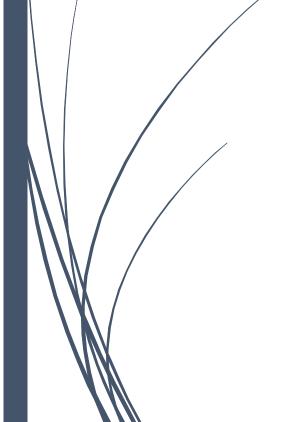7/15/2021

A Study on the Arts and Culture Sector in Palestine
Commissioned by SDC - Palestine

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Abbreviations:

AFAC	Arab Fund for Arts and Culture
CASE	Culture, Arts, and Social Engagement
CBOs	Community-based organisations
CSO	Civil society organisations
FGD	Focus group discussion
GZ	Gaza Strip
GUCCPAL	General Union of Cultural Centres-Palestine
ICH	Intangible cultural heritage
MoC	Ministry of Culture
MoI	Ministry of Interior
oPt	Occupied Palestinian territories
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCF	Palestinian Culture Fund
PPAN	Palestinian Performing Arts Network
ToC	Theory of change
WA	Welfare Association
WB	West Bank

1. Executive Summary

In March 2021, the Swiss Cooperation Office Gaza & West Bank – SDC, Jerusalem, launched a call for a "Consultancy on Culture," to "map emerging Palestinian culture initiatives and identify new opportunities, approaches, and partners to enhance links between culture and citizen participation." The objective of this consultancy was "to identify new opportunities, potential partners, and propose concrete recommendations that can help in laying out a new engagement in the sector, taking into consideration (a) the local needs, (b) the SDC's institutional experience accumulated and value added, and (c) promising thematic niches that are underfunded." A team of three researchers working in the cultural sector—in Palestine and the region at large—started the assignment on April 15, 2021, according to the signed contract and based on the Terms of Reference.

This executive summary presents a brief description of the main actors, donors, and dynamics in the sector. It presents a brief analysis of the challenges that were reflected on and discussed, between all respondents and the research team, and within the team. To illustrate the interrelated challenges facing the sector and its dynamics, this executive summary is structured in a cause-effect flow. Opportunities and prospective niches for innovation and new creativity are detailed by the researchers *(further detailed under Section 4.2.2)*. A set of general directions and recommendations were defined, based on a theory of change, and these are further detailed in Section 5.

The independent arts and culture sector: Key players

The Palestinian arts and culture landscape has flourished over the past 25 years into a diverse, dynamic, and vibrant sector. This multi-function, multi-actor sector has been keeping the Palestinian narrative alive, along with cultural and national identity. Artistic expressions have often been tools for awareness raising, promoting well-being, and encouraging people's resilience and hope. Outstanding artistic productions and artists have reached the world's cultural arenas, and in the process have given recognition to the Palestinian cause. This rich scene has been led by well-structured NGOs, some of which existed before the establishment of the Ministry of Culture (MoC) in 1994; community-based organisations (CBOs) working at grassroots and community levels; individual artists working independently or linked to civil society organisations (CSOs); not-for-profit companies, collectives, and networks; as well as new initiatives led by innovative groups that are not institutionalised, and are thus more daring in their approaches and ideas. In addition to the international donors to the sector—namely the EU, SIDA, SDC, and Norway—there are two Palestinian private foundations: the Welfare Association (WA) and A. M. Qattan, both of which are major donors and actors. Other private foundations have arrived on the scene, such as Drosos; EUNIC members have also been enriching the scene *(Section 3.3 gives details on all actors and donors)*.

The political and socio-economic environment of Palestine

The arts and culture sector in Palestine must find its way within a highly complex and constraining political, socio-economic, and institutional environment. This environment is determined by the Israeli occupation's policies of fragmentation and isolation of Jerusalem from the West Bank (WB) and Gaza, its complete siege of the Gaza Strip, coupled with the friction between the two main political parties in Gaza and the WB. As a result, the social, political, and cultural integrity and cohesion of the Palestinian people have been strangled. This environment is also marked by a poor performance of the Palestinian Authority (PA), the disarray of Palestinian civil Society, and a continued dependency on funding from the external donor community. This constraining environment has taken its toll on the daily lives of the Palestinians, particularly on youth and women. Negative social values, internal violence, and conservatism have been increasing for several years. Such conditions are weakening societal interaction with the arts and culture

sector, and weakening dynamics within the sector and with other stakeholders. This situation has been affecting the creativity of cultural actors and the development of the sector *(Section 3.2 provides a detailed analysis of the context's effect on the sector)*.

Dynamics with different stakeholders in the arts and culture sector

Despite the energy and quality work demonstrated by diverse actors, the above challenges and constraints have led the sector to underperform. The weak role and interaction of the sector with the society, minimal protection, and support from the MoC, high dependency on external funding, and the constraining donor policies (including conditional funding), have all negatively impacted the sector's performance, thus limiting creativity and freedom of expression. High competition, weak coordination, and networking within the sector, limited participatory cooperation with local initiatives, and limited interaction with individual artists have had their negative effects as well. These effects are further compounded by the repercussions of COVID-19 (*Section 4 elaborates on these dynamics and effects).*

The potential for improving the performance of the arts and culture sector

"Culture can't be a solution to these immense problems, but it is a territory where solutions can be found…*"[1]* Despite all the challenges and constraints cited above, the most obvious conclusion from this research process is the recognition, shared by all respondents, of the need to foster innovative thinking processes with a view to changing working modalities and diversifying resources. It is clear from this research that 2020—with the outbreak of COVID-19, coupled with the issue of conditional funding, brought to the surface core issues which had been dormant for the past 20 years. The year 2020 has also shed light on new opportunities and trends. A reflection and dialogue started at the individual organisational level as well as the collective, sectoral level. This process touched on issues such as the intrinsic roles of art and culture, developmental visions and approaches, and cooperation dynamics at different levels. Nevertheless, there is no magical, one-size-fits-all solution for all the challenges named above. Each problem needs a different solution, and each actor needs different modalities to solve its issues *(See Section 4.2.2 for further details).*

Opportunities

Digital transition: This is one of the most sudden changes faced by arts and culture actors. In a short time, cultural actors had to adapt to digital environments and break their isolation to reach their target groups. This was seen as a challenge and an opportunity. Digital capacity tools, media content development, professional capacity building and skills, as well as equipment and infrastructure need to be upgraded. The digital transition might also serve as an important **job creation tool** and networking modality to break Palestinians' siege and therefore isolation.

Job creation is one of the dimensions that the cultural sector in Palestine has started to consider through creative industry or creative economy. However, this concept requires in-depth research, and development of policies and legislations.

Advocacy, financial independence, and sharing of resources: Cultural actors are realising the importance of these pivotal issues for gaining more protection, sustainability, and impact. Concerted efforts, cementing trust, and commitment can help actors envision new directions and interventions.

Re-visioning old programmatic habits: It is crucial to develop and strengthen processes and tools that can help the cultural sector restore its pivotal role in society. In addition, community groups, often organising

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[1] "Reflection Papers on Culture and Development", Francois Matarasso

themselves independently and starting new innovative initiatives, need to be supported by more genuine participatory processes, so that new roads of creativity can be explored and longer-term social impact and empowerment can be guaranteed. NGOs in the arts and culture sector can connect with these initiatives and support them without jeopardising local ownership, working in mutual respect and following more bottom-up community development approaches.

Diversity of actors—there is space for everybody: The growing number of diverse, innovative actors in the sector is quite enriching. This growth demonstrates that creativity has no boundaries and **should not be hampered.** There is space for everybody. Serious reflections have begun on the integration of all actors in programs that can enrich and help develop the sector further. Different organisational and funding modalities for different types of actors are needed.

Other opportunities—thinking outside the box

Interaction with the private sector: While support from the private sector has been minimal until now, actors can still link with one another to create a "win-win" situation, where both sectors can have mutually productive cooperation. Financial support from the private sector can help establish an encouraging environment for job creation.

Interaction with the entrepreneurial sector: Significant amounts of funding have been channelled lately towards innovation in IT entrepreneurial companies, by both the private sector and business incubators. A similar approach can be developed for innovative ideas coming from arts and culture actors, particularly the young generation. It is essential that the knowledge and capacities of cultural actors be strengthened, in addition to the cultural ecosystem, through the development of legislations and the encouragement of interventions by the private and public sectors *(Section 4.3 gives more details)*.

Theory of change and directions of future SDC support to the arts and culture sector

Based on their detailed analysis of the challenges, opportunities, and general suggestions for the sector to improve its cultural and artistic aspirations, as well as its performance in society, the researchers propose a theory of change that may guide the SDC's future work. This theory of change also provides the basis for the team's general and precise recommendations. The theory and its three directions are detailed in Section 5.

These three directions can be shortly mentioned here as: (1) an approach geared towards more social empowerment and community development; (2) a more entrepreneurial attitude; and (3) space for individual artistic expression. For each direction, Section 5 will formulate more specific and precise recommendations.

2. Introduction

2.1 Scope and objectives of the study

The Swiss Cooperation Office Gaza & West Bank – SDC, Jerusalem, launched a call for a "Consultancy on Culture," to "map emerging Palestinian culture initiatives and identify new opportunities, approaches and partners to enhance links between culture and citizen's participation."

The objective of this consultancy, as specified in the TOR issued by SDC, was "to identify new opportunities, potential partners and propose concrete recommendations that can help in laying out a new engagement in the sector, taking into consideration (a) the local needs, b) the SDC's institutional experience accumulated and value added, and (c) thematic promising niches that are underfunded."

A team of three experts and researchers working in the cultural sector—in Palestine and the region at large—submitted a detailed proposal. On April 15, 2021, a contract was signed, with the team coordinator, Sabreen AbdulRahman, as the "contractor" for the execution of this assignment. A no-cost extension to mid-July 2021 was approved by SDC after a formal request, in view of the unexpected delays incurred due to the war on Gaza and the escalations in the oPt at the end of April.

The scope of work and the objectives of the assignment, together with the team's experience and SDC's rich portfolio in culture and development at large and in the oPt in particular, all guided the process. The contents and conclusions drawn in this research document are the result of the implemented methodology.

SDC's work has contributed to the development of the Palestinian cultural sector by starting support to many small cultural actions (for example, by 2010, SDC had supported more than 200 activities over a wide spectrum). Then, between 2010 and 2015, SDC moved to provide institutional support to three organisations on a longer-term strategic basis. In 2012-2013, SDC conducted a mid-term review[2] of their cultural program in the WB and Gaza, which recommended adopting a more strategic methodology. SDC's "Entry Proposal" was accordingly prepared in August 2013, with a strategy to "engage with one single partner to implement a program focusing on socialisation processes, a range of civil society and cultural institutions."[3] The first phase of its implementation started on January 1, 2016, and was extended to 2019 with one strategic partner: the A.M. Qattan Foundation. This partnership, under the program "Enhancing social engagement and accountability through arts and culture," is planned to have two phases; the second phase was approved for four years. The cultural program is part of the Local Governance Domain,[4] under SDC's priority theme "local governance and citizen participation." It aims to use arts and culture as a means of enhancing democratic debates, promoting social inclusion and youth participation, and promoting active participation within communities and between communities and local authorities.[5]

This research on the cultural sector is timely, in view of the developments in the sector since the Mid Term Review (MTR) of 2013, and the start of SDC's engagement with the A. M. Qattan Foundation as a strategic partner since 2016. Although the Palestinian cultural scene has flourished and diversified over the past 25 years, it remains fragile, and has been prone to turbulent periods which threaten its vibrancy. In 2020, the upsurge of the COVID-19 pandemic and the escalations in Palestine have negatively affected this already vulnerable sector.

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[2] Birtha Mikklesen, and Dima AlJu'ebeh, 13 January 2013.
[3] SDC's Entry Proposal, 7F, 08809.
[4] "While preparing SDC's new Cooperation Strategy 2015-2018, the decision to integrate the cultural program in the domain of local governance was taken" Credit Proposal, No.7F-08809.1.2 .
[5] TOR of "Consultancy on culture," SDC.

Before proceeding with the presentation of the process and findings of this research, it is worthwhile to review the definition of "culture" used in this document. In its 2011-2013 strategic plan, the Ministry of Culture adopted the "broader concept of culture so that it is not limited to literature and expressive art, or what is known as Fine Arts, but also to include popular culture, handicrafts, folklore culture with dialect, literary, architectural, musical and performance components."[6] Following this definition, this research provides a mapping and analysis of the "cultural" sector in the fields of visual arts, cinema, literature, digital arts, and performing arts (covering music, theatre, circus, and dance).

