependence on complementary infrastructure – albeit without alternatives – had a negative impact on the duration and thus on efficiency.

In total (both phases), measures of around USD 4.67 million were financed in the housing sector in Lebanon. The costs in the water and wastewater sector in Lebanon amounted to around USD 4.77 million. In Jordan, measures of around USD 2.94 million were implemented in the housing sector, and in the education sector the costs amounted to around USD 1.16 million. If the football pitch (approx. USD 87,000) is also included in the education segment, this results in a total amount of approx. USD 1.25 million.

The high level of investment in the housing sector in both countries can be explained by the fact that the rehabilitation and construction of new housing was one of the most important priorities for camp residents in both countries.⁶⁶ An external review of UNRWA programmes in 2010 also highlighted the rehabilitation of housing as one of the key priorities.⁶⁷ Although not all camp residents were able to benefit equally from the measures financed here, the individual impacts on the quality of life of the beneficiaries were and still are enormous. Due to UNRWA’s transparent selection of eligible families, it can also be assumed here that the most vulnerable families and those in need were favoured. Given that Rashidieh was the only refugee camp in Lebanon that did not have a sewage network, a needs-based selection of measures can also be assumed in the water and sewage sector, from which all camp residents also benefited. A similarly high coverage ratio would have been difficult to achieve through other measures, which is why the allocation efficiency is rated as very high in this regard.

About half a million Palestinian refugee children visit UNRWA schools in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Gaza and the West Bank. But for many of them, access to education is constantly at risk due to the difficult circumstances they live in.⁶⁸ A 2020 report from the Norwegian Refugee Council outlined the many challenges refugee children face when trying to gain access to education. This included financial hurdles, con-

| Indicator | Actual value at project appraisal 2011 | Actual value at ex post evaluation (2022) |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| (1) Sub-National HDI* | Lebanon (2011) - South (Rashidieh): 0,785 Jordan (2011) - Amman (Talbieh): 0,745 - Irbid (Husn): 0,733 | Lebanon (2019) - South (Rashidieh): 0,761 Jordan (2019) - Amman (Talbieh): 0,746 - Irbid (Husn): 0,723 |

*) Global Data Lab – Institute for Management Research, Radboud University (2022)

cerns about discrimination and lack of protection in schools, lack of documents such as residence permits and educational certificates, and a lack of available school places in public schools.⁶⁹ Against this background, investments in the education and leisure sector can undoubtedly be described as needs-oriented. Even beyond the end of the projects, it can be assumed that access to education will lead to lasting structural effects and an improvement in living conditions. Overall, the efficiency was optimally utilised by the funds made available.

⁶⁵ KfW (2020): PCR.

⁶⁶ UNRWA (2012): 2nd Progress Report.

⁶⁷ UNRWA (2012): Project Progress Report No. 3.

⁶⁸ UNRWA (2022): Education beyond the front line. Online: <https://www.unrwa.org/campaign/%C2%A0education-beyond-front-line>.

⁶⁹ NRC (2022): Lebanon – Children in Lebanon battle barriers to education. Online: <https://www.nrc.no/perspectives/2022/children-in-lebanon-battle-barriers-to-education/>.

The large delays in the course of the project would have been partly foreseeable, but are not unusual for the intervention context. Overall, the allocation efficiency of the projects can be classified as high, as the open programme and the participatory approach prioritised measures within the projects on a needs-oriented basis. In addition, the self-help component was able to generate gains in production efficiency and more people benefited from the measures than planned. Some compromises had to be made in terms of the delayed commissioning of the sewage system in Rashidieh. Overall, we rate the efficiency as satisfactory due to the shortcomings described.

Efficiency rating: 3

Impact

The overarching development objective of the projects (impact level) underlying this EPE was “Improving the living conditions of Palestinian refugees affected by the ongoing crisis and contributing to the preservation of peace and stability in and around selected Palestinian refugee camps in the programme areas.” The impact objective of the phases largely corresponded to that of the overarching DC programme “Supporting Palestinian Refugees”. This was “The overarching objective of all the measures involved is to improve the living conditions and the constructive coexistence of Palestinian refugees in the region and the population in Gaza”. It therefore appears plausible that the measures implemented under REPAC I and II made a contribution to the DC programme, as it can be assumed, in view of the achieved target indicators at outcome level, that improved access to and appropriate use of social and economic infrastructure actually improved the living conditions of the beneficiary population in the direct project areas.

