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**PALESTINE**

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**RING**  
**INTEGRATED STRENGTHENING**  
**OF THE PALESTINIAN HEALTH SYSTEM**

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***PROJECT DOCUMENT***

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**AUGUST 2017**

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## **B. ACRONYMS**

AC: Advisory Committee

AICS: Italian Agency for Development Cooperation

DGCS: General Directorate for the Development Cooperation

DPO: Disabled Persons' Organization

EU: European Union

EUREP: Office of the European Union Representative

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

HIS: Health Information System

HSWG: Health Sector Working Group

IC: Italian Cooperation

ICU: Intensive Care Unit

IDFMP: International Development of Family Medicine in Palestine

MAP UK: Medical Aid for Palestine United Kingdom

MCH: Maternal and Child Health

MOFP: Ministry of Finance and Planning

MOH: Ministry of Health

NCD: Non-Communicable Disease

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NPA: National Policy Agenda

OPD: Outpatient Department

PEGASE: Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique

PHC : Primary Health Care

PMC: Palestinian Medical Complex

PMO: Prime Minister's Office

PNA: Palestinian National Authority

ROF: Result Oriented Framework

SDG: Sustainable Development Goal

UNRWA: United Nation Relief and Works Agency

WHO: World Health Organization

1. IDENTIFICATION DATA OF THE INITIATIVE				
<b>Country</b>	Palestine			
<b>Title</b>	RING – Integrated Strengthening of the Palestinian Health System			
<b>Channel</b>	Bilateral local funds managed by AICS and budget support as per art. 7 Law 125/2014			
<b>Type</b>	Grant			
<b>Promoting party</b>	Italian Agency for Development Cooperation-Jerusalem			
<b>Implementing parties</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Palestinian Authorities: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Finance and Planning</li> <li>2. Italian Government: Italian Agency for Development Cooperation-Jerusalem</li> </ol>			
<b>Executive party</b>	-			
<b>Duration</b>	36 months			
<b>Estimated total budget</b>	Euro	11,500,000	%	100
<b>Financial participation requested</b>	<b>Euro</b>		<b>%</b>	
<b>Other financial participations</b>				
▪ <i>Locale Partners</i>	Euro		%	
▪ <i>Others</i>	Euro		%	
2. PRESENTATION OF THE INITIATIVE				
2.1 Summary of contents				
<p>This program proposal is part of the Italian Cooperation (IC) programming for 2017 in Palestine, in continuity and synergy with the initiatives being implemented in the health sector over the past five years: POSIT program aimed at strengthening the primary health care (PHC) system and CRONO program aimed at tackling chronic non-communicable diseases (NCD) in Palestine.</p> <p>The three-year long RING program, with a total budget of € 11.500.000, aims at strengthening the Palestinian health system with integrated actions addressing several building blocks of the system. Services for the prevention and control of chronic diseases will be strengthened through the organization of health education campaigns, the reinforcement of the PHC system according to the family medicine approach, the development of the screening programs of breast and colon cancers and the strengthening of the different levels of the referral system from the community up to high-specialty hospitals. Epidemiological surveillance and performance monitoring are important aspects of the control of chronic diseases, and, for this reason, it is planned to support the organization and management of the cancer registry and, more broadly, the strengthening of the health information system.</p> <p>With regard to mental health services, the network of community mental health centers will be strengthened to facilitate the de-institutionalization of chronic patients hospitalized in the Psychiatric Hospital in Bethlehem; psycho-social rehabilitation services will be implemented with creation of opportunities for employment and social integration of users of mental health services (through job grants, social enterprises, service cooperatives, etc.).</p> <p>Inclusive accessibility for disabled persons to health infrastructures built with the IC support will also be ensured. The initiative also intends to strengthen public health programs aimed at reducing inequalities and improving maternal and child health, with a specific focus on pregnancy and first two years of life of the baby ("the first one thousand days"), with an integrated approach to address issues related to mother and child nutrition, post-partum depression, and child's psycho-physical and cognitive development. In this regard, the Obstetric Center of Yabod will be built through the budget support mechanism. In order to</p>				

ensure the development of the Palestinian healthcare system, budget support funds will be used also for building and equipping the cardiology service of Jenin Hospital, and equipping the cardiology service of Hebron Hospital in order to respond to the needs of the population in areas with poor health infrastructure and thus reduce referrals outside the public system. For the same reason, it is also planned to finance through the budget support the construction of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the Palestinian Medical Complex (PMC) in Ramallah.

Direct beneficiary of the initiative is the entire Palestinian population, while the Ministry of Finance and Planning (MOFP) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) will benefit for the impact on the health expenditures due to the reduced burden of diseases.

This initiative is aligned to the National Health Strategy 2017-2022, in the framework of the National Policy Agenda (NPA) 2017-2022. It is also aligned to the European Joint Programming for Palestine, strengthening the role of the Italian Cooperation as lead donor among EU Member States.

## 2.2 Financial plan and cost overview

N.	Budget item	Estimate cost (Euro)		% Grand Total
		Budget support	Direct management AICS	
		<i>Italian grant funds</i>		
1	Construction	2,080,000		18.1
2	Medical equipment	4,700,000	180,000	42.5
3	Office equipment and furniture		110,000	0.9
4	Vehicles		430,000	3.7
5	Training	180,000	450,000	5.4
6	Technical assistance		779,000	6.9
7	Workshops, conferences and other public events		150,000	1.3
8	Production of health education audiovisual materials and dissemination campaigns		265,000	2.3
9	Psycho-social rehabilitation activities	524,000		4.6
10	Operational research		130,000	1.1
11	Program management		912,000	7.9
12	Overheads		610,000	5.3
	<i>Total by component</i>	7,484,000	4,016,000	
	<i>% by component</i>	65%	35%	
	<i>Grand Total</i>	11,500,000		100.0

## 3. CONTEXT OF THE INITIATIVE

### 3.1 Reference framework

The Palestinian health system operates in a complex political and economic situation that affects the health of the population. Some points to be highlighted are the following:

- geographical and political separation between West Bank and Gaza Strip;
- persistent stagnation of the economy, resulting in high unemployment and incidence of poverty;
- fragmentation of the service delivery system resulting in restrictions on people's movement and access to services, and poor overall healthcare efficiency;
- high demographic growth (mainly in Gaza) and increase in life expectancy, accompanied by an increasing demand for health services by the population of a low-middle income country living side by side and confronted with the healthcare system of Israel, one of the most advanced in the world.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has undertaken a consultation process with the Ministries of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and the donors' community that led to the publication of the National Policy Agenda (NPA) 2017-2022. This programming document aims to map out national development priorities for the next six years; on this basis, the various line Ministries have formulated the sectoral development strategies that are being approved.

NPA 2017-2022 identifies as priority objectives strengthening of the health system and improvement of the health and well-being of the Palestinian population. On this basis, the National Health Strategy 2017-2022 defines the strategic priorities for the health sector, including: (i) reforming the public health insurance system; (ii) improving the quality of health services; (iii) increasing equity in access to health services; (iv) reinforcing primary prevention interventions to promote healthy lifestyles; (v) implementation of the "family medicine" approach; (vi) consolidation of interventions to prevent and treat chronic NCDs.

IC is one of the main donors in Palestine and is a reliable interlocutor that supports the current budget of the PNA, promotes socio-economic development of Palestine and ensures adequate humanitarian intervention to protect the vulnerable groups of the population. In 2012, the IC commitment to support the PNA was enshrined by signing the Cooperation Framework Agreement (Rome, 23 November 2012) with implementation of a three-year Cooperation Program 2013-2015 for an amount of € 30,000,000 as grant and € 30,000,000 as loan. In the three-year period 2013-2015, IC has honored its commitments, doubling the initially promised grants and loans. Commitments made at the Cairo Conference (October 2014) on reconstruction in the Gaza Strip were also fully honored.

For decades, the health sector has been one of the main areas of intervention of the IC in Palestine. After the Oslo Agreement (1993-1994) and the establishment of PNA, Italy contributed to the development of the Palestinian MOH and health system, playing also, for many years, the lead role in the Health Sector Working Group (HSWG) for donors' coordination in Palestine and it is currently lead donor for the European Union (EU).

Following the aforementioned Italo-Palestinian bilateral summit in Rome on 23 November 2012, initiatives have started and are still underway, with a focus on strengthening primary health care system and control of chronic diseases: (i) POSIT project, with a budget of € 5,450,000 as a grant, 60% of which through the budget support mechanism according to the Article 15 of Law 49/1987 and the Article 7 of Law 125/2014; (ii) CRONO project, with a budget of € 3,000,000, of which € 1,650,000 of budget support), and (iii) the construction of two hospitals in the Hebron Governorate for an amount of €10,000,000 in loan.