It is important to note that SDC's intervention in culture in the oPt is in line with its global commitment in the area of culture and development, as well as its International Cooperation Strategy 2021-24, where "alleviating poverty and contributing to sustainable development in accordance with the 2030 Agenda are at the centre of the international cooperation mandate."[7] It is also consistent with the SDC's Middle East and North Africa Strategy 2021-24, and the Swiss Cooperation Program Near East 2021-24.

While other donors to culture support activities in the performing arts, heritage, visual arts, and artistic productions, SDC's intervention distinguishes itself from other donors to culture in Palestine by focusing on "social processes." SDC recognises culture as a component of development and as a catalyst for social transformation. This recognition was reiterated in SDC's strategic orientations, which indicate that "since 2010, a minimum of 1% of its operational budgets is allocated for culture:"[8] i.e., for culture promotion projects within the framework of country and regional cooperation strategies.

2.2   Methodology

This assignment started following the signature of the contract on April 15th. The process was based on the detailed methodology proposed in the assessment framework submitted to SDC, as formulated by the research team. The methodology included five main tools: i) Mapping of key players, ii) Literature reviews, iii) In-depth interviews, iv) Focus group discussions, and v) Reflection workshop, as follows:

Literature reviews

The desk research phase covered a wide range of material, including all relevant documents that were provided to the research team by SDC and their partner, the A. M. Qattan Foundation. In addition, the research team collected a wide range of relevant information and data on culture in the oPt.

Online questionnaires

Two online questionnaires were designed to cover registered cultural organisations and initiatives on one hand, and individual artists on the other hand. These questionnaires were sent out to hundreds of cultural NGOs, CBOs, and initiatives, in addition to individual artists in the oPt. This method was adopted due to the impossibility of having in-depth interviews with all the key players in the cultural sector.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork was extensive and involved mainly directors of NGOs, CBOs, individual artists, and groups of initiatives, in addition to interviews with three donors to culture in Palestine, as well as other relevant stakeholders, including private sector/service provider and resource persons. Different interview and focus group discussion (FGD) templates were adapted for these diverse actors in the cultural sector. A total of 32

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[6] The Palestinian Ministry of Culture, the Culture Sector Strategy for 2011-2013, p.17, (Translation)
[7] Brochure of International Cooperation Strategy 2021-2024.
[8] (SDC Entry Proposal, No.7F-08809, CASE EP Socialization, p. 3.)

individual interviews and seven FGDs were conducted in West Bank and Gaza Strip. Due to political and security considerations, some interviews and the FGD for cultural organisations in Jerusalem were conducted online.

The number of respondents for the different tools was as follows:[9]

Research tool	Individual artists	NGOs/CBOs	Initiatives/ Groups	Others
In-depth interviews	Gaza Strip			
	1	5	1	1 donor
	West Bank			
	3	18	1	6 (4 donors, 1 private business, 1 Entrepreneurial programmer
Focus group discussions	Gaza Strip			
	5	16	4	/
	West Bank			
	8	20	3	/
Online Questionnaire	6 (Special Questionnaire)	67	7	1 individual artist 1 Academic centre

Analysis and report preparation

The research team had to categorise this immense feedback into sub-headings under each section. Each point merited an analysis by itself. Therefore, the inputs had to be nuanced based on the research team's own experience in the field, and the literature which had to be reviewed and referenced. The research team members had extensive discussions with the respondents, as well as amongst themselves. The feedback from the respondents was more focused on challenges, particularly in view of the harsh repercussions of COVID-19 and the conditional funding issue. Yet many proposed general modalities to develop the sector. The immense data, especially on challenges, had to be thoroughly analysed in a cause-effect flow.

Reflection workshop

After submitting the first draft of the research to SDC, a reflection workshop was conducted online, integrating selected representatives of the cultural sector from the West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem. Most of the participants were not interviewed during the fieldwork. The aim was to present the findings of the research, get feedback on possible recommendations on how to overcome specific identified challenges in the research, and enhance the new opportunities.

Limitations

1. Many of the field interviews and FGDs that were set to be conducted in May 2020 were postponed due to the war on Gaza and the escalation in Jerusalem, in addition to the decision of the team to increase number of interviews and focus group discussions due to diversity of the cultural sector, which subsequently led to a change in the research calendar.

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[9] Annex 1 list of participants in FGD, Annex 2 list of individual interviews

2. Lack of cooperation by the MoC with the research team, which created a lack of information related to policies and funds by the government for the cultural sector. Statistics and financial data were not provided by the MoC.
3. Lack of participation in the FGDs in some geographical areas (Jerusalem, Ramallah), and in particular by initiatives and groups, despite the repeated invitations.
4. Interviews with representatives of private sector were not possible; different calls to set up meetings were not fruitful. This can be considered a missing component in the research.
5. The huge inputs of data from the participants in the individual interviews and FGDs were mainly focused on challenges. Inputs on questions related to future trends and modalities were more general. The respondents kept going back to highlighting problems rather than solutions, and formulating criticisms at themselves and other actors. It was time consuming for the research team to extract precise and relevant information.

3. Background and Context Analysis

3.1 Background and features of the sector

Understanding the background of the Palestinian arts and culture sector requires understanding its main features and roles. Palestinian culture and art have been playing a key role in keeping the Palestinian collective narrative and identity alive over the past 70 years. The landscape of arts and culture in Palestine has flourished into a diverse, dynamic, and vibrant sector. However, because it is not prioritised by Palestinian national development plans or budgets, and thus remains almost fully dependent on external aid, this vibrant sector has been quite vulnerable. Today, like other vital sectors, it is facing unprecedented challenges which put it at risk of collapse.

The features and roles of Palestinian artistic and cultural expressions are quite unique in view of the sophisticated national context. People's intrinsic attachment to their rich cultural heritage, along with their connectedness to contemporary diverse and vibrant cultural and artistic expressions, have been important **elements connecting Palestinian national and cultural identities** within the homeland and in the Diaspora. These flourishing expressions have been influenced by the dynamic lives of people, as well as the political and socio-economic developments in Palestine and the region. They have been important vehicles for **expressing people's aspirations, agonies, and visions of the future**. These cultural expressions have helped keep Palestinians' rights to freedom and justice vivid in the memories and minds of the whole world. In late April and early May 2021, millions of people took to the streets worldwide in solidarity with Palestinians and to oppose Israel's war. Culture and its diverse expressions are **tools that can be used creatively and innovatively to encourage people's resilience and hope,** in the face of oppression, erasure, and expulsion. In light of their pivotal role of the last 70 years, it is evident that the arts and culture in Palestine are *"not one of life's luxuries; they are life itself."*[10]

Inside Palestine, this dynamic sector has fostered equal **participation by all segments of society**. Thousands of women, children, and youth have been actively engaged in a diverse array of programs, organised by the different cultural actors, in all governorates, reaching less served communities and marginalised areas despite various forms of closures and isolation. Many of the organisations have opened their doors, particularly for **thousands of children and youth**, **providing safe spaces for self-expression, innovation, and creativity, and helping them improve their life skills and envision better prospects**. Although studies on the impact of arts and culture on Palestinian children and youth are almost non-existent, it is known that

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[10] Principles of SDC's cultural policy.

many children who have engaged in cultural activities have been positively influenced by those activities, and have become role models among their peers, or leaders in their communities. Others have become professionals in different fields, carrying the spirit of creativity and positive values.

In Palestine, arts and culture are used as vehicles for encouraging freedom of expression, raising awareness on issues of concern and tools for encouraging positive social values as important components of democracy. After all, *"the creative work of artists is not always obvious but its emotional and experiential power can resonate for years in people's imaginations."[11]* Artistic expressions, like theatre for example, address sensitive social topics which would not be touched by other means. In drawing a balance between conservatism and openness, several cultural organisations and actors have succeeded in opening a dialogue at different levels on issues of concern. Moreover, artistic tools have been used towards psychological remedial for traumatised children and vulnerable target groups in areas under Israeli attack. This was the case in the second Intifada and following the different wars on Gaza, which leave devastating long-term negative impacts.

Different creative expressions have become stronger in the last 10 years, with the birth of yet more outstanding artists and quality productions in music, film, and the visual arts. These productions and artists have made their way to some of the world's most prominent cultural venues and arenas. These successes on the international cultural scene have helped reverse some of the negative stereotypes of Palestinians globally. The fast-growing world of digital media has become a catalyst to promote these rich cultural expressions, as well as bringing the world's attention to the life of the Palestinian people under occupation.

3.2 Effects of the political and socio-economic context on the sector

Like other sectors in Palestine, the arts and culture sector must find its way within a highly complex environment that is defined by the Israeli occupation, with no clear end in sight.

The geographic, social, economic, and cultural cohesion and integrity of the Palestinian people have been fragmented by Israeli occupation polices. These include isolation of Jerusalem from the WB and Gaza, the complete siege of the Gaza Strip, tight restrictions on Palestinians' movement within the WB, and the daily threat to their lives. In addition, WB communities are segregated and marginalised all the more due to the construction and expansion of Israeli colonies. Such policies create a highly constraining environment and have a negative impact on every aspect of Palestinians' lives. The friction between the two political parties in Gaza and the West Bank, the disorganization of Palestinian CSOs (including cultural organisations), and their continued dependency on external financial aid, are all also effects of this constraining environment.

In Jerusalem, the basic rights of Palestinians to worship, and to access economic, social, and cultural life are threatened. Palestinians are separated by checkpoints and the apartheid wall, and isolated from the rest of the WB; this hinders their normal integration and engagement in cultural activities inside and outside Jerusalem. Regular attacks on Jerusalem-based NGOs, particularly cultural organisations, and discriminatory tax policies are weakening their role in the society. In **the Gaza Strip**, home to 2 million inhabitants and completely besieged since 2006, poverty and unemployment rates are increasing at an alarming rate.[12] In parallel, repeated aggressions, including the latest war of April 2021, are leaving irreversible psycho-social consequences for years to come, particularly on children and youth. Moreover,

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[11] Reflection Papers on Culture and Development, SCD, p.13

[12] In 2019, the unemployment rate in Gaza was at 43 per cent and youth unemployment was at 64 per cent, with more than half of the population living below the poverty line of US$4.6 per day. https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdb67_d5_en.pdf

the friction between the two major political parties in the WB and Gaza since 2006 has been especially dramatic for the Gaza Strip population. CSOs in the Strip, including arts and culture organisations, have been struggling to cope with the harsh conditions and meet the pressing needs for systematic interventions. The Gaza-based respondents to this research clearly stated that the mounting levels of frustration among artists, cultural activists, and organisations alike are effects of these tremendous challenges, including denial of travel or exchange outside the Strip. The **COVID-19 outbreak,** present since March 2020, with lockdown measures at occasional intervals, have further revealed the serious fragility and the dire, deteriorating economic conditions in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza alike.

Palestinians' trust in the PA has been declining in view of its **poor performance at the political and economic development levels**. This includes trust of the arts and culture sector in the MoC, which has not been sufficiently prioritised by the PA. In addition, the absence of a national political vision and the withdrawal of other political parties inhibit civil society, including its cultural dimensions, from formulating common visions for the political, social, and cultural issues it is facing. While being almost totally dependent on external funding, many civil society organisations in Palestine, including the cultural ones, are lacking a clear vision of their mandates and their role in the society, and therefore their activities and interventions. As one of the most financially subsidised countries in the world,[13] Palestine has been held captive in accomplishing sustainable and viable social, cultural, and economic sectors.

