


Situational Report

2021

The Community Protection Approach –
Strengthening Palestinian
National and Local Capacities



Overview of the CPA
implementation
impact on coordination
between communities
and their authorities in
Area C of the West
Bank 2015-2021

This report made possible with

01. INTRODUCTION

The recognition of the need to strengthen collaboration, coherence and complementarity across humanitarian, development and peace actors has become a guiding principle for international and local organizations.

This situational report presents data collected between 2015 and 2021 in over 204 communities in Area C of the West Bank, focusing on how the implementation of the Community Protection Approach (CPA)¹ coupled with the improved coordination and dialogue with local and governorate authorities has enabled an environment in which the Protection Response strategies and actions developed together with communities are increasingly being used for Institutional Planning. Chiefly, the analysis showcases a significant *decrease in the vulnerabilities* of the CPA targeted communities within the *Relation with Palestinian National and Local Authorities* sector and the related sub-sectors – namely, access to National Services, direct relation between the communities and the local authorities and factual link with relevant line ministries.

Since 2015, *WeWorld within the West Bank Protection Consortium (WBPC)* is working to prevent forcible transfers of Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem through

multi-sectoral and integrated, protection-oriented responsive and remedial responses, while implementing the CPA; a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral modality, coordinating to address protection risks through direct participation of local actors on the design and implementation of activities. Through the CPA, *the WBPC* has accompanied the different communities in having a unique strategic planning approach with local authorities, hence the *territory* has become a dynamic entity made of formal and informal interactions.

Moreover, the data reveals a progressive and significant increase of both responsive, remedial and environment building activities directly implemented by Palestinian National and Local Authorities (PNLA), from only 10 activities between 2013-2015 increasing to 170 in the last three years, with the top five sectors being Livelihoods, Health, Access, Wash and Education. PNLA's increasingly active engagement was boosted by "environment building" interventions aimed at creating and/or consolidating an environment – political, social, cultural, institutional, economic or legal – conducive to the full respect for the rights of an individual. This positive trend in PNLAs' active involvement in

WEWORLD'S NEXUS PRINCIPLE NO1: LOCALIZATION

The Protection Response Plans - a multi-sectorial set of sustainable actions identified with the community - are designed to be utilized in the territorial planning of communities together with PNLA which are ultimately responsible for their safety and dignity.

The collaboration between communities and the authorities fosters a proactive relationship that can improve living conditions and make redundant the role of the organization, thus localising the responses to protection needs within the communities and their members.

¹ For more information, please visit www.cpainitiative.org

the implementation of activities can be observed in all Governorates, especially Hebron, Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The only exceptions are the Governorates in which the CPA has been implemented in only 6 communities each, such as Jenin, Nablus and Qalqiliya, hence figures related to these governorates should be read with caution.

THE COMMUNITY PROTECTION APPROACH

The CPA is participatory quantitative/qualitative data-collection process that informs a contextual and multi-sectorial protection analysis to identify the protection risks experienced at community level and design sustainable solutions with the communities and local actors.

The Protection Response Plans (PRPs) are a set of sustainable actions to address the coercive environment in a specific community. More specifically, PRPs are multi-sectorial (including actions for every sector), multi-stakeholder (drafted as a “road map” for engaging different actors), and multi-scale, and they are based on the “Egg” Protection Framework (ICRC, 2001).

The Protection Vulnerability Index (PVI) is a set of composite and single quantitative indicators representing multi-sector data on protection-focused vulnerabilities and risks, covering 16 sectors, namely: Access, Access to Services, Civil Society Presence, Demography, Education, Energy, Gender, Health, Land Status, Livelihoods, Protection, Relation with the PNLA, Settler Violence, Shelter, Transportation and Wash.