The POSIT project aims to strengthen primary care services for: women's health, with a focus on breast cancer prevention and establishment of new obstetric services; prevention and control of chronic diseases; strengthening of emergency services and community mental health services; and mainstreaming of disability.

The CRONO project has ensured continuity to the previous initiative with regard to the activities carried out for the prevention and control of chronic diseases and for the primary and secondary prevention of breast cancer.

These activities are consistent with strategies set by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international global health institutions. In particular, WHO has published the Global Plan of Action 2013-2020 for the prevention and control of chronic diseases, where voluntary global targets are set for

countries. In addition, the fight against chronic diseases, with particular reference to low-middle income countries where 80% of global mortality due to these causes is occurring, is one of the top priorities for global health and is included in the Objective 3.4 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

In the European context, starting from 2013, in line with the “Code of Conduct on Division of Labor in the EU”, Italy plays a leading role in coordinating Member States in the following sectors:

- HEALTH, as lead donor
- GENDER, as lead donor
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, as active donor.

In 2016, in line with the Busan Forum on Aid Effectiveness and the EU Agenda for Change (2012), under the auspices of the Office of the European Union Representative in Jerusalem (EUREP), member states have stepped up their commitment to an approach more aligned with local policies to support development in Palestine. This joint process, which led to the formulation of the sixteen sector fiches (sectoral programming documents) in 2013-2015, is culminating in the current year with the launch of the EU Joint Strategy.

### ***3.2 Localization of the initiative, needs analysis and interventions needs***

As many other low-middle income countries, Palestine is experiencing a demographic, social and epidemiological transition with an increase in life expectancy (75.2 years for women and 72.1 for men in 2016); decrease in infant mortality (10.9 per 1,000 live births) and maternal (15.7 per 100,000 live births); and growth of non-communicable chronic diseases (cardiovascular, respiratory, tumor and diabetes) that account for more than 70% of overall mortality. Immunization programs (100% coverage) and services for pregnancy and childbirth (nearly 100% of deliveries are assisted by healthcare staff) contributed to a good control of infectious diseases and perinatal conditions.

The total health expenditure of US \$ 1,321,000 per year accounts for 10.7% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) according to the last National Health Accounts (2015). The high proportion of out-of-pocket household expenditure (45.5% of total health expenditure) and the large share of people not covered by any insurance scheme (18% of the population, about 800,000 people) hamper the access to health services by the poor and vulnerable groups of the population, exposing them to the risk of catastrophic costs that may further impoverish families.

Health services are provided by a mix of providers, including the MOH, the United Nation Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and the private providers (for-profit and not-for-profit organizations), in addition to the Palestinian Hospitals of East Jerusalem that are considered part of the Palestinian health system.

The Palestinian MOH manages 26 hospitals with a total of 3,259 beds and 472 primary health care centers, being the main first and second level healthcare provider. However, the public hospital network is not able to deliver all the high-specialty services needed for the Palestinian population, including many of the oncology services (also because radiotherapy and nuclear diagnostics are not authorized in Palestine). Patients requiring specialized services not provided by the government system are referred from the MOH to Palestinian private hospitals, to East Jerusalem hospitals or abroad (especially Israel, only in small numbers in Egypt). In 2016, 91,936 referrals involving 51,713 patients were made outside the public system with an estimated cost of about € 143,000,000. Almost all these referrals outside the public system are related to chronic NCDs (more than 23% for oncology cases). Reducing this spending is a priority issue in the NPA 2017-2022 in order to reduce government deficit and public debt.

A priority for the Palestinian Ministry of Health is therefore the development of high-specialty hospital services to respond to the population demand within the Palestinian healthcare system, thus reducing the number of referrals abroad and the related costs which currently account for about 40% of the entire health budget.

Public health services, managed by the Palestinian MOH, are funded by the MOFP, which receives compulsory government insurance scheme premiums for public employees and their families (and which operates with a significant gap between costs and revenues), and co-payment for services. An important contribution to health budget comes from donor funding also in the form of support to the MOH budget.

The Palestinian MOH is aware of the need to improve the organization and regulation of the healthcare system and the network among providers. Governance, leadership and policy formulation skills also need to be strengthened by making structural reforms of the healthcare system, with a focus on financing health expenditures and universal health coverage, the public insurance scheme and the payment of private hospital care providers.

It is worth noting that MOFP provides funds to the health sector not as planned in terms of amount and timeliness and this situation, in addition to the unpredictability of international aid, hinders effective programming. There is a frequent rupture of stocks of medicines and consumables with the need for citizens to buy them in the private market at high cost.

Development aid is provided by 84 donors (bilateral and multilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations – NGOs, etc) operating in the health sector. Among them, the European Commission, through the mechanism Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique (PEGASE), contributed to the PNA budget with € 2.1 billion in the period 2008-2016, partly used for the payment of debts accumulated by East Jerusalem Hospitals for the hospitalization of Palestinian patients.

Despite the above-mentioned difficulties, health indicators in Palestine are relatively positive when compared to those in other Middle East countries for both maternal and child health.

As far as women's health is concerned, one of the major health problems is breast cancer that is the most frequent type of cancer and the second cause of death for women in Palestine. Cases of breast cancer are often diagnosed in advanced stages with unfavorable prognosis. It is for this reason that, in POSIT and CRONO programs, the digitalization of the analog mammography units in primary health care centers and the supply of ultrasound machines to the referral centers have been planned and implementation is underway to strengthen the screening program and increase the coverage.

The trend of increase in chronic diseases in Palestine is associated with the unfavorable combination of poverty, unemployment and psychosocial stress resulting from occupation and reduced freedom of movement, which are combined with the high prevalence of behavioral risk factors such as smoking, physical inactivity and unhealthy diets. Cardiovascular diseases and tumors are the leading causes of death. Diabetes is on the rise, and is associated with obesity and metabolic syndrome, with an estimated direct cost of US \$ 28,000,000 per year, excluding complications. The prevalence of kidney failure is also growing, as a result of hypertensive and diabetic nephropathy.

In this scenario, promotion of health and primary and secondary prevention of chronic NCDs at community and individual levels are of great importance. These interventions require the strengthening of primary care services and their re-orientation according to the family medicine approach to promote continuity in health care and integration of services. MOH is working on the implementation of this approach in partnership with WHO, IC, Medical Aid for Palestine - United Kingdom (MAP UK) and International Development of Family Medicine in Palestine (IDFMP). MOH is also updating the national strategy for contrasting NCDs.

As far as child health is concerned, MOH has adopted the National Strategy for Early Childhood Development and Intervention. In this context, MOH and UNRWA are developing, together with the Palestinian National Institute of Public Health, the “national electronic mother and child health registry” to ensure standardization of data collection and reporting in order to support monitoring, evaluation and evidence-based decision making in this important area. It is worth noting that child development is the result of the interaction between individual biological characteristics and the environment in which the child is born, lives and grows. In this regard, the first 1,000 days of life represent a window of opportunity not only to ensure the psycho-physical development of the child (growth, cognitive and emotional development, wellbeing etc.), but also to prevent chronic illness in adulthood, such as obesity,



cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer. Risk prevention at this age becomes a public health priority also considering the potential accumulation of the individual risk over time and the possible synergistic effect of multiple risks at the same time. A positive environment must first provide proper nutrition, promote relational processes (within and outside the family), and ensure access to maternal and child health services.

Concerning the development of mental health services, MOH identified in the National Mental Health Strategy Palestine 2015-2019 the following priorities: (i) integration of mental health services into the primary care system, (ii) the expansion of community mental health centers, and (iii) focus on post-traumatic psychiatric disorders and crisis intervention.

Concerning disability, MOH is committed to ensure inclusive accessibility to healthcare facilities and creation of working opportunities for disabled people.

MOH also intends to reinforce data collection, analysis and use in the cancer registry in order to strengthen epidemiological surveillance and evaluation of the results in the prevention and control of cancers.

In order to reduce the number of referrals outside the Palestinian public system, MOH intends to pursue the "nationalization" strategy with development of infrastructures, supply of medical equipment and training of health personnel in order to provide high-specialty services for the Palestinian population within the national territory.