Under such fragmentation policies, regulations and licensing of cultural organisations fall under three distinct regulations: the Palestinian Authority, Israel, and Hamas. Cultural organisations not registered under the Palestinian law of 2000 are not eligible for funding through the Palestinian Culture Fund (PCF)[14] or EU mechanisms. Organisations from Gaza which are not licensed by the MoI/MoC in Ramallah cannot become members of the General Union of Cultural Centres (GUCCPAL) in Gaza; this means that all organisations established after 2006 are non-members, and therefore are denied funding opportunities through the Union. Restrictions by the PA on CSOs were recently announced by a presidential decree (#7) issued in March 2021. There is no formal PA office representing the MoC/Ramallah in Gaza, but there is a person as a focal point; coordination with NGOs or individual artists in the Gaza Strip is done directly by the MoC in Ramallah. According to human rights organisations, this constitutes a grave violation of the basic law and international treaties to which Palestine is signatory. It threatens the role, governance, and sustainability of the CSOs in Palestine. This decree was cancelled by the President in May 2021.[15] Freedom of media and of expression in the West Bank and Gaza are increasingly at risk, not only by Israel, but also by the PA and Hamas. According to the Hamla Centre, in 2020, there was a total of 408 cases of violations against media expression, out of which 210 were by the Israeli forces, 37 by the PA in the West Bank, and

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[13] Over USD30 billion has been spent since 1993 by international donors as aid for Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip (OECD 2016). This "investment" in peace and development has made Palestinians one of the highest per capita recipients of non-military aid in the world. https://alaatartir.com/2017/05/15/international-aid-to-palestinians-a-cursed-gift/

[14] Palestinian Culture Fund PCF: was established by an initiative of the MoC in cooperation with Norwegian government; both parties signed the first agreement in December 2004...The idea behind establishing the PCF came within the framework of the MoC goals towards the development of cultural sector in Palestine.
PCF supports projects and cultural activities, partially contributes to the invested efforts to achieve cultural development goals at the national level through supporting projects in the different fields such as theatre, cinema, audio-visual and visual arts, music, performing arts and literature. PCF works to create equipped cultural spaces qualified to receive cultural performances, particularly in marginalized areas, while taking cultural diversity into account." https://en.unesco.org/creativity/policy-monitoring-platform/palestinian-cultural-fund-pcf

[15] https://maqam.najah.edu/media/uploads/2021/05/legislations/179-27.pdf

59 by Hamas in Gaza[16] (*Input from the participants from Gaza and the WB on the effects of the socio-political conditions on the sector can be found in Annexes 4 & 5).*

In view of such harsh realities, increasingly negative social values, internal violence, and conservatism are alarming in both the WB and the Gaza Strip. These conditions have had their toll on all Palestinians; particularly youth aged 15-28, who comprise about 30% of the population. In 2019, "unemployment rates were the highest among youth graduates (19-29) years."[17] There have been growing feelings of frustration, apathy, suicidal attempts, and inclination to immigrate. Moreover, as people are caught in these dire economic conditions, arts and culture are not a priority.

The fragile culture and arts sector is entrenched in these conditions today. The repercussions of COVID-19 have increased the sector's vulnerability. Arts and culture alone are evidently insufficient to curtail these realities if fundamental political and social causes remain unsolved.

3.3   Main key players in the cultural sector and modalities of work

The cultural sector is a multi-actor sector, which is a part of Palestinian civil society and includes NGOs, CBOs/grassroots organisations, non-registered initiatives and groups, not-for-profit companies, individual artists, and networks or collectives. The proliferation of these entities and their programs has shaped this flourishing national landscape. They are diverse in terms of types of work, fields/specialisations, partnerships, programs' reach, capacities, and funding sources. In addition, there are different actors from the public sector, the private sector, and the international and national donors.

Cultural NGOs, CBOs, not-for-profit companies, and networks

Several NGOs, including cultural NGOs, existed prior to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority; they are formally registered organisations[18] governed by Law #1 of 2000. After Oslo, with an influx of foreign aid towards the PA and civil society, many new NGOs (including cultural ones) were established. As documented by the MoC "Between 1995 and 1999, about 219 new organisations were registered, initially by the MoC; then in 2000 all NGOs (old and new) were requested to register also by the Ministry of Interior (MoI)."[19] According to PCBS statistics, there were 528 registered cultural organisations in 2020, (compared to 566 in 2019).[20] They have been the main actor in the sector, working through funded interventions, often short-term, implemented by professional artistic and administrative staff. These interventions allowed them to build credibility in the community and among donors. Their activities in a wide spectrum of the arts and culture fields such as performing arts, cinema and visual arts, music, design, and publications, are directed generally to all social segments of the society. Their programs vary from traditional, to popular, to contemporary expressions, drawing a balance between artistic, social, and political themes. The formulation of visions and missions of NGOs are closely linked to the context described above. Justice, a liberated, pluralistic, and democratic society, respect of diversity, and human rights and equality are part of the jargon used in these formulations. NGOs perceive their interventions as contributions towards this

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[16] https://www.madacenter.org/files/Violations%20Annual%20Report%202020-%20arabic.pdf

[17] https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=3666

[18] There are 3,600 NGOs working in health, social, economic, and relief services; they employ 40,000 paid employees. NGOs received international funding between 1994 and 2017 of about US$34 billion. https://www.masarat.ps/article/5637

[19] These figures have been compiled (collected) as part of an action research that encompassed a comprehensive framework on the whole performing arts sector in Palestine conducted by DROSOS FOUNDATION in 2018/2019.

[20] http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_Ar_10-3-2021-cult-ar.pdf

ethos. Many work by sub-contracting individual artists for artistic productions. Most are almost completely dependent on external funding, while some have minimal revenue from membership fees, training fees, and sales.

CBOs are a smaller type of NGOs but are often registered under either the Ministry of Social Affairs as social work community centres or under the Higher Council of Youth and Sports. They mainly offer activities to children, youth, and women in certain localities (rural areas, refugee camps). According to PCBS, there are 670 such centres.[21] They implement diverse localised social activities, including cultural and artistic ones with more traditional forms. Their objectives and activities are more linked to their communities.

Not-for-profit companies: These came into existence based on Palestinian Cabinet Law #3, endorsed in 2010.[22] Registered under the Ministry of Economy, these companies combine charitable and developmental, cultural, or social with economic work. Their internal governance and mandate are more flexible as compared with NGOs. However, external funding channelled to any not-for-profit companies is subject to the approval of the Palestinian Council of Ministers prior to receiving the fund. Revenues cannot be distributed internally, but are spent on the organisations' projects. There were about 269 not-for-profit companies in Palestine at the end of 2016, some of which are specialised in arts and culture.

Networks and collectives: The idea of a concerted effort to create joint programs at various levels in the performing arts which started back in 2008-09, culminated in the establishment of the Palestinian Performing Arts Network (PPAN) in 2015, by 11 leading NGOs, with funding from SIDA. Today, there are 15 members in PPAN. Shafaq (founded as a collective by 5 Jerusalem-based major NGOs) was established with funding from SIDA as well. Some collectives form a cradle for emerging individual artists (e.g., Shababeek for Contemporary Arts in Gaza); others include individuals and groups/initiatives like Al-Qasaba's "Culture Incubator" program, and the alliance of three cultural not-for-profit companies to strengthen the digital transition and create jobs in the cultural sector. In Gaza, the General Union of Cultural Centres (GUCCPAL) was established in 1997, and formally registered under the MoC, with 52 active member organisations.[23] Non-registered entities—and therefore entities who are not members in GUCCPAL—are not eligible for any funds through the Union. Since 2006, no new members in Gaza have been able to join (see Section 3.2). Traditional unions for individual visual artists or theatre actors exist, yet remain stagnant in terms of internal policies and governance. This leaves individual artists without protection for their rights, let alone formal registration under a legal entity.

Local initiatives and individual artists: There has been an increase in the number of **independent professional artists**[24] in the last 5-10 years, in fields like the visual arts, music, and graphic design. Specialised artists in the technical production chain in the performing arts and cinema are much fewer in numbers. Unfortunately, the lack of a baseline has hindered the mapping of exact figures and specialisations of individual artists for the purpose of this research. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that three different categories were identified regardless of their artistic fields. First are individual artists who are sub-contracted by cultural NGOs, or possibly by private or public sectors to work on specific artistic projects or productions. Theatre actors fall in this category, for example. Another category involves persons contracted as trainers in certain fields, like music teachers, trainers in visual arts, theatre, animation, and different forms of digital arts. These two categories have the flexibility to work on their own productions alongside the contracted assignments. The last category is the completely independent artists; many have their own

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[21] http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/Culture-2019-10A.html
[22] https://www.saacb.ps/BruRpts/ComapniesNonProfetReport.pdf
[23] https://www.guccpal.org/ar/page.php?id=1
[24] Al-Harah Theatre conducted a mapping study (not published) covering 125 theatre individual artists including: actors, directors, musicians, scenographers, light/sound designers, costume designers and stage managers.

studios where they develop their own projects, particularly in the visual arts. Many of the individual independent artists initiate their own groups, particularly in music and dance. Individual artists link their role to the socio-political dynamic of Palestinian society; others give a priority to pure, art-for-art's-sake expressions.

Local initiatives:[25] Various groups have initiated new activities and become important players in the sector in the last few years. Clear definition or description of these "initiatives" is difficult, due to the absence of a clear database of their numbers, missions, forms of activities, and organisational features. These actors or initiative creators can be independent individuals, or groups of individuals, possibly affiliated with CBOs or completely independent from any entity. It is interesting to note that they are mainly youth-led groups. Often, they initiate less conventional and more daring ideas as possible solutions for daily lived social and economic issues which concern them as well. They make good use of digital tools to creatively conceive and implement these initiatives. They come together voluntarily, with concrete ideas, which are often linked to their communities; they aim to materialise these ideas in small-scale activities or projects. As non-registered entities, their governance and finances are almost non-existent, or very basic. Their work can be a specific artistic field, or a combination of different fields, addressing specific topics or linked to other developmental sectors and community issues.

Governmental and semi-governmental sector

The Ministry of Culture (MoC), established in 1994; strong cultural organisations were already existing before. It is the main—but not the only—key governmental body in charge of the cultural sector. **The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities** oversees tourism, tangible heritage and museums. The MoC has issued three sectoral strategies since its establishment, with the most recent being the 2017-2022 strategy. These well-articulated strategies lack practical mechanisms in view of the absence of supporting legislations, limitations of budgets, and frequent change of ministers. Since its establishment, the MoC has been quite challenged at these levels. In the last strategy of 2017-2022, it is clearly stated that "culture is not considered when drafting other national laws and legislations. Existing policies and legislations are not sufficiently capable to protect the national cultural identity."[26]

Becoming a member state of UNESCO in 2011, Palestine has ratified 6 international conventions on culture,[27] including the 2005 convention on cultural diversity, and the 2003 convention on the protection of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). Ratification entails commitment by Palestine to implement and ensure adherence to these conventions. New legislations and laws pertinent to culture have not been endorsed in the last past few years; this leaves the sector less protected. The latest endorsement of a specific law for the protection of cultural heritage (Decree Law 2018) is a major step towards the protection of tangible heritage. Neither copyright law nor the protection of ICH law has been endorsed yet.

Different entities attached to Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) play a role in the culture sector. These include **the Palestinian National Committee for Education, Culture and Science (PNCECS). The Higher Council of Sports and Youth** supervises youth centres, many of which run at least some cultural activities.

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[25] Annex 3 gives extensive details on the local cultural initiatives.
[26] http://www.moc.pna.ps/files/server/strategic/strategy2017_2022.pdf (p.5)

[27] https://en.unesco.org/countries/palestine/conventions

Local governance: Municipalities and local councils have very limited or almost no budgets earmarked specifically for culture.[28] Only a few of them have cultural strategic plans or allocated budgets, such as the municipalities of Ramallah and Bethlehem. This is reflected in their performance in cultural development.