No indicators were defined at impact level during the project appraisal, meaning that the sub-national Human Development Index (HDI) is used as a proxy indicator as part of this evaluation and as part of a contribution analysis. However, it can be seen that the value deteriorated between 2011 and 2019 in South Lebanon and in Irbid (Jordan), while a marginal improvement is visible in Amman. However, this is likely to be due to the generally worsening general conditions in the intervention context, among other things due to the increasing economic crisis in Lebanon. In addition, this value only captures aggregated developments at government level and thus does not allow conclusions to be drawn about dynamics in the actual project areas. This results in a high attribution problem when interpreting this data and the Sub-National HDI is only used as a proxy indicator.

As planned, working groups were set up in all three camps in both phases and involved in the selection of measures. Camp Improvement Plans (CIP) were prepared in all three camps. With technical support and close support from UNRWA, the working groups succeeded in making the selection and prioritisation of infrastructure measures in the refugee camps participative. The participatory approach ensured that the structures of self-government in the refugee camps were taken into account and further strengthened, and that conflicts in connection with the implementation of the project were largely prevented.⁷⁰ The projects were also able to reach particularly vulnerable (including children, senior citizens, persons with disabilities) and socially disadvantaged (including women, unemployed) population groups through the application of pre-agreed socio-economic and poverty-relevant criteria. Overall, the selection process for the measures allowed targeted poverty-oriented implementation, needs-based planning and greater visibility of Germany’s contribution in vulnerable and poor population groups. In particular, the participatory development of the CIP at the Rashidieh camp was regarded as a model within UNRWA and was then extended to other camps in Lebanon and Gaza.⁷¹

Rashidieh was the only refugee camp in Lebanon that had no sewage network. Before the modernisation of the sewerage system and the construction of the sewage pumping station, the camp’s wastewater was channelled either via open channels directly into the Mediterranean Sea or into underground pits. In addition to significant health risks for the camp’s residents, both types of original wastewater disposal had a negative impact on the environment. The wastewater flowing from the camp into the sea polluted not only the sea, but also adjacent sand beaches, creating tension between the Palestinian community in the camp and the Lebanese community in the neighbouring town of Tyre. Furthermore, there was a risk that natural water sources supplying both the camp and Tyre with drinking water were polluted due to the lack

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ KfW (2020): PCR.

of a sewage network and the spread of sink pits, and that use of these water sources would not have been possible due to this.⁷² However, the financed wastewater pumping station could not be connected to the public network for several months (see Efficiency) and UNRWA had to discharge the concentrated wastewater untreated into the sea between the end of 2017 and mid-2018. Overall, however, it can be concluded that, in spite of delays, the projects were able to contribute across the board to reducing the amount of polluted wastewater entering the environment and minimising health risks for the beneficiaries.

However, there were also unintended negative effects. During the implementation period, the security situation in Rashidieh deteriorated, as UNRWA reported in August 2015. This hampered the implementation of the construction of the wastewater and drainage system financed under REPAC II. The reason for this was the selection of workers to be employed to carry out the work, which was a point of dispute between the developer and the “Popular Committee”⁷³ in the camp. There was also a suspicion that at least some of the workers had links to criminal gangs. UNRWA employees and the building contractor were repeatedly threatened by certain camp residents. The situation escalated in a shooting and the work was interrupted from 3 until 23 February 2015. A group of security forces was then set up. The Camp Area Officer also intervened repeatedly in order to try to find an acceptable solution for all participants that would enable the peaceful progress of the work. However, on 4 July 2015 the worsening situation culminated again in an armed confrontation in which one person died. There were also injuries and property damage. In response to these incidents, the REPAC II-funded construction project was interrupted again until the necessary guarantees for camp safety were in place and the operating environment improved. Work resumed on 27 October 2015.⁷⁴