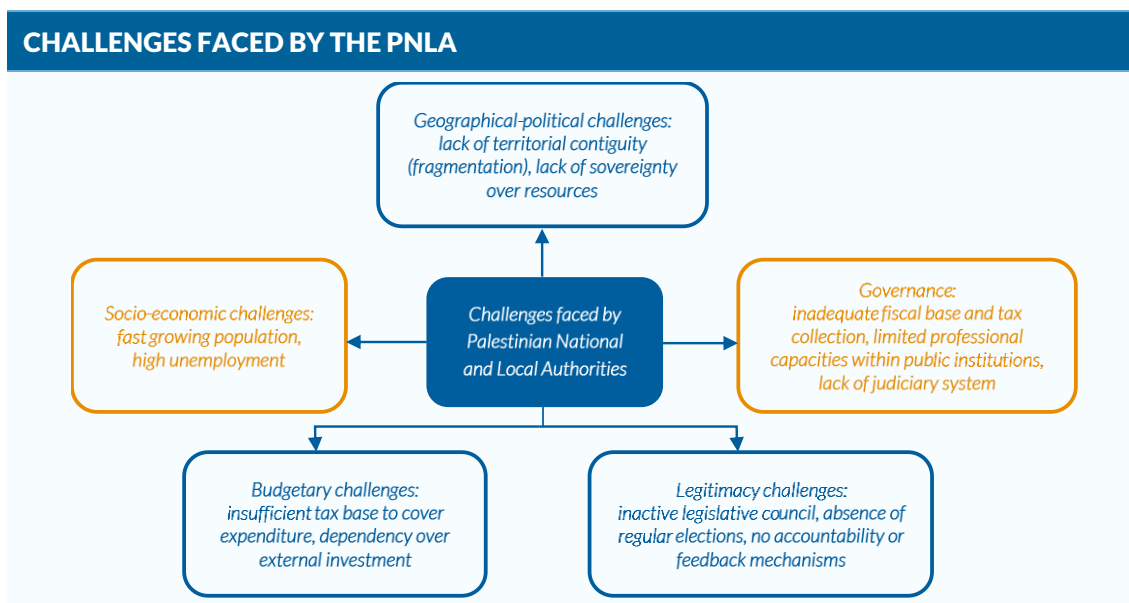
Data covers over 204 communities in Area C between 2015 and 2021, over 9 governorates.

02. THE CHALLENGES OF THE CONTEXT

National and Local Palestinian Authorities face both endogenous and exogenous limitations in addressing population needs, due to a set of multi-causal challenges.²

These limitations are intertwined with the highly volatile political and security context along with the territorial fragmentation and huge fiscal and institutional differences between municipalities. Palestinian communities are systematically prevented from developing housing and infrastructure, from moving within and beyond the territories to building sustainable livelihoods. At a governance level, there is no control over natural resources, nor is self-rule independent; in addition to this, the division of power between central and local authorities remains unclear.

² World Bank (2017), The Performance of Palestinian Local Governments - an assessment of service delivery outcomes and performance drivers in the West Bank and Gaza. See <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/920051497530257564/pdf/ACS22456-REVISED-WB-LGPA-report-TO-IDU-6MB-Nov-16-2017.pdf>



Several efforts to mitigate the shortcomings in delivering services to right-holders can be reported both at local and national levels.

At the local level, there is the institution of the *Joint Service Councils (JSCs)* among municipalities that provides single/multiple services, conducting local development and planning. Another institution is the *Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA)*, a semi-governmental non-profit association aimed at linking local municipalities with international actors, and providing capacity building to public sector employees.³ Yet, at present, many of these institutions are not fully operative.

At a national level, a *National Policy Agenda (NPA)* has been developed to strengthen consultation and coordination with multiple stakeholders and actors. The *Ministerial and Technical Committee on Area C (ACCO)*, now *Area C Team*, within the Prime Minister's office, was established to lead policy planning. However, given the progressive fragmentation of the Palestinian space, local authorities have become a central actor in providing basic services to the population, especially in political and geographically remote areas.

WeWorld's context analysis, along with meetings with community members, local and national representatives and the Area C Team focal point, further confirmed the need for reinforcing the PNLA's involvement and accountability in addressing population needs as a response to the deprivation of rights observed in communities at the eve of CPA implementation in 2014.

³ The Applied Research Institute, "PPI & Palestinian Local Authorities" (2009) & World Bank (2017), *ibid* & Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA). See <https://www.apla.ps/en/about-us>

Several efforts have been made to advance the accountability of PNLAs through the CPA. More specifically, the creation of PRPs jointly with communities allowed for the involvement of local authorities in the implementation of actions identified as a response to direct needs, increasing the affected population's meaningful access to basic services. However, given the persistence of a highly coercive environment, responsive and remedial actions remain necessary.