National, regional and international donors

The A. M. Qattan Foundation and Welfare Association (WA) are key national actors in the flourishing and sustainability of the cultural sector in Palestine. Both are privately owned foundations established by Palestinians of the Diaspora. The **A. M. Qattan Foundation** has been a pillar in the sector, supporting hundreds of emerging young authors, artists, and innovators and allowing them to leave their fingerprints on the landscape of cultural life in Palestine. **The WA's** main objective of its "Culture" program under the strategy of 2020-22 is to *"to maintain the living heritage, enhance the individual and collective identity, emphasise the role of culture as a component to guide sustainable development; and to preserve joint Palestinian achievements in cultural dialogue and the role of economic and social empowerment in the sustainability of this sector."*[29] **WA's** culture program will support the performing arts, cultural industries, and community initiatives, with a total of US$7.5 million in historic Palestine and Lebanon. Its main strategic directions will be focused on: improving art and cultural industries; supporting initiatives that use modern technology and interactive platforms; building an interactive archive of the cultural achievements; establishing an electronic space that includes beneficiaries of WA programs; supporting individual initiatives that use arts and cultural industries in raising awareness regarding individual and collective Palestinian cultural identity; individual productive initiatives in the field of performing arts; and improving the capacities of partner NGOs in terms of infrastructure and human resources. It is worth noting that WA's culture program budget in its 2020-22 strategy increased to US$7.5 compared to US$5 million in 2017-2019. It has US$3.6 million earmarked for the program in West Bank, and US$0.85 million for the Gaza Strip. **Rawa Fund** started a pilot project 2019-2021, supporting innovative community projects including cultural projects. As its mission statement affirms: "Rooted in collective community decision-making, Rawa is a funding and support model that aims to raise hope, build trust and dignity, and promote successful alternative local solutions generated by Palestinian communities."[30]

Regional funding organisations such as **Al-Mawred Al-Thaqafy** and **AFAC** which target cultural organisations, initiatives and individuals in Arab world, including Palestine. Their programs also cover artists who are refugees worldwide. Competition for their resources is quite high among cultural sector actors from Arab countries; they make separate annual calls for individuals and institutes, and for diverse forms of arts.

International governmental donors: The Main international donors to the cultural sector remain the **EU, SIDA, Norway**, in addition to some programs funded by the Belgians, Spanish, and Italians in the field of cultural heritage. There is other funding through **diplomatic missions like Germany, Netherlands, Ireland**, etc., but it is not regular or well identified.

International non-governmental organisations such as **Prince Claus Fund, Swedish Institute, War Child, Diakonia, and ProHelvetia,[31]** among others, have their funding resources in their own countries. With

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[28] According to a non-published study commissioned by UNESCO on the Culture 2030 indicators: "the budget dedicated to culture in all municipalities and local councils in the West Bank and Gaza is between 1.1%-1.4% of the municipalities' total budget."

[29] https://www.taawon.org/sites/default/files/pages_attachments/sp_final_-e.pdf

[30] http://rawafund.org/about

[31] https://prohelvetia.ch/en/. Cultural exchange between Switzerland and the Arab world is done through its liaison office in Cairo. Through its performing arts program, Pro Helvetia supports projects of regional and international significance. ProHelvetia was one of the partners to the Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival in 2019.

Palestinian partner NGOs, they might have a specific unilateral project funding, or joint multi-partner, project-based agreements. This funding is usually channelled or managed through the European NGO/partner; projects are built on partnerships and mutual understanding among the partners.

Drosos Foundation is the newcomer on the donor map since 2007-2008. Today, Drosos is considered one of the main donors to the creative sector in Palestine. It works with two complementary goals: (i) Sustainable sources of income and livelihood security; and (ii) Resilient and actively engaged disadvantaged people.[32] Within the context of promoting Palestinian economic independence and creative skills, DROSOS Palestine has four program outcomes, including: (1) Improved economic diversification and development through promoting creative economies; and (2) Empowered Agents for Change influencing social value creation for an improved quality of life. DROSOS Palestine believes in proactively promoting and nurturing creative industries to create jobs, generate income, and achieve social change, while preserving important aspects of Palestinian heritage/identity. DROSOS Palestine will support projects working with talented and creative youth from marginalised communities to create products and services relying on innovative ideas, skills, and the ability to seize new opportunities. DROSOS Palestine believes that the key enabler to improving the quality of life in marginalised communities is empowering children and youth to claim their rights and create social change. Having culture and creativity as the vehicle for building life skills competencies, disadvantaged children and youth from marginalised communities will have an opportunity to better function in both their communities and future professional lives.*[33]*

In addition, there are **four EUNIC members or European cultural institutes**: the **British Council,** the **French Cultural Centre,** the **Goethe Institute,** and the **Danish House** in Palestine, which have an important role in enriching the cultural scene mainly through exchange, language training, and human resources. They are not considered as donors, but rather a body for enriching exchange and dialogue between cultures while enjoying flexibility of networking and programming, often in cooperation with Palestinian counterparts. They open their spaces for such activities hosting both Palestinian artists and cultural operators and artists from European countries. **The British Council in Palestine supports artists through skills development, opportunities to showcase, and networking. Its "Masarat Grants" program covers needs of artists in Palestine and the region.[34]** In addition, **"Culture Protection Fund"[35]** is mainly for supporting renovation and protection of tangible heritage sites; it has also a partnership and granting program titled *"International creative partnerships supported by new digital collaboration fund"* aiming mainly at finding digitally innovative ways of collaborating internationally. Three types of grants are supported: research and development grants, restart grants, and collaboration grants with focus on virtual delivery.[36]

The Palestinian private sector

Funding for culture through the Palestinian private sector falls under "social responsibility." This funding is quite limited, focusing mainly on seasonal festivals to ensure visibility through sponsorships. One of the limitations of this research was the inability to conduct interviews with representatives of the private sector. As a result, the research team analysed the annual reports of the two main private sector entities that support culture: **Bank of Palestine and the Paltel Group Foundation**. The **Paltel Group Foundation** has focused on Technology and Education as its main two components since 2017, and has reduced its support to culture. The **Bank of Palestine** also has decreased its sponsorship for the culture sector, which is already exclusive to specific cultural organisations.

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[32] Drosos Palestine office Strategy 2019-2022
[33] Drosos Palestine office Strategy 2019-2022
[34] https://www.britishcouncil.ps/en/programmes/arts
[35] https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/culture-development/cultural-protection-fund
[36] https://www.britishcouncil.org/about/press/british-council-announces-international-creative-partnerships-supported-new-digital

Palestinian universities and community colleges

There are 51 higher education institutes in Palestine. "Out of the (42,394) graduates in 2019-2020, there were 3861 graduates of arts and humanities."[37] Unfortunately, few of these institutes offer programs leading to certificates in the management of arts and culture, and many of these programs lack a practical dimension. In 2018, the Faculty of Arts and Music was formally opened at Birzeit University, starting with a program in Arabic music, followed by a program in contemporary visual art and design." According to a recent market study however, "the 2nd highest unemployment rate is among graduates of arts, reaching about 47% in the first quarter of 2021."[38] According to Tina Sherwell, head of the visual arts program at Birzeit University, "50% of the students who are admitted at the faculty get enrolled because they scored very low at their 'Tawjihi' final exams, while the other 50% are quite passionate and look forward to establish a career especially in the design program."[39]

4. General institutional dynamics and their effects on the sector

4.1 Dynamics between different stakeholders

The issues raised here are classified under six sub-headings, based on the analysis of the respondents' feedback on challenges facing the sector and their effects on the dynamics of the sector. These challenges include: regression of social values and increased conservatism, weak performance of the MoC, constraining donors' policies (including conditional funding), and the Palestinian CSOs' lack of a clear vision of their roles and mandates (including cultural organisations). Overall, these challenges have contributed to the underperformance of the arts and culture sector.

4.1.1 Dynamics with decision makers and duty bearers

The respondents highlighted the insufficient attention given by the PA to the cultural sector, which has weakened the role of the MoC. According to respondents, the relationship between the MoC and the strong independent cultural sector has been characterised by mutual criticism, lack of communication, and random cooperation. Issues of transparency and bureaucracy related to the PCF were also highlighted by respondents *(Annex 6 gives input from respondents).*

Since its establishment, the MoC has issued three ambitious strategies for the sector.[40] Each includes an in-depth diagnosis of the challenges facing the sector. However, these strategies lack sufficient resources, supporting legislation, and sustainable means of implementation. In its first strategy (2011-2013), the MoC clearly stated the limitations in terms of budget allocations, as well as the need for legislation encouraging creativity: *"*the sector needs legislations summarised in laws for encouraging cultural, artistic and intellectual creativity, increasing the share of funding to the MoC from the general budget and PLO budgets, and strengthening the independence of cultural organisations."[41]. In the National Policy Agenda of 2017-

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[37] http://www.mohe.pna.ps/services/statistics

[38] https://www.aliqtisadi.ps/article/81598

[39] Interview Tina Sherwell on June 10th

[40] Consecutively: 2011-2013, 2014-2016, 2017-2022

[41] MOC, Sector Strategy 2011-2013, p.26

2022, identity and cultural heritage protection are placed under the 10th national policy. i.e. "preserving our national identity and cultural heritage." This policy falls under the pillar of sustainable development[42].

There is an important lack of regulatory laws and legislations that encourage creativity and protect the sector. As stated in Al Mawred Al-Thaqafy's report on Cultural Policy in the Region, "due to the continued absence of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and until the formation of an elected one, the draft laws are submitted to the Council of Ministers, which hands the laws over, if ratified, to the Office of the Palestinian Authority President for endorsement."[43] For example, the laws of intellectual property protection and Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) protection have not yet been endorsed. Efforts by the PPAN and other NGOs to exempt artists and arts organisations from income taxes have not been fruitful. When Palestine became a member state of UNESCO in October 2011), it ratified the six international conventions[44] on culture and thus, by default, adopted the "1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist."[45] However, in practice Palestine's current policies cannot yet meet all the obligations these international conventions entail. In 2018, the decree law on Palestinian Tangible Heritage came into effect. It is considered the first national legislation on cultural heritage. In Gaza, cultural policies are completely dependent on the "goodwill" of the Hamas government, which holds authority to approve not only laws, but also events and activities. Moreover, the issue of freedom of expression has come into focus in both Gaza and the WB, in view of the censorship and arrests of social media activists by the PA.

The researchers believe that cultural actors must develop stronger concerted efforts and advocacy tools to change PA policies and budget allocations to the arts and culture. The MoC should be the catalyst of the sector at the level of national development strategies and budgets. It is also the responsibility of the MoC to highlight the critical role of the Palestinian independent cultural and arts sector for international donors, and to defend its needs and protect its resources.

As for municipalities, their engagement and support for culture and the arts has overall been quite minimal. Notable exceptions are the municipalities of Ramallah and Bethlehem. Local governance can play a vital role in supporting the sector by providing logistics, or opening public venues for performances and exhibitions, and integrating arts and culture as essential sectors in their plans.

4.1.2   Dynamics with donors

Issues related to funding were repeatedly cited by the respondents during this research. There is general dissatisfaction about the way funding has been organised and managed. This dissatisfaction pertains especially to donors' policies and conditional funding (anti-terrorism clause); funding through intermediary organisations; non-differentiation of funding mechanisms; and lack of pre-assessment by donors. Almost all respondents cited recent issue of conditional funding from the EU. Most respondents had no direct experience with SDC-funded projects; the discussions on this component tended to deal with all external funding for the sector in general. *(Annex 7 elaborates on these issues)*

While external funding has made possible an increase in the number of actors and programs, expanded scope of work, and higher quality of cultural sector, it has also left negative results and created a strong relationship of dependency. Indeed, 73% of the organisations that replied to the questionnaire currently rely on external donations. The funding-related challenges faced by Palestinian CSOs, including cultural

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[42] National Policies Agenda, 2017-2022
[43] Cultural Policy in the Arab Region Programme Al Mawred Al-Thaqafy, 2015, p.8.
https://www.culturalpolicies.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/palestine_profile_summary_2014.pdf
[44] https://en.unesco.org/countries/palestine/conventions
[45] https://en.unesco.org/creativity/governance/status-artist

organisations, have to be considered as part and parcel of their and the PA's overall dependency on external aid.

The restrictions in funding policies for the Palestinian cultural sector include: conditional funding based on political reasons; funding through intermediaries; disproportionate funding for the sector, as compared with other sectors or the PA; and the fact that funding for art and culture is often seen as a by-product of funding for other areas such as human rights and democracy-building.

These policies have created a funding environment that is not conducive to the development or sustainability of the sector. This has in turn led to: (1) high competition over limited resources, rather than coordination and collective sharing among actors; (2) focus on the short term/projects rather than the long term and/or the quality of productions and activities, thus minimising impact; (3) fragmentation of the sector and exclusion of many actors, as funding is allocated to specific fields or geographic areas. These factors explain the overall underperformance of the sector, as well as the negative dynamics among all actors. They have also weakened the role of arts and culture in the community, in development, and in social change. In addition to the policies of external donors, the lack of funding from the Palestinian private sector, and the scarcity of public funding from the MOC, have further weakened the sector's capacities.

Beyond the national context, the regional context should also be considered. Beginning in 2011-12, the already-limited funding from international donors began to diminish, as priorities shifted towards relief and humanitarian aid for those affected by the wars in Syria and Yemen. In the last years, regional funding mechanisms such as Al-Mawred and AFAC have focused on Arab artists, especially Syrians, who have become refugees all over the world.