#### **4. DESCRIPTION OF THE INITIATIVE**

##### ***4.1 Subject of the initiative, Strategy of intervention and Methodology of approach***

On the basis of the result of the above mentioned bilateral summit held in Rome on 23 November 2012, and in accordance with the Italian Cooperation Three-Year Programming Document 2016-2018 and the 2017 Programming approved by the Joint Committee on 19 May 2017, IC intends to strengthen the health sector, for which Italy is the EU lead donor in the division of labor among European member states. The strengthening of the EU lead donor role is even more important in the context of EU Joint Programming.

In strategic continuity with the three-year POSIT Program for strengthening the Palestinian primary health care system (2013-2015) and with the one-year CRONO Program for tackling chronic non-communicable diseases (2016), this initiative aims to extend the results achieved in the reinforcement of primary care health services and in the prevention and control chronic NCDs that represent the most important public health priorities. In fact, chronic NCDs are the main causes of disease load, premature mortality and health expenditure.

Prevention is the best strategy to reduce the incidence and prevalence of chronic diseases and their complications because the control of modifiable risk factors at the individual and population levels allows not only to reduce the frequency but also the morbidity and mortality.

This initiative aims to strengthen the Palestinian health system with integrated actions addressing several building blocks of the system. Services for the prevention and control of chronic diseases will be strengthened through the organization of health education campaigns, the reinforcement of the PHC system according to the family medicine approach, the development of the screening programs of breast and colon cancers and the strengthening of the different levels of the referral system from the community up to high-specialty hospitals. Epidemiological surveillance and performance monitoring are important aspects of the control of chronic diseases, and, for this reason, it is planned to support the organization and management of the cancer registry and, more broadly, the strengthening of the health information system.

With regard to mental health services, the network of community mental health centers will be strengthened to facilitate the de-institutionalization of chronic patients hospitalized in the Psychiatric Hospital in Bethlehem; psycho-social rehabilitation services will be implemented with creation of opportunities for employment and social integration of users of mental health services (through job grants, social enterprises, service cooperatives, etc.).

Inclusive accessibility for disabled persons to health infrastructures built with the IC support will also be ensured. The initiative also intends to strengthen public health programs aimed at reducing inequalities and improving maternal and child health (MCH), with a specific focus on pregnancy and first two years of life of the baby ("the first one thousand days"), with an integrated approach to address issues related to mother and child nutrition, post-partum depression, and child's psycho-physical and cognitive development. In this regard, the Obstetric Center of Yabod will be built through the budget support mechanism. In order to ensure the development of the Palestinian healthcare system, budget support funds will be used for building and equipping the cardiology service of Jenin Hospital, and equipping the cardiology service of Hebron Hospital in order to respond to the needs of the population in areas with poor health infrastructure and thus reduce referrals outside the public system. For the same reason, it is also planned to finance through the budget support the construction of the neonatal ICU of the Palestinian Medical Complex in Ramallah.

This integrated approach aims to ensure continuity and coherence in the sequence of interventions on health determinants, primary, secondary and tertiary prevention and clinical management of complex pathologies in high specialty services:

- primary prevention focused on interventions to prevent or reduce the occurrence and development of diseases (with activities of health promotion and health education such as anti-smoking campaign and promotion of healthy lifestyles, regulation on reducing the content of salt in food, increased taxation on sugary drinks with consequent reduction in consumption, etc.);
- secondary prevention focused on early diagnosis of the disease and timely clinical management (with screening programs for breast and colon cancers, etc.);
- tertiary prevention focused on interventions to prevent complications and recurrences of the diseases and subsequent disability (with patient monitoring and follow-up, rehabilitation etc.)
- clinical management of complex pathologies in high specialty services (with construction of infrastructures, supply of equipment and training of healthcare professionals).

In developing this project, adequate consideration has been taken to technical and social innovations promoting efficiency and equity in health care delivery, through the utilization of know-how and experience of Italian centers of excellence. Criteria of innovation, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness were used in selecting interventions to be implemented in partnership with Italian institutions, therefore valorizing the excellence expressed by the Italian system. This approach allows also to address complex problems of public health and emergency situations in a perspective of sustainable health development (from relief to development), while ensuring recognition of the role of Italy by other donors. In particular, an agreement has been planned with the Department of Mental Health in Trieste for training and technical assistance on strengthening the network of mental health centers and services for psycho-social rehabilitation.

With regard to aid effectiveness (in accordance with the principles of the Paris Declaration), this proposal, developed together with the Palestinian MOH, ensures coherence and alignment of the Italian contribution to national policies, as well as consideration of the country's ownership, also using the mechanism of the budget support (Article 7, Law 125/14). The intervention will be implemented directly, with the assistance of AICS, by the MOH and MOFP for the component of budget support, and managed by AICS, in partnership with MOH, for the component of local funds.

The planned interventions use a public health approach based on evidence and are in line with WHO recommendations on prevention of chronic NCDs and cancer screening. Concerning consistency with the targets of the SDGs, one of the expected results of the initiative is the prevention and control of chronic NCDs (including screening of breast and colon cancers) responding to the target 3.4 on reduction of premature mortality due to non-communicable diseases. In addition, other expected results

are related to the improvement of maternal and child health, thus responding to targets 3.1 (maternal mortality reduction) and 3.2 (reduction of child mortality). Finally, improving access to health services and their coverage through the construction and equipment of new infrastructures, the training of healthcare staff and the development of prevention, diagnosis and care services is consistent with the target of 3.8 on universal health coverage.

The initiative is functionally integrated with the interventions that AICS is implementing in the areas of Gender and Social Protection and Economic Development. The initiative is also in line with the Italian Cooperation Three-Year Programming Document 2016-2018 approved by the Inter-ministerial Committee for Development Cooperation with regard to the geographical priorities, sectoral priorities (training of health staff, strengthening of health systems and access to health care), and crossing-cutting priorities (gender and disability).

Lastly, it is worth noting that the coverage of the mammographic screening program and the family medicine training centers as well as the number of referrals to Israeli hospitals are among the indicators of the Result Oriented Framework (ROF) - the tool for policy dialogue proposed by EUREP for monitoring the performance of the Palestinian MOH and shared with the Palestinian PMO as part of the evaluation of the European PEGASE mechanism to support the NPA budget.

#### **4.2 General objective**

General objective of the initiative is to improve the health status of the Palestinian population.

#### **4.3 Specific objectives**

There are two specific objectives:

1. Strengthening health system for health promotion and disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation with particular focus on chronic non-communicable diseases.
2. Improve the effectiveness of the support to the Ministry of Health by strengthening donors' coordination in the health sector.

#### **4.4 Beneficiaries**

Direct beneficiary of the initiative is the Palestinian population as a whole, in the West Bank (2.8 million) and Gaza (1.8 million), as it is exposed to the risk of chronic diseases as well as of premature mortality and permanent disability throughout their life. Prevention is able to significantly reduce the risk of morbidity and mortality at a population level, by acting on cohorts of young population. Women between 40 and 69 years, eligible under the current guidelines for mammographic screening, will be direct beneficiaries of the strengthening of the breast cancer screening program. Moreover, women and children will be direct beneficiaries of the MCH component of the project, with specific focus on the first 1000 days of life. Vulnerable groups (such as disabled persons and users of mental health services) will be beneficiaries of the activities aimed at ensuring, respectively, inclusive access to the health facilities and psycho-social rehabilitation.

Because the control of chronic diseases has an important effect on health spending for both the households and the government, the Palestinian MOH and MOFP are indirect beneficiaries of the program.