Response mechanisms should be gradually transferred to local authorities as well, as was the case with the Tubas' Early Warning Response System (EWRS), implemented within the framework of the Tubas Rural Development and Business Opportunities (TURBO) project. This mechanism was created, along with an Early Warning and Response Unit (EWRU) at the Tubas Governorate level, to record violations of international law suffered by members of all the 30 communities. The system and response unit were

key to ensure an adequate and immediate response to those violations, shortening reporting times and formulating an efficient response both in material and legal support, which represented an appropriate response to the actual needs identified through the CPA.

In the long-run, there is a clear necessity in the West Bank to *strengthen even more governance synergies for enhancing a prompt responsiveness of duty-bearers towards right-holders' needs*, along with the establishment of safe and modular channels transferring responsibilities to central and local authorities, including ministries, governorates, municipalities, village councils. In parallel, *continuous efforts in empowering communities and mobilizing duty-bearers should guide the constant interaction with local and central authorities* and other relevant actors so as to enhance the meaningful participation of communities in policymaking. In line with this approach, the ultimate scope of the CPA is for aid organizations to exit the territory, supporting each community to become independent, meaning to own the process of advocating for the identification and implementation of actions addressing their needs by the relevant duty-bearers.

THE PEACE PROCESSES: THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

One of the main achievements of the Oslo Accords was the establishment of an ad interim governmental structure for oPt with a view to the formation of an independent Palestinian State, the so-called Palestinian National Authority. The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) leadership was regarded as key to the legitimization of the newly-established power. Decentralization along with the inclusion of pre-existing local institutions such as municipalities in some cases dating back to 1850s were also agreed upon.

Hence, the establishment of local authorities aimed at creating elected local units accountable for the provision of services, funded through the direct collection of local taxes and fees, and under the broader supervision of the Palestinian Ministry of Local Government established in 1994. Along with the emanation of the 1996 Local Elections Law, the 1997 Local Authorities Law No. 1 later amended by Decree No.9 in 2008 which defined the 27 areas of intervention under the local governments' responsibility.

The oPt are currently administrated by the Fatah-led government in the West Bank (divided in Area A, B and C), which houses the internationally recognized Palestinian Authority (PA), and Hamas-led de facto government in the Gaza strip that is not recognized by the majority of states.

AL 'IQAB: A SUCCESS STORY FROM THE FIELD

Al 'Iqab (Bethlehem) is a high-risk community located in Area C and surrounded by four main Israeli settlements in the West Bank and a bypass road. Dwellers are at constant risk to violence and land seizure by Israeli Forces and settlers.

Prior to WeWorld's intervention, Al 'Iqab's children were exposed daily to severe threats on their way to school, forcing many of them to drop-out, especially girls. Through coordination and empowerment activities with community members, WeWorld managed to construct an emergency primary school inside the community.

This intervention raised the attention of the Ministry of Education (MoEHE) to the educational vulnerability in the community and dwellers felt empowered to advocate for the construction of safe education facilities.

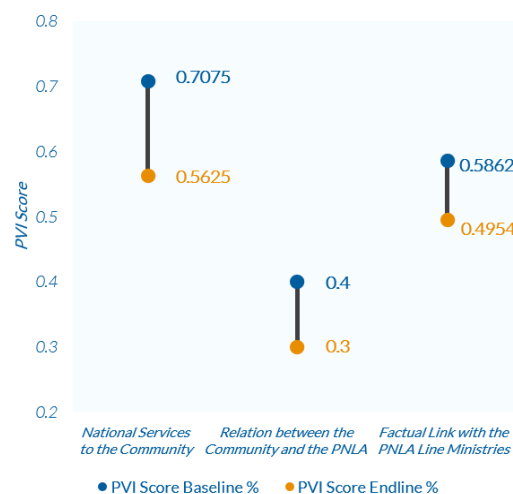
In May 2018, the MoEHE constructed a new school with full standards in order to serve all students in the community: students are no longer exposed to violence and humiliation when accessing their right to education.