4.1.3 Dynamics of the sector with the community

It is interesting to note that the respondents recognised that the role of arts and culture has been marginalised in society and in movements for social change. Community participation, work in synergy with other sectors, and interventions with the capacity to leave an impact, were all described as insufficient or weak *(Annex 5 gives details by respondents in the WB)*.

The overall disappointment and frustrations of artists and cultural actors, due to the constraining environment and its effects (described under Section 3.2), are leading them to withhold from addressing real national issues or concerns of the community. Respondents from Gaza affirmed that the siege and repeated wars have seriously affected the dynamic between cultural actors and overall society *(Annex 4 gives details by respondents from Gaza)*. Nevertheless, cultural and artistic expression have been extensively used as tools of expression and as trauma remedial interventions. In Sheikh Jarrah, for example, improvised music, singing, and traditional dance have been taking place on a nightly basis, as expressions of solidarity. In the Gaza Strip, many different arts interventions have been used since the last war.

In addition, people are not prioritising arts and culture programs because they face other pressing economic priorities. The fact that there is no clear national political vision also creates friction between arts and cultural practitioners and their visions: some are working towards state-building; others are working towards strengthening resilience and steadfastness.

Other reasons for the distance between the cultural and arts sector and the wider community are the lack of mechanisms, limited resources, and capacities of some organisations and individual artists to reach out or develop community-based activities. Organisations using conventional working modalities, such as "top-down" approaches, have been ineffective in increasing participation and inclusion of diverse groups. As a result, they have not been able to attract or build new audiences. Other actors are reluctant to leave the vicinity of their office areas, concentrating their activities in major cities. Some organisations are restricted

to implementing short-term funded projects, or have to follow agendas imposed by donors, focusing projects on specific communities or target groups. However, there are many genuine partnerships and organisations using "bottom-up" and "people-centred" approaches—particularly in the performing arts, which engage large publics. Such interventions are built on equal partnerships with CBOs or grassroots initiative groups. They build on their joint experiences by creating and fostering programs that cater to the needs of the communities. Long-term interventions at the community level are the best modalities. In such models, "processes" and tools are effective in sustaining ownership of activities by groups or CBOs and long-term partnerships. Such models need to be further developed.

4.1.4   Collaboration among cultural organisations

The inputs from respondents on the dynamics among organisations were shared between the WB and Gaza respondents; it can be described as 'a look from within', and a 'self-criticism' of the organisations to their own modalities of work, which have been hindering further their progress and the development of the sector in general. The levels of dynamics here were given under different sub-headings below (Annex 8 gives more details):

Cooperation dynamics: According to respondents in this research, negative features such as high competition among actors, lack of cooperation, and diversion of activities and resources have decreased impact of their interventions and their underperformance at different levels. Unfortunately, some of these negative effects appeared due to funding modalities, policies, and conditions. These findings confirm the same points or criticism highlighted in the reflection meeting of June 11th, at Sareyyet Ramallah.[46] This "self-criticism" can be the beginning of a re-thinking process that may lead to more positive and fruitful dynamics and cooperation. Further collective discussion on future modalities of cooperation and sharing of resources, were initially phrased in four objectives for "Sallet Al-Mawared," yet exact formulations followed by implementation is still to be finalised. It was clear that the COVID-19, and the conditional funding issues, were opportunities behind opening this collective dialogue and highlighting these issues. The organisations realised their weaknesses in adapting to new realities, or working in emergency modes, and their inability to manage the new challenges collectively.

Working within collectives or networks. Respondents criticised the exclusive nature of many cultural networks, and way their development is constrained by donor wishes. Many organisations are members of either local, regional, or international networks or collectives (i.e., 69.7% of the respondents to the questionnaire). Although such networks might further fragment the sector, collective planning and joint implementation of certain projects and/or in certain areas can be effective and powerful. Networks or collectives should not be seen as negative if they are built on equal partnerships, transparency, mutual benefits, and if they contribute to the development of the cultural landscape. In Gaza, for example, many organisations are sharing equipment to implement big events, due to the limited resources. As a modality, the organisations should probably establish a "code of conduct" among themselves, following the principles of networking or collective work.

Business development in the culture and arts sector: It was also clear from the research that the organisations do not know the entrepreneurial world well, nor how to link it with culture to develop business models that can sustain the cultural sector. Although this could be an important path, it needs further research and exploration. (see Section 4.2.2).

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[46] 59 participants from historic Palestine, including NGOs, individuals, and initiatives, met on June 11th; it was a follow-up to a meeting held on May 7th and initiated by Sareyyet Ramallah and WA. Later, this initiative was named "Sallet Al-Mawared," or "basket of resources."

4.1.5 Dynamics with initiatives and individual artists

Respondents gave different opinions on the dynamics between NGOs, individual artists, and initiative groups. Individual artists and initiative groups stressed the challenges of working with NGOs. The sub-sections below elaborate on these issues:

Numbers and categories: For the purposes of this research, we have learned about groups or initiatives supported through the A. M. Qattan Foundation, PPAN, Al-Harah Theatre, Sakakini, Dar Qandeel, YES Theatre and Film Lab. In addition, 16 Palestinian contemporary dance groups took part in the Dance Festival, organised by Sareyyet Ramallah (RCDF) in June 2021.[47] Ashtar Theatre International Youth Festival in July 2021 included seven Palestinian troupes of young actors. There is to date no database showing the number or the categories of existing initiatives. Many arts and culture NGOs work in partnership with CBOs or grassroots organisations and groups, who initiate ideas for joint activities. These realities raise the question of whether the emergence of such initiatives and the increasing number of individual artists in recent years can be attributed to the natural development of the sector—and a proliferation of programs nationally—or whether they due to the increasing funding opportunities by bigger foundations like the A. M. Qattan Foundation, or through networks like PPAN or other modalities.

With their limited core funding, fixed assets, and venues, these initiative groups have ownership of one thing: their ideas. This also can apply to independent artists, who are not affiliated to any organisation. Individuals and groups might seek basic support, equipment, working spaces, or funding from bigger NGOs. Others might cover their costs through local funding from their communities, or simply through their personal efforts. It bears noting here that their "core costs" are quite minimal *(Annex 3 gives extensive details on initiatives).*

Competition with established NGOs? Based on these features and relations, there was a clear discrepancy between different NGOs' opinions. While some were more welcoming and open to these young innovative groups and individuals, others were more hesitant, out of fear of competition over limited resources. They also question the social-political impact of these groups, as well as their experience, sustainability, and inconsistency in terms of activities. There is, however, a consensus among NGOs that these initiatives should not fall into the sophisticated procedures of registration and funding. Some of these initiative groups do not want to work under the umbrella of an NGO, fearing controlling approaches and excessive paperwork. In Gaza, there is cooperation among organisations, initiatives, and individual actors, due to the limited resources. However, some donors work only through projects under contract with registered organisations, even if project activities are targeting individual artists or initiatives. In such cases, artists who implement the actual production are not given contracts, nor are they recognised, since they are not formally registered. Copyrights therefore, remain in the hands of the registered NGO that signed a contract. This is a frustrating issue for individual artists and informal groups, according to respondents from Gaza. Moreover, some groups band together when there are funding possibilities but disperse once there are no more. As for the dynamic between organisations and individual artists, organisations' restrictive regulations and attempts to interfere with artists' creative ideas have jeopardised the positive dynamic that used to exist. Artists are thus pulled between two divergent concerns: the search for free artistic expression and the concern for their income. Some artists are critical of classification methods of some organisations to the artistic levels of artists; this may segregate or marginalize some artists. It is known that independent individual artists are the most vulnerable category in terms of protection and sustainability.

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[47] Interview with Khaled Elayyan, Executive Director of Sareyyet Ramallah, on 15/6/2021 on radio 24fm.ps

Win-win: The Palestinian landscape of arts and culture has become richer mix of diverse actors who immerse the public, in Palestine and the world with their creativity. The contribution of all actors is paramount to the sector's development and vibrancy. In view of the huge needs for arts and culture interventions, it is not helpful to marginalise the role of one or another group of actors. It is essential to have reciprocal "win-win" cooperation between NGOs and emerging young artists or local community initiatives. Leveraging artists' creativity and making use of the management capacity of NGOs, while avoiding exploitive attitudes, could become the basis for a win-win form of cooperation.

In terms of capacity building, it is well known that many CBOs, initiatives, and individual artists lack basic managerial and marketing skills. Some independent artists are not comfortable with use of digital platforms or tools, and lack marketing capacities. Others, particularly those from the Gaza Strip, are more experienced with digital tools. The issues of "copyrights" and "ownership" are quite crucial for individual visual artists. Infrastructures for exhibitions, rehearsal spaces for performing arts productions, or studios and equipment, especially in Gaza, are limited or unaffordable. Organisations as well as local governments should open their doors for such activities and provide facilities and equipment. The MoC and donors should provide equal opportunities for supporting and developing the sector in Gaza and the WB.

4.1.6   Interaction with other developmental sectors

The multiple roles of culture—in good governance, development, and social change processes—are well-articulated in the visions and mission statements of arts organisations in Palestine. However, in practice, these visions and missions lack follow-through on the ground. Actors are often asked to re-formulate their strategies in more realistic terms, and participatory processes.

It has become evident that that the arts and culture sector has not gotten sufficient attention from large CSOs working in other development sectors. Synergy between cultural CSOs and CSOs from other sectors has rarely materialised on the ground. Holistic approaches to community development work, fostering genuine participation and mutual interests between all stakeholders, are unfortunately not common in Palestine. It is important that the cultural sector, as part of Palestinian civil society, makes a serious effort to initiate reflections and dialogue on their developmental visions and approaches. It is also important that they seek cohesion with other sectors contributing to sustainable development.

It is important to note that culture was adopted as a cross-cutting issue in the SDGs, but not recognised as an independent Goal. As UNESCO's Culture 3030 agenda states: "Culture is not only a sector of activity in itself, but also a transversal, intrinsic component across the public policy spectrum, acting as an enabler to accelerate sustainable development processes. While culture does not have a dedicated Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) in the 2030 Agenda, it is reflected across many of the goals and targets including those on sustainable cities (SDG 11), decent work (SDG 8), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), climate action (SDG 13), gender equality (SDG 5), innovation (SDG 9), and peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16)."[48]

4.2   Effects of 2020 on the cultural sector

4.2.1   Negative effects

In 2020, new challenges added to the cultural sector's existing vulnerability. These challenges were experienced at the organisational and individual levels, not only in Palestine but worldwide. However, in the context of Palestine and in light of the challenges described above, the repercussions of the COVID-19

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[48] https://en.unesco.org/news/culture-2030-agenda

pandemic on this already fragile ecosystem have been severe. The closure of organisations and the cancellation of public activities led to a loss of audiences, loss of target groups, and temporary jobs. In 2020, "about 100 cultural events were cancelled… including 26 cultural festivals and closing of 457 organisations plus a sudden suspension of a big number of artists, groups and actors…."[49] *(Annex 10 gives inputs from respondents on the negative effects of COVID-19).*

2020 was a shock for all CSOs, who did not know how to go about programs in the context of a life-threatening pandemic. Organisations were not ready for sudden closures or the complete suspension of activities, and were unable to function due to the lack of clarity on the duration of the lockdowns. Funding was directed towards the health and humanitarian sectors. In addition, organisations and individuals lost income usually obtained from sales and fees, as attention shifted towards health and economic priorities. According to the PCBS, "there were only 96 theatre shows organised in 2020, which attracted only 22,000 spectators; in comparison, 323 shows were organised in 2019, attracting about 90,000."[50] However, an audience of 691,362 attended "artistic shows" in 2020, with 652,828 attending them virtually and only 38,534 physically."[51] Unfortunately, neither the PA nor individual NGOs were prepared for such consequences, and therefore could not cater to the economic empowerment of the sector. As a remedial effort, "750 artists were supported by culture grants of US$500 each,"[52] according to the MoC. Meanwhile, the A. M. Qattan Foundation granted 57 artists[53] from historic Palestine small grants of US$750 each. In addition, the A. M. Qattan Foundation and Al-Mawred directed a total of US$400,000 to institutions in the form of grants, with a ceiling of US$30,000 each, as part of the "Takatuf" granting program.[54]

Cultural and artistic expressions are closely linked to and depend on the direct interaction of people and target groups. These forms of interaction were completely cut off, despite attempts to organise events online. All respondents acknowledged that they did not know the digital world well earlier, while also recognising that it has imposed itself strongly. They confirmed, however, that it is not an alternative to real and direct contact. To be sure, 89.5% of the respondents stated that working directly with audiences serves most of their missions and programmatic priorities. Artists and organisations are hesitant to use digital media due to censorship, copyright, and piracy concerns. Difficulties accessing the internet, together with electricity cuts, made it difficult for many groups to get engaged in digitalised activities, particularly in the Gaza Strip.