<b>4.5 Expected Results and Indicators</b>	
Expected results	Indicators
<b>Specific objective 1</b>	<b>Strengthening health system for health promotion and disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation with particular focus on chronic non-communicable diseases.</b>
<b>Result 1</b> Population in West Bank and in Gaza is sensitized and informed about the importance of health promotion and prevention of chronic non-communicable diseases and protected with adequate regulations.	Number of health education campaigns implemented
	Number of health education materials produced
	Number of health education multimedia products developed
	Number of laws and regulations on healthy lifestyle and food safety approved
<b>Result 2</b> The "early childhood development" approach focusing on the first 1000 days of the baby is implemented in women's, maternal-child and reproductive health services	Number of PHC Centers that implement early childhood development approach
	Number of cases of post-partum depression identified and managed
	Number of training courses organized
	Number of health professionals trained
	Number and type of equipment supplied
	Number of field visits for supportive supervision performed
	Number of missions of technical assistance performed
<b>Result 3</b> Breast cancer screening program is implemented in all districts and colon cancer screening program in three pilot districts	Number of Centers where breast cancer screening is performed
	Number of women who undergo mammography screening
	Number of women who undergo second level screening examination for breast cancer
	Number of women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer through screening program
	Total number of women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer
	Number of tests for colon cancer screening performed
	Number of persons who undergo second level screening examination for colon cancer
	Number of persons who have been diagnosed with colon cancer through screening program in the pilot districts
	Total number of persons who have been diagnosed with colon cancer in the pilot districts
	Number of field visits for supportive supervision performed
	Number of missions of technical assistance performed

<b>Result 4</b> The family medicine approach for the prevention, control and clinical management of chronic non-communicable diseases is implemented in primary health care services	Number of PHC Centers that implement family medicine approach
	Number of training courses organized
	Number of health professionals trained
	Number of medical doctors specialized in family medicine
	Number and type of equipment supplied
	Number of field visits for supportive supervision performed
<b>Result 5</b> An integrated system is in place in Palestine with community mental health centers taking care of patients with mental disorders discharged from the Psychiatric Hospital of Bethlehem	Number of training courses organized in Palestine
	Number of study tours organized in Italy
	Number of health professionals trained in Palestine
	Number of health professionals trained abroad
	Number of patients transferred from Bethlehem Psychiatric Hospital to Community Mental Health Centers
	Number of patients referred from Community Mental Health Centers to Bethlehem Psychiatric Hospital
	Number of field visits for supportive supervision performed
	Number of missions of technical assistance performed
<b>Result 6</b> Three pilot experiences of psychosocial rehabilitation are in place involving users of mental health services	Number of grants for job placement supplied
	Number of social cooperatives established and active
	Number of patients with mental disorders who are members of social cooperatives
	Number of sensitization events organized
	Number of field visits for supportive supervision performed
	Number of missions of technical assistance performed
<b>Result 7</b> Healthcare facilities built with the support of Italian Cooperation meet the accessibility criteria for disabled persons	Number of health infrastructures that meet inclusive accessibility criteria for disabled persons
	Number of elevators installed with the support of the program
	Number of sensitization events organized by Disabled Persons' Organization (DPOs) and supported by the program
<b>Result 8</b> The Health Information System and the Cancer Registry are able to provide reliable information for monitoring health services and guiding health policies	Number of health institutions reporting performance data according to the schedule
	Number of performance reports that meet quality standard
	Ratio between cancer cases recorded in the Cancer Registry and expected cases
	Number of evidence-based public health actions taken on the basis of cancer registry data
	Number of missions of technical assistance performed
<b>Result 9</b> The services of interventional cardiology are functioning at Governmental Hospitals of Jenin and Hebron	Number of infrastructures completed
	Number and type of equipment supplied
	Number of patients admitted

	Number of Outpatient Department (OPD) visits
	Number of referrals avoided through the cardiology services established
	Number of onsite training courses organized
	Number of health professionals trained on site
	Number of health professionals trained abroad
	Number of missions of technical assistance performed
<b>Result 10</b> The Obstetric Center is built and functioning in Yabod; the neonatal ICU at the Palestinian Medical Complex in Ramallah is built and the Tubas Health Office is expanded	Number of infrastructures completed
	Number and type of equipment supplied
	Number of deliveries attended in the Yabod obstetric center
	Number of training courses organized
	Number of health professionals trained
<b>Result 11</b> The Program is coordinated, implemented and monitored according to the Project Document	Number of Advisory Committee (AC) meetings held
	Number of Annual Operational Plans approved
	Number of biannual work plans approved
	Number of financial audits performed
	Number of monitoring visits performed
<b>Specific objective 2</b>	<b>Improve the effectiveness of the support to the Ministry of Health by strengthening donors' coordination in the health sector</b>
<b>Result 2.1</b> The harmonization of aid and the policy dialogue with the Palestinian Ministry of Health are coordinated by the Italian Cooperation	Number of meetings attended as EU lead
	Numbers of quarterly and annual ROF reports prepared
	Number of meetings of the HSWG and Thematic Groups attended
	Number of policy dialogue events attended

## 4.6 Activities

The activities described below are consistent with the expected results and aggregated according to them.

**Specific objective 1: Strengthening health system for health promotion and disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation with particular focus on chronic non-communicable diseases.**

**RESULT 1. 1: Population in West Bank and in Gaza is sensitized and informed about the importance of health promotion and prevention of chronic non-communicable diseases and protected with adequate regulations.**

Behavioral risk factors (smoking, unhealthy diet rich in salt, sugar and animal fats, and physical inactivity), social determinants (high poverty and unemployment) and psychosocial stress related to violence and military occupation, favor the increase in chronic non-communicable diseases. In this context, it is important to strengthen the activities of health promotion and prevention of these diseases as well as the activities of legislation and regulation to promote healthy lifestyles and ensure adequate nutritional standards in food.

**Activity 1.1.1: Production of paper/multimedia materials for information and health education**

With local funds, it is planned to produce paper/multimedia materials for health education campaigns. In particular, information materials will be produced for anti-smoking campaigns and promotion of healthy diet (rich in vegetables and fruits, poor in salt and sugar, etc.); initiatives to promote physical activity are also planned to be financed. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 100,000.

**Activity 1.1.2: Organization of health education campaigns and related events**

With local funds, information and communication campaigns are planned to be implemented to tackle the main risk factors for chronic diseases and to promote healthy lifestyles through radio and television spots, billboards/video and social media, in addition to public events, workshops and conferences. Such activities have already been successfully carried out in the POSIT and CRONO programs. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 110,000.

**Activity 1.1.3: Technical assistance for the definition of legislation and regulation related to healthy food and healthy lifestyle**

Missions of Italian experts are planned to provide technical assistance and training to Palestinian personnel for the definition of legislation and regulation regarding promotion of food safety and healthy lifestyle, with a focus on the content in trans fatty acids, salt and sugar in food and the implementation of the tax on sugary beverages (soda-tax). Technical assistance will focus also on the use of lab equipment to be provided to the Central Public Health Laboratory at the MOH in Ramallah for monitoring the quality of food, water, etc. (see Activity 1.4). The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 36,000.

**Activity 1. 1.4: Supply of equipment for the Central Public Health Laboratory**

Equipment are planned to be provided to the Central Public Health Laboratory at the MOH in Ramallah, such as liquid chromatography for analysis of additives, triglycerides and mycotoxins in food, spectrophotometers for analysis of chemical food preservatives, mercury analyzer for analysis of mercury content in food, water and soil, digital refractometer for analysis of water and fruit juice, a viscometer for analysis of fluid food, etc.). These analyzes aim to ensure monitoring of food quality and support the definition of food-related legislation and regulation (for example, reduction or elimination of trans fatty acids, implementation of soda-tax etc.). The funds allocated through budget support for this

activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 200,000.

**Activity 1.1.5:** Organization of workshops and conferences for the presentation of the results of health education initiatives

Workshops and conferences will be organized to present the results of health education initiatives and evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness, also in comparison with good international practices and performance of similar initiatives in neighboring countries. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 20,000.

**RESULT 1.2:** The "early childhood development" approach focusing on the first 1000 days of the baby is implemented in women's, maternal and child and reproductive health services

The initiative aims to strengthen maternal and child health services, with particular reference to pregnancy and the first two years of baby's life ("the first one thousand days"), with integrated interventions regarding mother and child nutrition, post-partum depression, and psycho-sensory, motor, cognitive and physical development of the child.

**Activity 1.2.1:** Supply of medical equipment for primary maternal and child health services

With local funds it is planned to provide medical equipment needed to monitor maternal and child health and the psycho-sensory, motor, cognitive and physical development of the child. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 130,000.

**Activity 1.2.2:** On-site training of health personnel of primary maternal and child health services.

It is planned to carry out on-site training of health care staff in health centers, with previous assessment of training needs and using active learning methods, aimed at the implementation of the guidelines adopted by the MOH to ensure continuity of prenatal care, care at birth and neonatal and child care, with a focus on identification and management of post-partum depression, monitoring of the mother's and child's nutritional status, and the child's psycho-sensory, motor, cognitive and physical development. The local funds allocated for this activity for the period 2017-2019 amount to € 90,000.

**Activity 1.2.3:** Technical assistance

Missions of Italian experts (40 days/person/year for three years) are planned to provide technical assistance and training to Palestinian personnel on implementation of the strategy of early childhood development (with a focus on the first 1000 days) and monitoring of the quality of maternal and neonatal services. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 70,000.