03. THE CPA AND EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

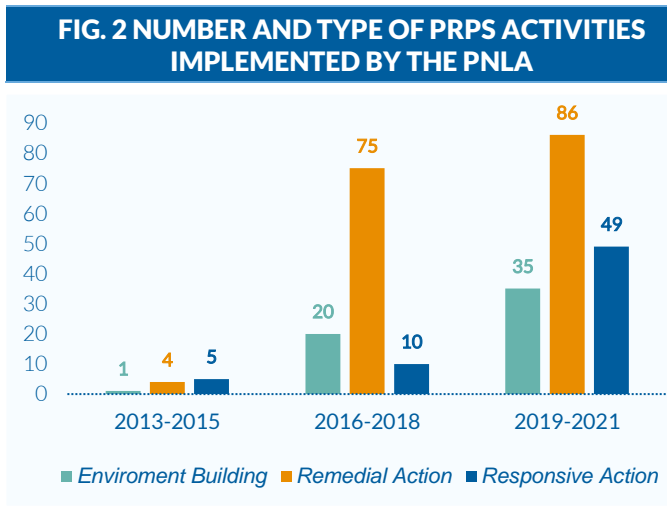
The long-standing commitment with local communities fostered by the CPA's implementation, together with the improved coordination and dialogue with local and governorate authorities has enabled an environment in which the PRPs are increasingly being used for Institutional Planning.

As Figure 1 shows, the three main subsectors within the *Relation with PNLAs Sector* – namely, national services to the community, relation between community and local authorities, factual link with national line ministries – *have shown a significant decrease in vulnerability since the implementation of the CPA*, constituting one of the most improved sectors. National Services to the community had a 14.5% decrease, Relation between community and PNLA 10% decrease and link with national line ministries 9.08% decrease, Hence, the strong emphasis in supporting local and national authorities through the CPA has proven to be fruitful.

FIG. 1 AVERAGE VULNERABILITY CHANGE IN RELATION WITH THE PNLA



Average Vulnerability Change in the CPA 2020 targeted Communities in Relation with National and Local Authorities Sub-sectors (Endline - Baseline)



The decrease in vulnerability is also showcased by the increasing number of PRPs' activities directly implemented by the PNLAs. As Figure 2 illustrates, there has been a progressive and significant increase of both responsive, remedial and environment building activities taken over by the PNLA in the years since CPA implementation, jumping from only 10 activities in the 2013-2015 period to 105 activities between 2016-2018, reaching 170 in the last

three years.⁴ This proves that CPA implementation has positively contributed to engagement with local authorities in addressing the communities' direct needs, identified with the communities through the PRPs.

All sectors of intervention have experienced an increase in the number of activities⁵ directly carried out by local and national authorities during the years the CPA was implemented, with the top five sectors being *Livelihoods, Health, Access, Wash and Education* (Figure 3, see Annex). The fact that the Relation with PNLA activities are very low in numbers is due to this type of activity mostly being implemented by other actors with the aim of enhancing local authorities' accountability.

In fact, if we extend our scrutiny to PRPs activities implemented by all actors⁶ (Figure 4, see Annex) we can observe an *increase in the number of activities implemented in sectors like "Civil Society Presence" and "Relation with National and Local authorities" which are considered "environment building" activities* per se, namely aimed at creating and/or consolidating an environment conducive to the full respect for the rights of the individual.

Environment building activities are not limited to the two aforementioned sectors; rather such activities can be identified in different sectors, such as WASH, Livelihood, Health, Education, Energy, and responses to Settler Violence incidents.

The entire process of the CPA includes activities that boost the accountability of PNLAs towards communities. One of the critical aspects in any emergency situation is to promote a shift from purely humanitarian assistance to development projects and program accordingly. Hence, the so called "Environment building activities" are the first steps toward helping communities reduce their aid dependency over time by enhancing local capacities.

As previously stated, *Relation with the PNLA* has been one of the sectors that showed the greatest improvement in decreasing the vulnerabilities of the targeted communities. The long-standing

⁴ It should be also considered that only the first trimester of 2021 is accounted in this analysis.

⁵ Some responsive activities, such as "Responses to emerging cases of destruction of property by settlers" are considered ongoing as if these events occur there is an ongoing response mechanism in place.

⁶ All partners WBPC, local & INGOs and the local authorities that range from municipalities and village councils to relevant ministries.

presence of the partner organizations in the WBPC and the involvement with the communities through the process of empowerment have demonstrated success, shifting from a needs-based approach to a rights-based approach. Communities are starting to demand their rights to a safe and dignified life.