4.2.2　New trends and opportunities

The most obvious conclusion from this research process is cultural organisations' realisation that it is impossible to protect their existence unless they reconsider and change their modalities of working, and diversify their resources. This section will conclude the major opportunities and future trends, with a view articulating a number of recommendations.

It is clear that 2020 brought to the surface core issues that have lain dormant for the past 20 years. Together, the negative effects of the COVID-19 outbreak, coupled with the refusal of conditional funding by cultural organisations as well as various political, economic, and social complications, all shed light on new opportunities and new trends. It was also obvious that the institutional dynamics and landscape of the

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[49] https://www.rommanmag.com/view/posts/postDetails?id=6125&page=1 Mommad Al Zaqzuk

[50] 24FM.PS: Facts on the influence of Covid on the Palestinian cultural sector in 2020

[51] http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/Culture-2020-04A%20.html

[52] Interview with Minister of Culture: Dr. Abu Saif. June 20th, on 24FM Radio
https://www.facebook.com/ministryofculturep/

[53] http://qattanfoundation.org/ar

[54] http://qattanfoundation.org/ October 7, 2020

sector have started to change; it is high time that these changes are further explored and that new frameworks are devised to sustain this flourishing sector. New modalities and frameworks can strengthen the cultural sector if they are efficiently supported.

The digital transition: This is one of the most sudden changes faced by arts and culture actors. In a short time, cultural actors had to adapt to digital environments and break their isolation to reach their target groups. The actors realised that the digital sphere is the future. However, shifting to new digital tools was a controversial issue: it was seen as **an opportunity but also as a challenge.** Organisations that succeeded in adapting their work during the pandemic and used digital tools to continue working believe that this will increase their ability to reach and build new audiences, locally and internationally. In other words, they saw the digital transition as an opportunity they could build upon. Other organisations considered that extensive use of digital tools was a **challenge;** they lacked the knowledge, infrastructure, skills, and capacities to make good use of this sudden shift to the digital environment. Therefore, they were cut off from their target groups and their work was suspended. They also saw it as an **opportunity** since it forced them to build their capacities and develop their tools and skills. The organisations and individual artists realised that the digital world has a potential to help them develop their work, and widen their outreach locally and internationally. However, performing arts organisations stressed that digital means should not replace direct interaction with the audience through the activities and programs. In other words, digital activities can and must be led in parallel with live activities.

It has become clear that most organisations lack important capacity to upgrade their knowledge, infrastructure, and capacities in the digital world. However, it is not evident that the digital will replace the traditional or direct tools of interaction and communication in this sector, at least not in the near future. Nevertheless, digital capacity tools, media content development, professional capacity building opportunities and skills, as well as equipment and infrastructure need to be upgraded for the sector. The digital transition might serve as an important **job creation opportunity,** particularly for youth. It will also **strengthen networking modalities, locally and internationally**, which will help break Palestinian isolation. Finally, the transition will also make it possible to **upgrade the quality of artistic productions and performances,** which in turn will make them easier to promote globally. There is a growing belief that the digital transition should be utilised extensively, both horizontally and vertically, so that the digital sphere can boost the **creation of new jobs and the exporting of skills, knowledge, and expertise, from Palestine to the world.**

Job creation is one of the areas that the cultural sector in Palestine is looking to develop. To do so, it is looking to the concept and ecosystem of "**creative industry,**"[55] or the "**creative economy**." There is a growing belief that the cultural and creative industries can make an important economic contribution. They have the potential to **create more job opportunities** and may at least partially guarantee the sustainability of the sector. Nevertheless, enhancing the cultural and creative industries is a long process. It requires conducting an in-depth study on the ecosystem of creative industries and their potential to strengthen the Palestinian economy. Conditions that encourage or hamper its development, as well as proposed modalities of implementation by different stakeholders, must be examined in depth. Such a study can become a baseline for the future development of concrete programs. This direction requires the development of policies and legislation that encourage the full potential of creative industries, until they become a full-fledged sector capable of securing jobs for innovators. These policies and legislations must be consolidated through a concerted effort between different stakeholders in the private and public sectors.

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[55] According to World Bank data, the creative industry grew at a fast pace in 2017: "up to a 10% growth rate in the MENA region with Kuwait leading the process." https://euromed-economists.org/creact4med/

Advocacy: Arts and culture organisations are required to develop mechanisms and legal frameworks to strengthen their position and protect artists. **Lobbying and advocacy campaigns to influence policies and legislations must be developed and put into action.** Many respondents affirmed the importance of such interventions, as they have the potential to strengthen the sector and contribute to the protection of cultural actors and creativity in general. Successful advocacy requires joint envisioning and planning among the different actors. Lobbying and advocacy should also be seen in the framework of improving funding criteria and abolishing the conditional funding imposed on the sector.

Financial independence, solidarity, and resource-sharing: The recent imposition of conditional funding by the EU and individual EU countries (which the cultural sector organisations refused to abide to), coupled with the repercussions of COVID-19, have put certain key actors and/or their programs at risk of complete collapse. This risk is especially high due to the minimal funding provided by the PA and the Palestinian private sector. Most of the cultural organisations now realise that they must work together, rather than in competition. Inclusion of individual artists and initiatives is crucial and enriching. Cultural organisations have begun to embrace collective thinking. A case in point is the "Sallet Al-Mawared" ("Basket of Resources") concept, where actors can share ideas, activities, and resources: for example, sharing technical and human resources, as well as expertise, in addition to infrastructure. The aim of this collective thinking process is to decrease running costs, create a pool of resources, and strengthen advocacy on joint issues, with the ultimate aim of protecting the sector. The dialogue opened through "Sallet Al-Mawared" is an opportunity that should not be wasted. There are other examples of joint reflections and sharing initiated by smaller numbers of organisations: for instance, the "Masahat" collective which brings together four organisations in Hebron; and the digital art alliance collective of three organisations.

Re-visioning programmatic work in relation with the community

While the sector has been distancing itself from social issues and concerns, it is crucial to re-gain its pivotal role in society. To this end, processes and tools must be developed and strengthened at both the individual organisational levels and the general sectoral level. At the sectoral level, processes of collective envisioning and sharing that started back in 2020 represent an important opportunity. There is a need for an in-depth reflection process on the sector's mission, amid the current political uncertainty. It is important for all actors to revise their modalities of intervention by adopting more realistic, participatory approaches which are built on long-term, bottom-up approaches. The real priorities, needs, and concerns of the communities should be at the heart of organisations' missions, key objectives, and interventions. This process will require goodwill as well as good facilitators.

This re-visioning process is an opportunity to restore culture's pivotal role in Palestinian society, and to boost people's resilience, ownership, and development. It is also crucial for creating complementarity and synergies with other sectors, or as a cross-cutting sector in development. This dimension has never been discussed before at the sectoral level.

Diversity of actors – there is space for everybody

In the past few years, there has been a mosaic of diverse actors in the Palestinian arts and culture landscape. This marks an important development. There is space for everybody; creativity has no boundaries. There is a need for serious reflections on ways of integrating all actors in programs that can enrich and develop the sector. Compromises and adaptations are necessary on the part of all actors. Bigger organisations should support and absorb individual artists, and young emerging groups of activists, by encouraging their programs, providing facilities, and offering minimum financial support, etc. In addition, organisations should reduce restrictions on emerging initiative groups and individual artists; such restrictions affect the creativity, productivity and independence of these groups and artists.

4.3 More sectors: It is time to think "outside the box"

4.3.1 Interaction with the private sector

Although support from the private sector for arts and culture has also dropped significantly in the past few years *(see Section 3.3)*, many respondents noted that it should continue to provide marginal support in the form of social responsibility initiatives and other modalities. The contribution of the private sector is crucial to replace conditional funding with national sources. There is a potential for complementarity between the private and cultural sectors, or for the creation of a win-win situation, through sponsorship for arts and culture event. In addition, the private sector can strengthen the capacities of the cultural sector by providing tools and skills to boost income-generating opportunities for the different actors. The private sector can strengthen the capacities of the cultural sector by opening new directions and driving innovative job creation, thus contributing to the growth of the "creative industries." The cultural sector can also benefit from initiatives connecting arts and cultural actors to the IT sector, which has been supported in the last years by the private sector. Such links may create job and other income-generating opportunities for individuals and organisations. There is a potential for greater complementarity and synergy between the IT and the arts and culture sectors.

4.3.2 Interaction with the entrepreneurial sector

There are important misconceptions and a lack of understanding among cultural actors on the concept of "entrepreneurship." Cultural actors tend to link "entrepreneurship" specifically to the IT sector. This misconception has developed due to the influx of funding from the private sector to the IT sector. IT has also been the increasing focus of business incubators and accelerators. The arts and culture actors have clearly stated that they do not know how to partner with the "entrepreneurial" and IT sectors, or how to make good use of them. For instance, in Gaza, there are 14 incubators in the IT sector alone. The creation of links between the diverse entrepreneurial initiatives and the cultural sector should be feasible after 2021. Merging the different components or dimensions of entrepreneurial work may generate new modalities for artistic production, giving the younger generation new opportunities for innovation. New ideas can break traditional modalities, as entrepreneurship is part of development. It is worth noting that the Higher Council for Innovation and Excellence, focusing on entrepreneurial and business which is under the direct supervision of President Mahmoud Abbas, focuses on entrepreneurial and business accelerators.[56]

5. Directions and Recommendations

5.1 Theory of change

Based on the general analysis, opportunities, and suggestions above, which are meant to help the sector to improve its cultural and artistic aspirations and its performance in society, the researchers propose a theory of change that may guide SDC in its initiatives, while leading to both general and precise recommendations by the research team. This theory of change is formulated below; the three directions are detailed in Section 5.2.

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[56] https://hcie.ps/?page_id=492&lang=en

> **Theory of change**
>
> *Given the socio-economic and political constraints discussed above, it is important to support the resilience of the Palestinian people. In view of the enormous effects that 2020 had on the cultural sector in oPt— effects that threatened its very existence—it is important to focus on ways to overcome these negative effects and challenges, and to fulfil the specific and as-yet unmet needs of the sector. By facilitating the active participation and social empowerment of local communities, both in rural areas and urban settings, and by strengthening innovative, inclusive, and sustainable approaches, it will be possible to dynamize and enrich the performance of actors in the arts and culture sector.*
>
> *This can be achieved by 1) focusing on strengthening the civic engagement processes through cultural and artistic projects aimed at social empowerment and community development; 2) venturing into new approaches for increasing viability, through the exploration of new innovative models; and 3) opening more spaces for free expression and support for individual artists.*
>
> *In the short term, these directions will strengthen 1) the skills and capacities of the main actors, individuals and initiative groups in the entrepreneurial field; 2) close interaction between the actors and communities, 3) linkages with innovative cultural programs; and 4) the efficient use of technology for creating jobs. Skills development can be accomplished in parallel with the establishment of an enabling infrastructure, spaces, and provision of equipment. Also in parallel with these outcomes, advocacy campaigns can be launched in order to change policies and legislation to better serve the sector. If all these outcomes are achieved, it will lead to: 1) job creation, 2) stronger synergies, 3) networking, 4) better quality productions, and 5) stronger local cultural services and greater marketing potential, both locally and internationally.*
>
> *In the long term, interventions such as these will: 1) reduce unemployment specifically among arts and culture graduates; 2) provide stronger protection for artists; 3) ensure greater independence and sustainability for the NGOs in the sector; and 4) enhance their ability to influence stronger community engagement and social change. In that way, these interventions will **revitalise the arts and culture sector, improve its performance and enhance its artistic expression;** this can help strengthen the resilience of the Palestinian people, while also contributing to economic development.*

5.2   SDC's possible future directions

From this ToC, three directions can be derived that take into consideration the complex context in Palestine and its implications for the sector, as well as the opportunities and high potential that already exist there. These proposals take into account Switzerland's two key approaches: *"conflict-sensitive programming, and flexibility."*[57] They are in line with the *"Swiss Cooperation program in Near East 2021-2024,"* contributing particularly to*: Domain 2:* Rule of Law, protection and gender equality*; Domain 3:* Youth employment and innovation*, and Domain 4:* local governance and essential services.*[58]* These directions are also in line with "sustainable development" as one of the thematic focus areas of SDC in the MENA region.[59]

These three proposed directions for SDC's future arts and culture program can be categorized here as follows:
1) Promoting a social empowerment and community development approach.
2) Fostering a greater entrepreneurial spirit.