**RESULT 1.3:** Breast cancer screening program is implemented in all districts and colon cancer screening program in three pilot districts

Breast cancer screening activities will be carried out in continuity with those already implemented during the previous POSIT and CRONO Programs and will focus on expanding the screening program in all districts. As for the screening of colon cancer in three pilot districts, it will consist of the search for occult blood in the stools and, if positive, on endoscopic examinations (rectosigmoidoscopy and colonoscopy). It is worth noting that colon cancer originates often from benign tumors (adenomatous polyps) that can become malignant within a period of about 7-15 years. In this temporal window, screening allows, in addition to early diagnosis of already malignant tumors, to detect (and remove) polyps before they become malignant.

**Activity 1.3.1:** Supply of kits and equipment for colon cancer screening in pilot health centers

It is planned to provide the first stock of screening kits for the identification of occult blood in stools and medical equipment for colonoscopy and recto-sigmoidoscopy. The funds allocated through budget support for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 500,000.



**Activity 1.3.2:** On-site training for health professionals on colon cancer screening in pilot health centers and refresher training on screening of breast cancer

With local funds, it is planned to carry out on-site training of the healthcare staff of the pilot health centers for colon cancer screening as well as to upgrade healthcare staff working in the breast cancer screening centers who were already trained in the framework of POSIT and CRONO Programs. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 120,000.

**Activity 1.3.3:** Technical Assistance for training health professionals and monitoring breast cancer screening program and its referral system

Missions of Italian experts (40 days/person/year for three years) are planned to provide technical assistance and training to health personnel on the implementation of the breast cancer screening program. Local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 69,000.

**Activity 1.3.4:** Technical Assistance for training health professionals and monitoring colon cancer screening program and its referral system

Missions of Italian experts (70 days/person/year for three years) are planned to provide technical assistance and training for health personnel on the implementation of the colon cancer screening program. Local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 123,000.

**Activity 1.3.5:** Organization of workshops and scientific conferences for the presentation of the results of the screening of breast and colon cancers

It is planned to organize workshops and scientific conferences for dissemination of the results of the screening of breast and colon cancers and evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness compared to international standards and performance of the same programs in neighboring countries. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 20,000.

**RESULT 1.4:** The family medicine approach for the prevention, control and clinical management of chronic non-communicable diseases is implemented in primary health care services

In order to cope with the increase in chronic non-communicable diseases and multimorbidity, it is necessary to ensure the strengthening of primary health care services and their re-orientation according to the family medicine approach in order to provide integrated services and continuity of care through multidisciplinary teams that are responsible for the prevention, diagnosis and care services in specific catchment areas. These multidisciplinary teams consist of doctors, nurses, other healthcare professionals and social workers. The MOH is working on the implementation of this approach in partnership with WHO, Italian Cooperation, MAP UK and IDFMP. In this context, it is of great importance to ensure the supply of healthcare equipment and vehicles for mobile teams and the training of health and social workers: for this purpose, the MOH has decided to establish three primary health care training centers, respectively, in the northern, central and southern areas of the country. While the two centers in the central and southern areas are already operational, the one in the north is still not functioning and needs equipment and furniture. The supply of such materials and the functioning of the northern training center will therefore ensure the full coverage across the country. Furthermore, a three-year residential course for specialization in family medicine of medical doctors is under way at An-Najjah University in Nablus.

**Activity 1.4.1:** Supply of medical equipment for primary health care services

With local funds it is planned to provide medical equipment for primary health care services in order to ensure the adequate implementation of family medicine activities. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 50,000.

**Activity 1.4.2:** Training on family medicine approach for primary health care staff

With local funds, it is planned to carry out on-site training of the health staff of the multidisciplinary team of family medicine, with previous assessment of training needs and using active learning methods, aimed at the implementation of the guidelines adopted by the MOH with a focus on prevention and clinical management of chronic not communicable diseases through the approach of family medicine. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 50,000.

**Activity 1.4.3:** Supply of 3 vehicles to transport family medicine teams

It is planned to provide 3 vehicles (minibus type) for the transport of family medicine teams to ensure a better organization of visits to communities in the catchment areas by the multidisciplinary teams of family medicine. In this way, it is possible to ensure greater efficiency in the use of human resources and an increase in services provided to the population, especially in remote and disadvantaged areas. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 130,000.

**Activity 1.4.4:** Supply of furniture and teaching equipment for the new family medicine training center in Dair Al Ghoson

The purchase of furniture and teaching equipment is planned to ensure the full functionality of the new family medicine training center of Dair Al Ghoson (Tulkarem Directorate). It is worth noting that this training center, located in the northern area of the country, will complete the coverage of training centers throughout Palestine, as those located in the central and southern areas are already operational. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 30,000.

**Activity 1.4.5:** Organization of workshops and scientific conferences for the presentation of the results of the family medicine activities

It is planned to organize workshops and scientific conferences for presentation of the results of the family medicine activities and evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness in order to ensure dissemination of good practices and correction of errors and delays. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 20,000.

**RESULT 1.5:** An integrated system is in place in Palestine with community mental health centers taking care of patients with mental disorders discharged from the Psychiatric Hospital of Bethlehem

The network of community mental health centers will be strengthened to allow the de-institutionalization of chronic patients in the Psychiatric Hospital of Bethlehem with community mental health centers taking care of patients with mental disorders; in this context, an agreement with the Department of Mental Health of Trieste is planned for the technical assistance and training of Palestinian personnel working in mental health services.

**Activity 1.5.1:** On-site training of the health staff working in mental health services

With local funds, it is planned to train, with previous assessment of training needs and using active learning methods, the health staff working in the Psychiatric Hospital of Bethlehem and in community mental health centers aimed at implementing the biopsychosocial model of mental health and the integration of mental health services in the primary health care. The funds allocated for this activity for the period 2017-2019 amount to € 60,000.

**Activity 1.5.2:** Study tours, workshops, and conferences in Italy

For mental health professionals working in the Psychiatric Hospital of Bethlehem and in the community mental health centers, it is planned to participate in study visits in Italy on de-institutionalization and development of network of mental health centers as well as in international scientific conferences (2 persons for 12 days/year for 3 years). The funds allocated through the budget support foreseen for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 25,000.

**Activity 1.5.3:** Technical assistance

Missions of Italian experts from the Department of Mental Health of Trieste (2 persons for 45 days/year for 3 years) are planned to provide technical assistance and training to health personnel on the development of the network of community mental health centers. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 156,000.

**Activity 1.5.4:** Operational research in the field of mental health

It is planned to implement operational research activities on quality of mental health services and innovations in mental health practices. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 30,000.

**Activity 1.5.5:** Organization of workshops and scientific conferences for the presentation of the results of the interventions regarding mental health

It is planned to organize workshops and scientific conferences for presentation of the results of the interventions regarding mental health and evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 30,000.

**RESULT 1.6:** Three pilot experiences of psychosocial rehabilitation are in place involving users of mental health services

Activities for psychosocial rehabilitation and social integration will be implemented with creation of job placement for users of mental health services (through grants in support of job placement, creation of social cooperatives, etc.) in three districts in Palestine. The agreement with the Department of Mental Health of Trieste will also focus on psychosocial rehabilitation with provision of technical assistance and training of Palestinian personnel working in mental health services.

**Activity 1.6.1:** On-site training of the health staff working in mental health services

With local funds, it is planned to train mental health staff, with previous assessment of training needs and using active learning methods, on psychosocial rehabilitation of users of mental health services to be achieved through social integration and job placement. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 60,000.

**Activity 1.6.2:** Management of psychosocial rehabilitation services

Through funds from the budget support, it is planned to recruit staff (3 occupational therapists, 3 social workers and 3 psychologists) to support the process of social integration and job placement of users of mental health services. The administrative and accounting activities for the management of the funds will be performed by a local accountant based at the Palestinian MOH in Ramallah. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 284,000.

**Activity 1.6.3:** Implementation of psychosocial rehabilitation services for users of Psychiatric Hospital and mental health centers

In order to promote a productive life for users of the Psychiatric Hospital of Bethlehem and mental health centers, it is planned to create job placement, with budget support funds, through provision of grants, creation of social cooperatives, etc., and to facilitate access to the labor market. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 240,000.

**Activity 1.6.4:** Technical assistance

Missions of Italian experts from the Department of Mental Health of Trieste (2 people for 24 days/year for 3 years) are planned to provide technical assistance and training to health personnel on psychosocial rehabilitation with a focus on job placement and creation of social cooperatives. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 84,000.

**Activity 1.6.5:** Study tours, workshops, and conferences in Italy

For mental health professionals working in the Psychiatric Hospital of Bethlehem and in the community mental health centers, it is planned to participate in study visits in Italy on psychosocial rehabilitation as well as in international scientific conferences (2 persons for 12 days/year for 3 years). The funds allocated for this activity through the budget support in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 25,000.