However, it is questionable to what extent these incidents can be attributed exclusively to the projects. All people interviewed as part of the EPE agreed that the potential for conflict in Rashidieh was already present before the projects were implemented, as was the residents’ dissatisfaction with the labour market situation and their general living conditions. All refugee camps are full of grievances and frustrations, so overlapping personal crises such as food insecurity or a lack of satisfaction of basic needs, coupled with exclusion from the official world of work and public services, can lead to the application of adverse coping mechanisms.⁷⁵ It can therefore be assumed that confrontations would have occurred sooner or later independently of the projects. With the CIP approach, a procedure has already been selected that has a de-escalating effect and involves the target group in decision-making processes. In addition, selection criteria were presented transparently. Nevertheless, the potential for conflict should have played a greater role in planning and implementation. For example, a context analysis before intervention could have helped to anticipate risks and better manage beneficiaries’ expectations.⁷⁶ Mitigation measures have now been integrated into the REPAC projects, for example in the tendering process. For example, a specified percentage of employees must come from the camps.

Overall, findings from Phases I and II were incorporated into the follow-up phases of REPAC and established profitable cooperation between German DC and UNRWA, from which countless Palestinian refugees in the Middle East have benefited since then as part of many other projects. As part of these initial phases, implementation mechanisms were established that ensured the quality and development objectives of the measures and at the same time minimised operational risks. The implementation concept was further developed for further REPAC phases on the basis of the findings and learning experiences gained from Phases I and II. In particular, the selection criteria for the camps, the prioritisation and definition of measures and design standards as well as criteria for the environmental and social impact assessment were revised or developed from scratch.⁷⁷ For example, mandatory insurance cover was introduced, the partner organisations⁷⁸ were made aware of environmental and social standards and monitoring procedures were established for compliance with them during construction work.

⁷² UNRWA (2011): 1st Progress Report 07 Dec. 2011 – REPAC.

⁷³ The “Popular Committee” is one of many different committees in the camps. Representatives of these committees were also represented in the working groups.

⁷⁴ UNRWA (2015): Project Progress Report No. 8.; UNRWA (2016): Project Progress Report No. 10.

⁷⁵ UNRWA (2021): Syria Regional Crisis Emergency Appeal 2021.

⁷⁶ KfW (2021): REPAC Mid-term Evaluation 2020/21.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ In later REPAC phases, UNDP and UNOPS also act as executing organisations in addition to UNRWA.

Many refugee camps and their surroundings were assumed to have an increased potential for conflict due to poor living conditions, hygiene-related illnesses and insufficient prospects for the future of the residents.⁷⁹ With regard to the dual objectives of the projects, it can be argued that, on the one hand, the provision of individual housing was able to contribute to stabilisation, as housing is necessary to ensure safety and personal protection and to promote resilience to diseases. According to UNRWA, many of the shelters in the refugee camps were characterised by dangerous steel structures and asbestos panels, inadequate ventilation and insulation, severe damp and mould infestation. Some inhabitants have already suffered from chronic diseases that have been exacerbated and associated with the poor conditions in the accommodation.⁸⁰ Accommodation also plays an essential role in maintaining family and community life, as well as reducing vulnerability and strengthening community resilience.⁸¹ On the other hand, investments in water supply and sanitation are a central aspect in preventing water-borne diseases and were thus able to make a significant contribution to the health and living conditions of the target group, which in turn can have a positive effect on well-being and conflict potential. In addition, access to education is an important factor in the physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection of children in fragile contexts. By providing a sense of stability, education can alleviate the psychosocial impact of conflicts and offer prospects for the future.⁸² Overall, in spite of the unintended adverse impacts, a positive influence of the measures on the target group and stability in the camps can be derived, even beyond the completion of the projects.

The projects were undoubtedly able to contribute to an improvement in the target group's living conditions, but this is difficult to measure or quantify as part of the evaluation. Although a stabilising or conflict-mitigating effect through the participatory CIP approach is still plausible, existing lines of conflict in the camps must be better taken into account in order to avoid unintended negative effects, such as in Rashidieh. As a result, the project's overarching developmental impact is rated as moderately successful.