04. Annex

FIG. 3 NUMBER OF PRPs ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE PNLA BY SECTOR

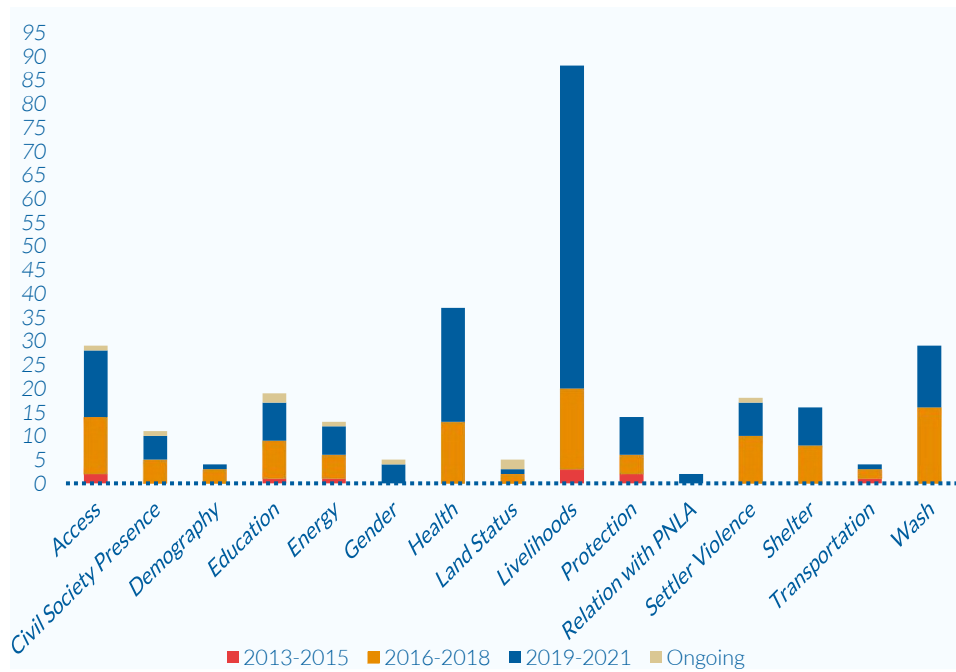


FIG. 4 NUMBER OF PRPs ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY ALL ACTORS BY SECTOR

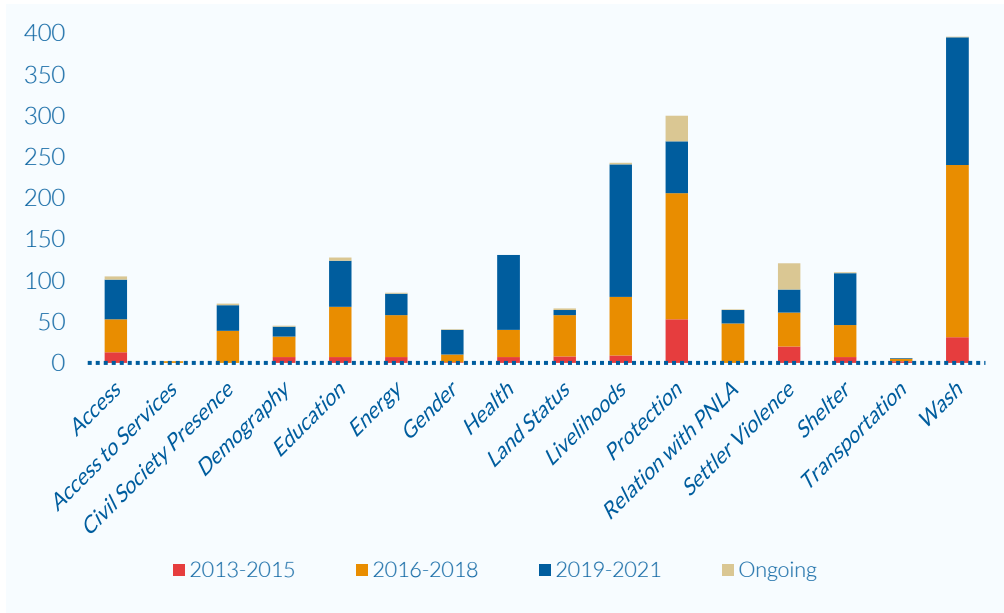


FIG. 5 NUMBER OF PRPs ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE PNLA