**Activity 1.6.6:** Organization of workshops and scientific conferences for the presentation of the results of the interventions regarding mental health

It is planned to organize workshops and scientific conferences for presentation of the results of the interventions on psychosocial rehabilitation and evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 20,000

**RESULT 1.7: Healthcare facilities built with the support of Italian Cooperation meet the accessibility criteria for disabled persons**

**Activity 1.7.1:** Technical assistance for the verification of compliance with criteria for inclusive accessibility for disabled persons in the design, construction and equipment of healthcare facilities built with the support of the Italian Cooperation

It is planned to organize missions in Palestine by an Italian expert (1 person for 23 days/year for 3 years) to provide technical assistance to verify the compliance with criteria of inclusive accessibility for disabled persons to already built healthcare facilities. The Italian expert will be also in charge to ensure facilitated paths of access to health facilities to be constructed with funds from the Italian Cooperation. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 40,000.

**Activity 1.7.2:** Installation of two elevators for disabled persons in the PHC centers of Bethlehem and Hebron

In order to ensure inclusive accessibility for disabled persons, the supply and installation of 2 elevators are planned in the primary health centers with four floors located in Bethlehem and Hebron. The funds allocated through the budget support for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 100,000.

**Activity 1.7.3:** Organization of events, seminars and workshops with disabled persons organizations

It is planned to organize events, seminars and workshops on inclusive accessibility for disabled persons to ensure dissemination of good practices and evaluation of the results of the interventions. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 40,000.

**RESULT 1.8: The Health Information System and the cancer registry are able to provide reliable information for monitoring health services and guiding health policies**

Epidemiological surveillance and monitoring trends are important activities for controlling chronic diseases, so support is planned for the organization and management of the cancer registry. Because of the technical complexity of the organization of the cancer registry in Palestine and its importance in the framework of the current and planned interventions for primary and secondary prevention of cancer (in particular, breast and colon cancers) as well as clinical management of oncology cases, an extensive support will be provided using the know-how and experience of centres of excellence in Italy, and technical assistance by Italian experts will be ensured for capacity building of the MOH personnel. Concerning the development of information systems, the support is focused on improving the quality of data and strengthening the use of information for service planning and performance monitoring, with a paradigm shift from the model based on data collection and reporting for statistical purposes to the model based on use of information for decision-making based on evidence.

**Activity 1.8.1:** Capacity building of healthcare personnel on cancer registry and use of information for evidence-based decision making

With local funds it is planned to train health personnel on cancer registry and use of information for

evidence-based decision making. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 70,000.

**Activity 1.8.2:** Technical assistance for the cancer registry

Missions of Italian experts (55 days/person/year for three years) are planned to provide technical assistance and training to health personnel for the organization of the cancer register, focusing on improving collection, coding and storage of cancer diagnosis and treatment data and their availability for analysis, dissemination and public health research. Local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 96,000.

**Activity 1.8.3:** Technical assistance for dissemination and use of information for policy making

Missions of Italian experts (32 days/person/year for three years) are planned to provide technical assistance on dissemination and use of information for evidence-based decision-making, focusing on the organization of the system for collecting, analyzing, reporting and using data at different levels of the healthcare system, while, at the central level, the focus is on strategic areas with high technical and innovation profile, such as decision support system and production of evidence for the development of health policies and strategies. Local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 57,000.

**Activity 1.8.4:** Preparation and printing of forms and materials for data collection and technical reports

It is planned to prepare and print forms and materials for the cancer registry and technical reports. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 55,000.

**Activity 1.8.5:** Operational researches in the field of cancer registry and health information systems

It is planned to implement operational research activities to monitor the health system performance, disseminate good practices and guide corrective actions for the issues documented. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 100,000.

**Activity 1.8.6:** Supply of IT equipment, software and furniture

It is planned to supply IT equipment, software and furniture to the cancer register's office. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 80,000.

**RESULT 1.9:** The services of interventional cardiology are functioning in Governmental Hospitals of Jenin and Hebron

The Ministry of Health is the main health care provider, with 471 primary health care centers and 26 hospitals (with a total of 3,258 beds) in the West Bank and Gaza. Nonetheless, about 92,000 referrals were made outside the public hospital system in 2016 for diagnostic examinations or treatment, especially in high-specialty hospitals in East Jerusalem or abroad (mainly in Israel). The cost of these medical referral amounted to US \$ 148 million (2016), accounting for about a third of the budget and more than half of the debt of the MOH. In order to develop the Palestinian public hospital system and reduce the costs of referrals, it is necessary to strengthen high-specialty services, particularly the cardiologic ones, since cardiologic diseases represent, after oncology cases, the most common causes of referrals (15% of the total referrals in 2016).

**Activity 1.9.1:** Construction of the high-specialty cardiology service of Jenin Hospital

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned to build the cardiology service of Jenin Hospital (with a surface area of approximately 500 sq. meters) to ensure adequate health coverage in the catchment area currently underserved as well as a decrease in referrals of cardiologic patients out of the Palestinian public health system, with the subsequent reduction in costs incurred by the MOH. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 500,000.

**Activity 1.9.2:** Supply of medical equipment and furniture for the high-specialty cardiology service of Jenin Hospital

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned to supply furniture and medical equipment for cardiac catheterization (including aortic contropulsation, echocardiography, Holter monitoring, etc.) and for the treatment of complex cardiovascular diseases in the high-specialty cardiology service of Jenin Hospital. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 2,100,000.

**Activity 1.9.3:** On-site training of health care personnel of the high-specialty cardiology service of Jenin Hospital

Missions of Italian cardiologists are planned to provide technical assistance and training to Palestinian cardiologists working in the high-specialty cardiology service of Jenin Hospital with a focus on interventional cardiology. Budget support funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 40,000.

**Activity 1.9.4:** Training in neighboring countries and in Italy of health care personnel of the high-specialty cardiology service of Jenin Hospital

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned for Palestinian cardiologists working at the high-specialty cardiology service of Jenin Hospital to participate in study visits in neighboring countries and in Italy as well as in international scientific conferences. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 20,000.

**Activity 1.9.5:** Supply of medical equipment and furniture for the high-specialty cardiology service of Hebron Hospital

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned to supply furniture and medical equipment for cardiac catheterization (including aortic contropulsation, echocardiography, Holter monitoring, etc.) and for the treatment of complex cardiovascular diseases in the high-specialty cardiology service of Hebron Hospital. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 1,600,000.

**Activity 1.9.6:** On-site training of health care personnel of the high-specialty cardiology service of Hebron Hospital

Missions of Italian cardiologists are planned to provide technical assistance and training to Palestinian cardiologists working in the high-specialty cardiology service of Hebron Hospital with a focus on interventional cardiology. Budget support funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 40,000.

**Activity 1.9.7:** Training in neighboring countries and in Italy of health care personnel of the high-specialty cardiology service of Hebron Hospital

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned for Palestinian cardiologists working in the high-specialty cardiology service of Hebron Hospital to participate in study visits in neighboring countries and in Italy as well as in international scientific conferences. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 20,000.

**Activity 1.9.8:** Technical assistance for the high-specialty cardiology services of Jenin and Hebron Hospitals

Missions of Italian experts (28 days/person/year for three years) are planned to provide technical assistance on interventional cardiology for the medical personnel of the high-specialty cardiology services of Jenin and Hebron Hospitals. Local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 48,000.

**RESULT 1.10:** The Obstetric Center of Yabod is built and functioning; the neonatal ICU at the Palestinian Medical Complex in Ramallah is built and the Tubas Health Office is expanded

An obstetric center is planned to be built in Yabod, with, in addition, supply of medical equipment and provision of staff training; the neonatal ICU of the Palestinian Medical Complex in Ramallah will also be built to provide neonatal intensive care in case of complications of childbirth and after delivery. Tubas Health Office will be expanded to provide primary health care services, including maternal and child health care, thus strengthening interventions targeted to mothers and children with particular focus on the first 1000 days.

**Activity 1.10.1:** Construction of the Obstetric Center in Yabod

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned to build a safe delivery (obstetric) center in Yabod (with a surface area of approximately 500 sq. meters) in order to improve maternal and child health services in the district. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 480,000.

**Activity 1.10.2:** Supply of medical equipment and furniture for the Obstetric Center of Yabod and for the maternal and child health primary care services

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned to equip the newly constructed Obstetric Center of Yabod, with a focus on medical equipment for childbirth and neonatal care (ultrasound machine, suction cups, incubators, etc.) and furniture (beds, lockers, etc.). The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 300,000.