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[57] Swiss Cooperation program in Near East 2021-2024, p.13
[58] Swiss Cooperation program in Near East 2021-2024, P.9
[59] MENA Strategy 2021-2024, p.26, p. 29

3) Creating space for individual artistic expression.

These are further described below. For each direction, more specific and precise recommendations are formulated in Section 5.3.

The three proposed directions are in line with SDC's holistic approach, whereby cultural funding contributes to greater civic engagement and community development under SDC's local governance initiatives, while reaching the most vulnerable. At the same time, they will help increase job opportunities for new graduates through cultural innovation and approaches. Synergies with the cultural sector and others can be nurtured throughout the three directions.

The proposed directions and recommendations help to put into practice the multiple links between arts and culture with social and economic development. They are also in line with SDC's cultural development policies, approaches, and measures[60]. Supporting dialogue and diversity as tools for change and cohesion is consistent with both SDC's culture policies and the overall vision of many Palestinian cultural actors. It is precisely this conviction that many actors in the sector hold about the developmental role of arts and culture that has kept arts and culture alive in Palestine despite the challenges that exist.

The 1st direction: Promoting a social empowerment and community development approach: This can be achieved by strengthening the civic engagement processes through cultural and artistic projects aimed at social empowerment and community development. When people take ownership and feel responsible for their organisation, their ideas, and the benefits such activities will bring them, these are signs of true civic engagement. This can be better guaranteed when people see that such engagement is rewarding them with social or economic benefits and services; when access to their basic rights is rather enhanced instead of deteriorate, and when they acquire skills, capacities and knowledge as well as greater influence over their own decisions.

SDC can fund civic engagement interventions *"that empower youth and women, and enhance social inclusion of diverse groups in arts and culture."*[61] This is promoted by activities under SDC's "local governance and essential service delivery portfolio." Such activities can also fall under SDC's *"strengthening rule of law and local governance program."* This can be done by supporting participatory and cooperation processes at the sectoral level; building organisational and artistic skills and learning; or supporting direct interventions by one or more experienced actors/organisations who are working through engagement and inclusive approaches with diverse social groups at the community level.

Such a social empowerment approach is in line with SDC's program in oPt: "Social engagement and accountability through arts and culture" and serves its overall objective of "Enhanced social engagement and participation through arts and culture."[62]

SDC support can take two forms:

- Directly supporting the **facilitation of participatory processes** for civic engagement and empowerment, and for efficient sharing of resources. This is **a capacity-building approach** which requires facilitators experienced in participatory and people-led approaches who also have an affinity for cultural and artistic expressions. Supporting NGOs or collectives in the sector to engage in such facilitation processes would have an important up-scaling impact.

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[60] SCD culture and development policy, p.12
[61] Swiss Cooperation program in Near East 2021-2024, p.30-31
[62] Overall Objective in CASE project and in CP_ Case_ 20-23 document

- Directly supporting interventions by one or more actors working through engaged and inclusive approaches with diverse groups at the community level, with the involvement of the local authorities.

People-centred and participatory processes should be demonstrated throughout the design and implementation phases of the project as part of the "civic engagement and empowerment" modality. As criteria, these projects have to focus on engaging some of the vulnerable groups including women, children, and youth; priority can also be given to marginalized areas that are geographically isolated or outside the periphery of major central cities. Specific criteria can be developed for this type of funding which can be directly channelled through SDC office in Jerusalem, rather than through an intermediary.

The 2ⁿᵈ direction: Fostering a more entrepreneurial approach: Taking new approaches to increase the viability of the sector through social enterprises and business development models, for example. This makes it necessary to develop capacities in digital tools and branding that will create jobs for youth in particular. This is in line with the "increased focus on employment opportunities for youth"[63] as one of the implications of the Near East program in oPt. This direction needs further assessment in terms of its eco-system and value chain. Although there are several business incubators and accelerators in Palestine, they are focused mainly on the IT sector; there are still few models designed for the arts and culture sector.

Through interviews it became apparent that different actors are facing many challenges when it comes to dealing with digitisation, if given the accelerating development of new technologies. They also realized that it is imperative for them to embrace new ideas, including digitisation, to overcome the financial challenges threatening the sector.

As the SDC MENA strategy points out, "The digital revolution offers many economic opportunities: it fosters youth employment, and promotes innovation and the development of a dynamic start-up scene."[64]

The 3ʳᵈ direction: Creating space for individual artistic expression: This direction is complementary or consistent with, civic engagement as described in the first direction. It also builds on the second track of the current CASE project:[65] "Grant-making through an open call for applications, art project grants are provided for artists to produce artworks that are inspired from communities' needs." This track/direction should be specifically open to individual artists. Grants should support artists with innovative community-based ideas that engage diverse community groups in a process where they identify their needs. Through this direction, SDC can continue to provide financial support to individual artists. This support can be used not only for production grants, but also for artists to build their capacity in terms of digital tools and marketing in particular, and for equipment and infrastructure improvement. This is in line with the second direction above. Although highly contested by the respondents, including individual artists, support can be channelled through a neutral intermediary entity, provided that there should be no real or perceived conflicts of interest. Conditions and criteria should be formulated under the direct supervision of SDC to avoid exclusion. Technical requirements are the responsibility of the intermediary. Criteria for selection of artists and projects can be pre-defined by a neutral committee from a pool of experts in the field who have decision-making power.

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[63] Swiss Cooperation program in Near East 2021-2024, p.13
[64] MENA Strategy 2021-2024, p.33
[65] Culture, Arts and Social Engagement, implemented through Qattan Foundation.

Unperformance of arts and culture sector

Challenges 1:
- Weak role of culture and art in the society
- Weak engagement of the society with culture and arts
- Weak synergy with other developmental sector
- Limited coordination among all actors in working with community
- Lack of participatory processes and engagement processes

Challenges 2:
- Misconception of the Entrepreneurial Approach
- Lack of experience in the digital world
- Lack of knowledge on potential of creative industry
- High rates of unemployment in culture sector

Challenges 3:
- High rates of unemployment among artists
- Freedom of artistic expressions of individual artists is curtailed by NGOs
- Lack of knowledge in marketing and utilizing digital tools and platforms
- Limited management skills
- Lack of equipment and basic infrastructure

Direction 1:
Social Empowerment and Community Development

Direction 2:
Entrepreneurial Approach

Direction 3:
Space for Individual Artistic Expression

Long Term Impact:
Strengthening the performance of arts and culture sector

Domain 1:
Rule of Law, Protection and Gender Equality

Domain 2:
Youth Employment and Innovation

Domain 3:
Local Governance and Essential Services

5.3   Recommendations

Before suggesting specific recommendations for each of the three directions, it is important to highlight several general recommendations that need to be taken into account. In view of the complex context in which the sector operates in Palestine, it is especially important to emphasise the flexibility of Switzerland's approaches.

General recommendations

1. Loosen funding criteria and conditions to cater to the specific situations and conditions of different categories of actors. This will require a more in-depth assessment of actors' respective visions, priorities, needs, and challenges. It is also preferable to provide different funding channels.
2. Strengthen and provide financial support for cooperation between local CBOs and the many innovative initiatives they would like to start, as well as the more established NGOs that could provide artistic, technical, and managerial support. Again, this is with the proviso that the

fundamental notion of free and independent expression of ideas (in this case of local initiatives) must be nurtured and protected, as a basis for a thriving arts and culture scene in Palestine. Funding such win-win alliances would be an interesting way to provide new energy to this sector.

3. Revisit intermediary funding modalities, so as to avoid conflicts of interest and ensure the effectiveness of funding modalities within the entire cultural management chain.
4. Engage with the MoC to enhance the participation of sector actors in policies and strategic planning, and explore possibilities to provide the arts and culture sector with more proactive support in terms of regulations and budgets.
5. Coordinate with different donors in Palestine's cultural sector to streamline donor conditions and criteria and to make them consistent, in addition to ensuring complementarity among donors to guarantee that most of the artistic and cultural field is covered.
6. Engage in the political process with other European countries and the EU Parliament to revise and establish more precise rules for conditional funding.

Specific recommendations (1st direction):

- Allocate further support to **increase the capacities of the different actors in the sector in "people-centred"** participatory empowerment processes for designing activities and programs.
- Based on strengthened capacities in "people-centred" and participatory processes, **provide direct funding to several NGOs or CBOs that adopt such approaches** in their proposed projects. Funding can also encompass capacity building, core funding, and institutional development of NGOs and CBOs based on a real assessment of their needs, so as to ensure their independency and sustainability.
- Encourage and support ideas and activities of formal and informal collectives which focus on sharing of resources and capacities among actors in the sector.
- Improving the capacities of cultural NGOs and CBOs in leading and managing advocacy campaigns to create changes in policies and enhance their role in accountability. This can be linked with those who are working in cultural digital activities.
- Encouraging collaboration between CBOs, local initiatives, and local governance and NGOs in the same projects, in marginalized areas in particular, focusing on projects based on needs assessment activities, or those having needs assessment as one of the activities in the project.

Direction 1: Social empowerment and community development

Supporting "people-centered" participatory empowerment processes in designing activities and programs, and directly funding organisations or CBOs that adopt such approaches	Encouraging and supporting the facilitation processes and ideas focusing on sharing resources and capacities among actors in the sector, such as"Sallet AlMawared"	Improving the capacities of cultural NGOs and CBOs by supporting capacity building on leading and managing advocacy campaigns	Encouraging collaborations between CBOs, local initiatives, local governance and NGOs in the same projects through direct support	Supporting projects focusing on marginalised areas based on needs assessment activities

Specific recommendations (2nd direction):

- Invest in digital capacity tools, media content development and professional capacity building and skills, as well as relevant equipment and infrastructure, in order to heighten the quality of art products and performances; this might also serve as an important **job creation** tool and networking modality to break Palestinian isolation and strengthen international reach. This can be applied to individual artists, local initiatives groups, CBOs, and NGOs.
- Support capacity and skill development for **income generating projects** and **entrepreneurial initiatives** in the arts and culture sector, while exploring cross-links between this sector and the **business sector** to contribute to the sustainability of the arts and culture sector.
- Support processes for fostering dialogue between leaders from the cultural sector and entrepreneurial projects including both digital and non-digital innovative projects, by conducting interactive activities and interventions that can explore new modalities of work.
- Introduce entrepreneurship business models for cultural actors to enhance the concept of entrepreneurship in culture. This can increase knowledge among the actors in this field, while also making it possible to explore inspiring initiatives from around the world.
- Support research in the field of entrepreneurship in culture for Palestinian researchers. This can be essential for leading evidence-based campaigns to improve cultural policies and legislation and to offer an encouraging environment for entrepreneurs.
- Enhance the concept of "creative industry" as an innovative way of finding solutions for a large number of unemployed people and helping to improve their economic situation.

Direction 2: Entrepreneurial approach

Supporting capacity building in using digital tools and platforms	Fianncing equipment and infrastructure	Supporting capacity development for income-generating projects and entrepreneurial initiatives	Supporting ideas and processes of exploring cross-links initiatives between the cultural sector and the business sector	Combining culture and entrepreneurship, both digital and non-digital	Introducing entrepreneurial models for cultural actors	Supporting research in the field of entrepreneurship in culture for Palestinian researchers	Supporting concert mechanisms and initiatives for improving cultural policies	Enhancing the concept of "creative industry" by supporting research and policies

Specific recommendations (3rd direction):

- Provide **specific and tailored funding support to individual artists** (including equipment and rental of working space) to guarantee their independence, and take into account the need for differential funding to different categories of actors in the sector and their capacities.
- Allocate funds for individual artists to build their capacity to use digital tools and platforms in order to benefit from opportunities, participate in regional and global activities (e.g., exhibitions and festivals), and market their art products and services. This might create new ways for them to generate income and take advantage of job opportunities abroad, thereby enhancing their independence. This will also reflect on improving the arts' sector contribution to the economy at the national level.