Impact rating: 3

Sustainability

The projects were implemented with a limited claim to sustainability, as it was assumed at the time of the project appraisal that UNRWA would not be able to cover the maintenance and upkeep costs for the individual measures in the long-term (financially or due to a lack of capacity). Financing UNRWA's running costs depends heavily on the reliability of donor payments. For example, interruptions and cuts in financing by major donors led to a financing deficit of over USD 100 million in 2022.⁸³ If, in future, the organisation is no longer able to carry out its work due to financial problems, the already disastrous situation of Palestinian refugees would deteriorate dramatically, which could also contribute to growing humanitarian crises throughout the region.

In any case, the general conditions have deteriorated further since the completion of the projects in both Jordan and Lebanon. For the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the situation could not be more precarious given the diverse and exacerbating crises. The COVID-19 pandemic and the explosion at Beirut Port on 4 August 2020 further strained the public health system and the economy and led to an additional loss of livelihoods and jobs. Inflation is at a record level, and for those already marginalised, the pressure on income and livelihoods has reached an intolerable level.⁸⁴ In Jordan, the consequences of the pandemic and lockdowns have also exacerbated vulnerability and inequalities, especially for those who depend on informal and daily work. These developments, in turn, are also exacerbating the diverse, already existing

⁷⁹ KfW (2009): PP for the REPAC FC programme.

⁸⁰ UNRWA (2012): Project Progress Report No. 3.

⁸¹ European Commission (2017): Humanitarian Shelter and Settlements Guidelines. Thematic Policy Document No. 9.

⁸² Smith, A. (2011). Education and peacebuilding: From 'conflict-analysis' to 'conflict transformation'?

⁸³ UNRWA (2022): US Contributions to UNRWA in 2021–2022 are Key to Agency's Ability to Operate Online:

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/us-contributions-unrwa-2021-2022-are-key-agency%E2%80%99s-ability-operate>.

⁸⁴ UNRWA (2021): Syria Regional Crisis Emergency Appeal 2021.

security needs and risks, threatening social cohesion and favouring the increased application of adverse coping mechanisms.⁸⁵

The greatest risks to the continued existence of the financed infrastructure and the impacts achieved for the target group continue to be the very tense security situation in the programme areas and the inadequate financial capacities on the part of UNRWA and the camps for ongoing maintenance and repair. A permanent political solution to the conflicts in the region is not expected in the foreseeable future, but new escalations are likely to remain. There is also the possibility that the refugee policy of the host countries may worsen, which could manifest itself, for example, in additional restrictions (e.g. with regard to access to the labour market/services or residence status) and lead to a further deterioration in living conditions. However, the general conditions in the programme areas could not and cannot be influenced by FC projects. Another risk factor is the environmental conditions of the intervention context. As the severity and frequency of extreme weather events caused by climate change are likely to increase in the future, high demand for infrastructure and housing maintenance is expected in Rashidieh in particular due to its proximity to the coast.⁸⁶

The final inspection already highlighted major differences in the construction quality between the measures in Lebanon and Jordan, but this was generally rated as good to very good in the interviews. Likewise, all financed measures continue to exist and are used by the target group. A high degree of ownership was found among the beneficiaries, particularly in housing that was rehabilitated or newly built through the self-help component. However, since all shelter measures are individual living spaces and therefore also the focal points of the beneficiaries, it can be assumed that long-term and sustainable use is also sought by their side. The remaining selection of measures in the areas of social and economic infrastructure was also based on participatory processes and thus contributed to meeting the most urgent needs of the target group. It can therefore also be assumed in these areas that there is a great interest in maintaining the use and access to this infrastructure in the future. In summary, the risks listed in the final inspection are still present at the time of the EPE. However, it must be noted that many of the implementation risks could be anticipated via appropriate mitigation mechanisms and have therefore not materialised.⁸⁷

Despite the negative effects on the implementation efficiency of the complementary infrastructure in the Lebanese refugee camp Rashidieh, the connection of the sewage treatment plant to the national sewage network in Tyre had a positive effect on cooperation between UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities. On the other hand, such an approach in the sense of a localisation strategy strengthens the national integration of important infrastructure of Palestinian refugees and thus also contributes to sustainability.