**Activity 1.10.3:** On-site training of health staff in the Obstetric Center of Yabod

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned to organize training courses for the health staff in the Obstetric Center of Yabod. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 10,000.

**Activity 1.10.4:** Supply of 3 ambulances for transport of emergency cases with obstetrical complications from obstetric centers to referral hospitals

It is planned to supply 3 ambulances to transport emergency cases from obstetric centers to referral hospitals to ensure timely obstetric and neonatal care. The local funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 300,000.

**Activity 1.10.5:** Construction of the neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the Palestinian Medical Complex in Ramallah

In order to strengthen maternal and infant care services, through the budget support mechanism, it is planned to build the neonatal ICU (of the estimated surface area of approximately 500 sq.meters) at the Palestinian Medical Complex in Ramallah. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 500,000.

**Activity 1.10.6:** Construction of the second floor of the Health Office in Tubas

Through the budget support mechanism, it is planned to build the second floor of the Health Office of Tubas (of an estimated surface area of 820 sq. meters) to support planning, organization and delivery of health services in a catchment area that is currently underserved. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 500,000.

**RESULT 1.11:** The Program is coordinated, implemented and monitored according to the Project Document

The availability of health experts is planned for the coordination, management, implementation, and monitoring of the initiative: in particular, a head of program is in charge of the overall coordination of the activities, with, in addition, participation in policy dialogue meetings, provision of technical assistance to the Palestinian MOH and fulfillment of the role of EU lead donor. A senior public health expert is planned to assist the head of program in implementing activities and monitoring program performance.

Palestinian technical staff is planned to be locally contracted to contribute to the implementation and monitoring of the activities financed through local funds and budget support.

**Activity 1.11.1:** Coordination of program activities and participation of Italian Cooperation in forums for policy dialogue as EU lead

A position is planned for an expert head of program to carry out management and monitoring activities during the implementation of the RING program, worth € 11.5 million and focusing on areas, such as mental health, screening programs and cancer registry, requiring extensive technical assistance. In addition, the expert head of program will be in charge to promote the process of harmonization and policy dialogue in order to ensure donors' coordination and improve aid effectiveness as specified in the points 1.1 and 1.2 of the specific objective 2. In this context, it is worth noting that he will play also the role of EU lead in charge of monitoring the sectoral performance through ROF indicators and coordinating EU state members that operate in the health sector. The funds allocated for this activity in the three-year period 2017-2019 amount to € 360,000.

**Activity 1.11.2:** Support to program coordination, management and monitoring

A position is planned for a senior public health expert to support and supervise the implementation of the activities of the initiative and monitor the components funded through local funds as well as through budget support mechanism. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 360,000

**Activity 1.11.3:** Technical assistance for the implementation of the activities of the program

A position is planned for a Palestinian program officer based at the AICS office in Jerusalem in charge of the operational management of the activities of the program, with a focus on those implemented through local funds. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 96,000.

**Activity 1.11.4:** Technical assistance for the management of the budget support mechanism at the Palestinian Ministry of Health.

A position is planned for a Palestinian program officer based at the Ministry of Health in Ramallah in charge of the operational management of the activities of the program, with a focus on those implemented through budget support mechanism. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 96,000.

**Activity 1.11.5:** Administrative support for the management of local funds

A position is planned for a Palestinian accountant based at the AICS office in Jerusalem for accounting local funds. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 96,000 under the budget line of the overheads of the program.

**Activity 1.11.6:** Driver

A position is planned for a driver to ensure the transport and mobility of the staff of the Program. The funds allocated for this activity in the period 2017-2019 amount to € 90,000 under the budget line of the overheads of the program.

**Specific objective 2:** Improve the effectiveness of the support to the Ministry of Health by strengthening donors' coordination in the health sector.

**RESULT 2.1:** The harmonization of aid and the policy dialogue with the Palestinian Ministry of Health are coordinated by the Italian Cooperation

Development aid is provided by 84 donors (bilateral and multilateral agencies, NGOs, etc) involved at various levels in the health sector; among them, there is the European Commission which, through the



PEGASE mechanism, contributed to the PNA budget with a total € 2.1 billion in the period 2008-2016, partly used for the payment of debts of East Jerusalem hospitals related to the hospitalization of Palestinian patients.

As part of the European Union's division of labor, Italy is currently the EU lead donor in the health sector. This task highlights the commitment of Italy to the principles of the Paris Declaration for aid effectiveness, reaffirmed in Accra and Busan, that are also included in the Italian Health Cooperation Guidelines and addressed in this project document.

In this context, it is important to promote the process of harmonization and policy dialogue with the MOH, so that IC, after availability of adequate human resources as envisaged in this project document, can play an important role both as an EU lead donor, and in the HSWG.

#### **Activity 2. 1.1: Role of EU lead donor**

In accordance with the results of the Italo-Palestinian bilateral summit held in Rome on 23 November 2012 and the programming exercise for 2017, IC intends to strengthen the sectors - such as health - where Italy plays the role EU lead donor within the division of labor among EU member states. Strengthening the role of lead donor is even more important in the context of the EU joint programming.

The Italian Cooperation, as EU lead donor, has the task of preparing quarterly and annual reports of monitoring the Result Oriented Framework for the health sector as a tool for policy dialogue proposed by EUREP for assessing the performance of the Palestinian MOH and shared with the PMO as part of the evaluation of the PEGASE mechanism to support the PNA budget.

In this perspective, in the course of this initiative, it is planned to develop the Result Oriented Framework 2017-2022 including definition of indicators for performance monitoring, their baseline and target estimates, and specification of sources of verification. The system for monitoring the implementation of the EU Joint Strategy will also be developed as part of the function of EU focal point for the EU Joint Programming in the health sector (EU Pillar III).

#### **Activity 2. 1.2: Support to the Health Sector Working Group (HSWG)**

Italian Cooperation has contributed over the past three decades to the development of the Palestinian health system by promoting technical assistance to the MOH with involvement and coordination of other donors and international agencies. The IC will strengthen the activities of coordination of donors and contribution to policy dialogue in HSWG.

## **5. IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES**

### ***5.1 Financing Partners and Financing Modalities***

The initiative will be funded by AICS and includes a component of direct local funds (€ 4,016,000) and a component of budget support to MOH according to the art. 7 paragraph 2 of Law 125/2014 (7,484,000 Euros) to ensure the full ownership of the Palestinian institutions.

Local partners are the Palestinian MOH and MOFP, the latter with regard to the budget support component. MOH, partner also of POSIT and CRONO Programs, is the main provider of health services in Palestine and has demonstrated reliability, transparency and an adequate operational capacity.

The inclusion in this proposal of the budget support mechanism is based on the positive experience gained so far in the POSIT and CRONO Programs that has highlighted the Palestinian good standards of reliability and transparency in the management of this type of financing.

### ***5.2 Executive responsibility***

The executive responsibility of the initiative is given to AICS Jerusalem for the component directly managed by AICS and to Palestinian MOH for the component of budget support that will be managed according to the modalities established in the Technical Agreement in coordination and with the assistance of the AICS personnel of the Jerusalem office.

### ***5.3 Methodology and procedures of management and execution***

This project has the same methodological approach followed by the projects POSIT and CRONO of which it represents the continuation. The project will be regulated by a Technical Agreement signed by the MOFP, representing the PNA, and the General Directorate for Development Cooperation (DGCS), representing the Italian Government. The Technical Agreement and Annexes will define the objectives, beneficiaries, results and the allocation of total funding between funds directly managed by AICS and budget support managed by MOH and MOFP.

To supervise the implementation of the activities and support the planning and monitoring exercise, an Advisory Committee (AC) will be established, gathering representatives from the MOFP, MOH and AICS. The AC will meet at least bi-annually. As for the budget support funds, they will be transferred following the approach adopted for above mentioned programs:

- Upon the signature of the Technical Agreement, MOH will prepare the Annual Operational Plan, with the AICS technical assistance.
- The Annual Operational Plan will be approved by the AC.
- The MOFP asks for the disbursement of the budget support from AICS.
- AICS disburses the funds to the "single treasury account" opened by MOFP.
- MOH prepares the respective Biannual Work Plans, where the activities and related costs are detailed.
- After the approval of the biannual Work Plans by AICS, MOH requests MOFP to disburse the biannual funds.
- The MOFP proceeds with disbursing the related funds to the MOH "special accounts".

At the end of the program, MOH will present to AICS an exhaustive narrative and financial report on the activities carried out through the budget support. The report will also evaluate the impact of the program against the expected results and indicators. Finally, the MOFP will take care of presenting an audit report to AICS on the use of the budget support funds.