However, by means of complementary infrastructure (e.g. Rashidieh wastewater), it is also possible to provide an incentive to coordinate with the national authorities, for example (which is always extremely challenging). And in some cases there are no alternatives: As mentioned in the EPE, the wastewater in Rashidieh was previously channelled via open sewers directly into the Mediterranean or into underground pits. Connection to the national network (Tyre) is therefore extremely welcome, sustainable and also positive as a cooperation between UNRWA and the Lebanese authorities. Overall, LPDC, for example, is increasingly taking the approach of no longer considering the camps as detached/autonomous regions, but rather to “integrate nationally” (we are currently having discussions here, for example, in terms of electricity supply).

The increased potential for conflict, especially in the refugee camps in Lebanon, was already cited at the time of the programme proposal: “At refugee camp level, there is a risk of conflicts breaking out between rival groups”.⁸⁸ At that time, it was assumed that this problem could be circumvented primarily through the participatory approach and the resulting close involvement of the target group, which was also largely successful retrospectively.

Despite deteriorating general conditions in the intervention context, all financed measures continue to exist at the time of the evaluation and are used by the target group. The participatory approach and the

⁸⁵ UNRWA (2022): Syria, Lebanon and Jordan Emergency Appeal 2022.

⁸⁶ For example, UNRWA is currently building a sea wall there to mitigate the effects of weather conditions.

⁸⁷ KfW (2020): PCR.

⁸⁸ KfW (2009): PP for the REPAC FC programme.

self-help component in particular had a positive impact on the sustainability of the measures and contributed to strengthening the self-government structures in the camps. However, external factors (volatile security situation, economic, political, climate-related developments) and UNRWA's tense financial situation continue to pose risks. Due to the existing shortcomings, sustainability is rated as moderately successful, taking into account the general conditions.

Sustainability rating: 3

General conclusions

In fragile contexts, projects designed as open programmes, which are relatively intensive in terms of support, have proven their worth, as it is not yet foreseeable at the time of the appraisal which needs and therefore which measures must be prioritised at the time of implementation. A combination with participatory approaches not only enables the required flexibility, but also gives the chosen measures the required legitimacy within the target group. Moreover, the implementation of a self-help component can lead to a higher level of ownership, sustainability and satisfaction among beneficiaries.

FC projects in a fragile context cannot resolve decades of smouldering conflict or eliminate hostilities between different population groups. Claims for the objective of the projects should therefore be formulated realistically.

A detailed peace and conflict analysis is essential in order to identify existing lines of conflict ex ante and to take these adequately into account in the project design and implementation. The transparency of selection criteria and processes as well as the close involvement of the target group also contributes to mitigating triggers for potential conflicts within the target group at an early stage and to strengthening participation and ownership, and proves to be particularly important in target group-oriented projects in fragile contexts.

Ideally, infrastructure measures to be financed should only be chosen if they stand alone and do not exhibit any functional dependency on other partial measures whose construction progress is beyond FC's control (e.g. completion of a sewage treatment plant as a prerequisite for the modernisation of a sewage system). Otherwise, there are high risks for the timely completion of the planned measures, which always entail high losses of impact. Functional dependencies can prove themselves in individual cases in the sense of a localisation and integration strategy in order to strengthen the national and/or sub-national assumption of responsibility for financed infrastructure and can have a positive impact on sustainability.

Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects (and programmes) are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being **relevance**, **coherence**, **effectiveness**, **efficiency** and **impact**. The ratings are also used to arrive at an **overall rating** of a project's development effectiveness. The scale is as follows:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Level 1 | Very good result that clearly exceeds expectations |
| Level 2 | Good result, fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings |
| Level 3 | Satisfactory result – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate |
| Level 4 | Unsatisfactory result – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results |
| Level 5 | Clearly inadequate result – despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate |
| Level 6 | The project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated |

The **overall rating** on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all six individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Rating levels 1–3 of the overall rating denote a “successful” project while rating levels 4–6 denote an “unsuccessful” project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally “successful” only if the achievement of the project objective (“effectiveness”), the impact on the development objective (“impact”) **and** the sustainability are rated at least “satisfactory” (level 3).