### ***5.4 Implementation modalities***

The two financial mechanisms tested over the past five years, direct management of local funds by AICS and budget support to MOH, allow the agile and timely implementation of the activities. With local funds, it is planned, with the assistance of Italian experts, to carry out the training activities related to the

implementation screening programs for breast and colon cancers, as well as those related to mental health and psycho-social rehabilitation, inclusive accessibility, maternal and child health, family medicine and cancer registry. In addition, with the same financial mechanism, it is planned, among others, to supply three cars for family medicine program and three ambulances for obstetric centers.

For the construction of new health infrastructures and the supply of equipment for healthcare facilities as well as for the implementation of activities of psycho-social rehabilitation (job placement, hiring of mental health staff etc.), the mechanism of budget support will be used, with MOH being in charge to carry out the procedures for bidding with the assistance of Italian experts.

### ***5.5 Conditions for starting***

The implementation of the activities of the program with local funds will take place after the signature of the Technical Agreement and the transfer of the local funds. Regarding the budget support component, the funds will be transferred from Italy directly to the MOFP, and then transferred by MOFP to the MOH according to the procedures described in point 5.3 above.

### ***5.6 Starting phase***

.Following the signature of the Technical Agreement, AICS and the Palestinian MOH, in order to proceed to disbursement of funds and start-up of the activities, will be required to prepare:

- The Annual Operational Plan for local funds and request to AICS for disbursement of the relevant funds.
- The Annual Operational Plan for the disbursement of budget support.

## 6. FINANCIAL PLAN AND COSTS OF THE PROGRAM

### 6.1 Financial plan and costs of the program: synthesis

RING - BUDGET							
Activity code	Items	2017	2018	2019	Total	Budget support	Direct Management AICS
7, 9, 10	Construction building	1,080,000	500,000	500,000	2,080,000	2,080,000	
1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10	Medical Equipment	980,000	2,420,000	1,480,000	4,880,000	4,700,000	180,000
4, 8	Office equipment and furniture	30,000	55,000	25,000	110,000		110,000
4,10	Vehicles	0	430,000	0	430,000		430,000
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9	Training for health professionals	60,000	295,000	275,000	630,000	180,000	450,000
1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	Technical assistance	245,000	267,000	267,000	779,000		779,000
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	Workshops, conferences and other public events	0	60,000	90,000	150,000		150,000
1, 8	Production of health education audiovisual materials and dissemination campaigns	15,000	125,000	125,000	265,000		265,000
6	Psycho-social rehabilitation activities	100,000	212,000	212,000	524,000	524,000	
5, 8	Operational research	0	65,000	65,000	130,000		130,000
11	Program Management	300,000	304,000	308,000	912,000		912,000
	Overheads	190,000	220,000	200,000	610,000		610,000
	<b>GrandTotal</b>	<b>3,000,000</b>	<b>4,953,000</b>	<b>3,547,000</b>	<b>11,500,000</b>	<b>7,484,000</b>	<b>4,016,000</b>

## 7. TIMETABLE

Program Component	Activity by Component	Length											
Specific objective 1	Strengthening health system for health promotion and disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation with particular focus on chronic non-communicable diseases.	1st year (quarter)				2nd year (quarter)				3rd year (quarter)			
		<b>Result 1.1</b> Population in West Bank and in Gaza is sensitized and informed about the importance of health promotion and prevention of chronic non-communicable diseases and protected with adequate regulations	1.1.1 Production of paper/multimedia materials for information and health education										
	1.1.2 Organization of health education campaigns and related events												
	1.1.3 Technical assistance for the definition of legislation and regulation related to the promotion of healthy foods and healthy lifestyle												
	1.1.4 Supply of equipment for the Central Public Health Laboratory												
	1.1.5 Organization of workshops and conferences for the presentation of the results of health education initiatives												
<b>Result 1.2</b> The "early childhood development" approach focusing on the first 1000 days of the baby is implemented in women's, maternal-child and reproductive health services	1.2.1 Supply of medical equipment for primary maternal and child health services												
	1.2.2 Local training of health personnel of primary maternal and child health services												
	1.2.3 Technical assistance												
<b>Result 1.3</b> Breast cancer screening program is implemented in all districts and colon cancer screening program in three pilot districts	1.3.1 Supply of kits and equipment for colon cancer screening in pilot health centers												
	1.3.2 On-site training for health professionals on colon cancer screening in pilot health centers and refresher training on screening of breast cancer												
	1.3.3 Technical Assistance for training health professionals and monitoring breast cancer screening program and its referral system												
	1.3.4 Technical Assistance for training health professionals and monitoring colon cancer screening program and its referral system												
	1.3.5 Organization of workshops and scientific conferences for the presentation of the results of the screening of breast and colon cancers												
<b>Result 1.4</b> The family medicine approach for the	1.4.1 Supply of medical equipment for primary health care services												
	1.4.2 Training on family medicine approach for primary health care staff												





	1.11.6 Driver																		
<b>Specific objective 2</b>	Improve the effectiveness of the support to the Ministry of Health by strengthening donors' coordination in the health sector	<b>1st year (quarter)</b>				<b>2nd year (quarter)</b>				<b>3rd year (quarter)</b>									
<b>Result 2.1</b> The harmonization of aid and the policy dialogue with the Palestinian Ministry of Health are coordinated by the Italian Cooperation	2.1.1 Role of EU lead donor																		
	2.1.2 Support to the <i>Health Sector Working Group</i> (HSWG)																		

## 8. SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

The project is aimed at supporting policies and strategies of the Palestinian MOH, in accordance with the National Health Strategy 2017-2022. The use of the MOH budget support mechanism – accounting for 65% of the total budget of this initiative – is consistent with the principle of local ownership of development strategies while, at the same time, it ensures sustainability of the initiative in terms of institutional commitment. The program intends to make the most of local capabilities and resources to develop the management skills of the MOH.

The program's activities focus largely on strengthening existing activities such as mammography screening, activities to prevent chronic diseases, and family medicine services, thus ensuring technical sustainability. Regarding psycho-social rehabilitation and community mental health services, both on-site training and study tours in Italy are planned to build capacity of Palestinian mental health professionals. These activities will be carried out with the technical assistance of an Italian centre of excellence (the Department of Mental Health in Trieste) with a long experience in this area.

With regard to the construction of high-specialty hospital services and the supply of equipment, specific theoretical and practical on-site training courses are planned with the support of Italian experts; it is worth noting that these technologies are already in use in Palestine and compatible with the current level of development of the healthcare system, thus ensuring technical sustainability. There are no problems regarding maintenance of equipment, since appropriate skills are available in Palestine.

Economic and financial sustainability is also ensured, as all services that will be enhanced or introduced through this initiative are already included in the current MOH plans. Considering that the program will strengthen existing health services, there will not be any negative environmental impact. As already done for POSIT and CRONO programs, the design and construction of new infrastructures will meet the standards for inclusive accessibility for disabled persons as well as for energy sustainability.

The initiative will have an important gender impact as it aims to improve women's health through strengthening maternal health services and screening of breast cancer, which is the most frequent cancer and an important cause of mortality among women.



## 9. RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The risks are related to the precariousness of the political situation and the continuing occupation with the possibility of escalating violence. The resulting instability, coupled with the prolonged economic recession, would undermine the progress made by the PNA to reduce the budget deficit and public debt. However, PNA's default seems to be a relatively remote perspective, so as to be a "medium" risk.

On the other hand, institutional strengthening and improved governance processes, within which the budget support component of this initiative is incorporated, are underway. As EU lead donor in the health sector, Italy is playing an increasingly important role in coordinating the different initiatives in the framework of the EU Joint Programming that is aligned with the National Policy Agenda 2017-2022 and to sectoral strategies. This framework of strengthened support by Italy and Europe in Palestine can mitigate the risks inherent in the unstable situation in the field. Outbreaks of violence and clashes may lead to interruptions or slowdowns of activities due to the resulting restrictions on movements; in these cases, it will be necessary to change the program's expected timetable.

## 10. EVALUATION OF RESULTS

It is planned to conduct a process evaluation through monitoring of the progress in implementing the initiative both in terms of activities and in terms of management of the budget support according to the procedures mentioned above in Chapter 5.3 (semi-annual workplans, audits). In this regard, it is planned to use appropriate indicators for monitoring program's performance (as summarized in the Matrix of the Logical Framework), while indicators identified in the ROF in agreement with MOH will be used to monitor the performance of the health sector.

## 11. REFERENCES

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