Direction 3: Space for individual artistic expression

Provide specific and tailored grants funding to individual artists	Allocating funds which finance equipment, infrastructure, and working spaces	Allocating funds for capacity building for individual artists on using digital tools and platforms

6. ANNEXES

1. Annex 1: List of focus group attendees
2. Annex 2: List of interviews
3. Annex 3: Local cultural initiatives in Palestine
4. Annex 4: Political and socio-economic challenges on the Gaza Strip
5. Annex 5: Political and socio-economic challenges on the WB
6. Annex 6: Dynamics/interaction with the PA/decision makers and duty bearers
7. Annex 7: Dynamics with donors – Funding through intermediaries
8. *Annex 8: Collaboration and dynamics among cultural organisations*
9. *Annex 9: Dynamics of the sector with the community*
10. Annex 10: Negative effects of COVID-19 on the sector

Annex 3: Local cultural initiatives in Palestine

The term "initiatives" stands for "mubadarat" in Arabic referring to the actors/groups who hold or implement the ideas. In addition to details given earlier, some initiatives emerge from youth-affiliated or grassroots organizations, or CBOs in rural areas or refugee camps. Their modality of work is very similar to the pre-Oslo groups which were also youth-led and voluntary-based. With limited or no core funding at all, initiatives by groups enjoy flexibility of decision making, and have more ownership of their ideas. Functioning without fixed assets, or venues, some might seek basic support and funding from bigger NGOs, or Palestinian funding organizations, based on open calls, while others might cover their costs from local funding in their communities, or simply from their personal efforts noting that their "core costs" are quite minimal. Such initiatives have been growing in number in the last seven to five years. For the purpose of this research, we have compiled more then 80 initiatives according to lists provided by major organizations like Qattan, PPAN, VAFF program, Al-Harah Theatre, Sakakini, Dar Qandeel; there are other initiatives mentioned by Yabous, Film Lab and Yest Theatre. Categorization of these initiatives for the purpose of this research was not possible in view of disbursed data related to fields and types of work.

It is noted that some actions or small projects based on concrete or spontaneous ideas -with no solid funding base- may often disappear, while new ones emerge or re-emerge at community levels in a new format or initiative. This has become a trend in the cultural sector in particular. For example, "PPAN since 2017, within its Sida program, has supported more than 40 initiatives with amounts ranging between $ 2000-$ 3500 US. In addition, PPAN members conducted mentoring for initiatives supported in 2017-19, at the artistic and basic managerial levels. In 2020, based on an open call, PPAN received 80 applications; only 20 were supported including some online initiatives.[1]". The CAP program of Qattan received 83 applications in 2020 from individual artists, collectives and organizations under CASE - the grant making track; five projects were finally supported through this track from the 12 shortlisted by the jury. Under the track of "community initiatives led by teachers and students" 228 applications were received by teachers who submitted projects with community initiatives; 40 teachers' projects were selected[2].

Rawa Fund on the other hand, has an open call for initiatives in diverse ideas and sectors including culture and arts.. The screening process is quite participatory through their experts' teams in the communities. Once the initiative is approved, Rawa does not require any reporting, or financial documents[3]. Al-Qasaba on the other hand, has the "incubator for cultural initiatives" program where initiatives receive grants and training. Dar Qandeel made two categories of small support through the VAFF program: support to the project idea/production, and support to the group. In total they have supported 4 out of 30 for the ideas, and 17 out of 45 for the individual projects. For example, in Cinema, Film Lab provides equipment to the youth initiatives to screen films or develop cinema literacy.[4] In Gaza, through VAFF program, Shababeek, being hosted under the General Unioin of Cultural Centres, supports individual artists or initiatives by groups.

Initiatives in the form of music and dance groups have been emerging in the past few years, focusing mainly on both contemporary genres, and traditional, performing a few times at public venues and festivals, before getting dispersed or re-formed under other names. The appearance of such initiatives in the sphere of music and dance is an important result of the consistent work of the NGOs. To indicate this: number of senior music students and graduates mainly from ESNCM and Al-Kamandjati are transformed

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[1] Interview Marina Barham- head of board PPAN
[2] CASE progress report 2020, Qattan Foundation
[3] Interview Fadya Salfiti – Head of board – Rawa Fund
[4] Interview Attallah Hanna

into music groups, especially in Arabic classical or modernized styles. Many of these groups exist in the Ramallah and Bethlehem area. Other individual graduates form their own music initiatives and some have made it globally. As for dance, encouraging experimentation and contemporary dance following the 15th edition of the Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival by Al-Sariyyet[5] can be attributed to their emergence. The 2021 edition of the RCDF includes 16 dance groups from historic Palestine. This can also be said for Theatre, yet with less emergence in numbers. As for Dabke, many were trained by El-Funoun within its outreach areas and schools over the past 20 years; many follow the footsteps and style of El-Funoun. Social initiatives, combining diverse cultural forms with developmental issues for the service of the community, have been encouraged by Al-Qattan program and the nature of the CBOs. In view of lack of data, it is worth studying this phenomena of initiatives.

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[5] Interview Khaled Elayyan: 16 contemporary dance projects submitted by Palestinian groups/collectives for the 15th edition of the Festival.

Annex 4: Political, socio-economic challenges on the Gaza Strip:

The Palestinian political friction affected the cultural sector in many ways including the social dynamics with the community and the internal dynamics of individual organizations and artists: "organizations have become "*either aggressive or afraid, passive and introvert, not daring to give opinions or interventions out of fear to get in conflict*". The political and socioeconomic situation also impacts societal values. In addition, *"opportunities for freedom of speech, and spaces for free expressions have become so limited"* . . Participants also highlighted the effects of the siege on exchange, networking and capacities. Moreover, the uncertainty and insecurity in view of the repeated wars, the latest devastating situation after the last war, and the overall political conditions have strongly affected the whole sector. It is highly frustrating for the individual artists, and the sector in general, that they receive attention, and are well promoted, <u>only</u> after each aggression on the Strip. Artists are in need of support at all levels and times and not only in these "Breaking News" moments. According to the respondents from Gaza**, Covid19 has further compounded the situation of isolation in Gaza**. Covid, as education was mainly on-line, has an effect on culture as well. **Box A3.1** is a list of citations of the participants involved in the interviews and workshops, providing a good picture of their opinions and insights.

Box A3.1. Challenges and constraints due to the overall context as observed in Gaza

- "In Gaza, cultural operators have become intellectually selective and removed from reality; creativity has become only a personal decision, without sharing with the collective, as if the public are not part of culture."

- "There is a regression in the general culture values in the society, with diminished awareness on many issues."

- "For some organizations or operators, to adopt violent discourse and directly attacking religion or shocking the general beliefs of people, can be considered counterproductive; this created a negative reaction from people against any other positive value or activity. People think that there is a problem between "religion and culture/arts". Young men and women are becoming more isolated politically and culturally. This situation compels people to immigrate".

- "Because of the siege, artists' mobility outside Gaza is almost impossible; the siege, not only denied Gaza from normal exchange and enriching the scene, but internally, contributed to frustration and withdrawal or isolation of some artists, and organizations, fear of criticism, limiting progressive expressions, intellectual distancing instead of collective sharing and visioning, and distancing from the society".

- The possibilities of promoting, marketing and networking for Gaza artists is quite limited, compared to those in the West Bank of course in view of the siege.

- "We are aware that what is built -psychologically and materially - can be destroyed any time in the "future". The instability of the political situation means the timing of the next collapse is unpredictable. We can work on a "short-term" basis, but in view of the prevailing political conditions, we can't even predict or plan this. Now, spotlights are again on Gaza!"

- Consequences of this last war and the Coronavirus were devastating at the moral/psychological levels for all age groups without exception. We need time to heal.

- <u>Other Covid-related issues</u>

- "For young women in Gaza, they want to exit to breath, not to be only linked indoors to social media."

- During Covid, there was a lack of normal social interaction among people in view of lockdowns and isolation. "In view of the overall deterioration of the level of education to a whole generation, there will be a bigger gap between those working in culture and people in view of Corona and use of online Particularly in view of Covid, change in the behavior of children by constantly being locked at home. Their abilities to experience, to move and look forward towards their future becomes limited.

Annex 5: Political, socio-economic challenges on the West Bank and Jerusalem

Most of the respondents stressed the Israeli occupation policies as an underlying cause of many of the mentioned challenges. However, there are also two different visions for actors in the sector: *"some work on the basis of "state building", others work on the basis of the fact that there is an occupation and therefore, their initiatives and programs are built on increasing people's steadfastness. The program/initiative comes from the base of your vision/assumption."*

In addition to the Israeli occupation and its fragmentation policies, the respondents highlighted the different societal perceptions and interactions within the sector. The cultural sector also gets affected by religious conservatism. In view of such political, and socio-economic changes, the respondents themselves raised critical questions on the role of culture in the society. They also insisted that the cultural sector, with its limited resources and capacities, should not take the full brunt of all political, socio-economic issues in Palestine. Some participants criticized the politics and policies of the PA, the corruption in the country and the overall deterioration of society and the economy that impacts negatively the culture and arts sector.   In Jerusalem in particular: "*Israel's isolation of people with check points, arrests of activists and attacks on organizations, threatening of even the right to residency and living, let alone the high taxes are a serious threats to organizations and the sector in general in Jerusalem*"

Box 3.2. Challenges and constraints due to the overall context as observed in WB

- "The Palestinian society is not a homogenous one politically and socially; we can't expect that everybody will accept and interact with arts in the same way". Additionally, freedom of expression and the relation between the intellectuals and the society are all factors influencing the sector.

- People have different interests; some activities attract large numbers of the public, while others don't (cinema is available at home). The negative view regarding culture and arts is a general issue. The religious aspect is difficult to assess. Yet, in Sheikh Jarrah, dance and music are part of the resistance; there, culture depends on the political dynamic in general.

- "The issue of people's regression in the acceptance of artistic expressions appeared after the Arab Spring; deteriorating economic conditions of people, and the deteriorating cultural level of youth in particular, are issues that lead to an overall deterioration of the sector and role of culture in society".

- "New issues are being raised about the political and social role of culture; these essential questions are challenging for the current structure of the cultural sector". The organizations question about their role now in society; to indicate this "Latest issues like Ashtar, and Nabi Mousa, had put the organizations at the defensive side..after all these years of work, it has realized that it had played a limited role in the society in view of the changes which has occurred on values, and ethics

- "With its marginalization and limited resources, the sector can't be fully engaged in political and economic issues and take full responsibility to counter these issues; there is also an important role for education/schools, tourism and social sectors."

- "The political policies of the PA, the corruption and the overall deterioration has led us – organizations - to become "beggars", seeking to safeguard our existence, identity and culture.".

Almost all respondents considered that the role the MOC, and the public policies by the PA were part of the challenges hindering the development of the sector. Key words include: national budgets, laws and legislations, national policies, presidential decree, Hamas policies, etc. Here there are specific challenges facing the sector in Gaza in view of the Hamas policies.

- For individual artists, although some minimal support was given in view of Covid, "the role of the government to protect the artists is insignificant; normally it is the state which has to do this role. Role of government: to fund, to protect, to promote artists and productions. There is a limited role of the public sector/government in nurturing and developing the intellectual, creative and artistic sector". There are no copy rights to protect artistic productions of individual artists.
- Organizations are frustrated from the role of the government. While individual artists are seeking to find basic income, they raise the tax from 5% up to 10% on the production; let alone lack of infrastructures for exhibitions and performances; and freedom of expression.
- The artists and organizations from Gaza expressed challenges at different levels:
- The MOC – Ramallah, gave more attention to WB more than Gaza.
- Interference of Hamas government, through regulations, censorship of lyrics, attending activities and sudden orders to close down/end event instantly are serious challenges to the sector in Gaza. Moreover, coordination to get approval is without clear regulations and accountability which ministry or directorate. This lack of policies and regulations impacts how to manage our work; it is dangerous to reach a situation where we opt to cancel the activity, rather than go through the process of taking approval from the MOI.
- Issue of registration/licensing a new organization: due to the friction between the two authorities, Gaza organizations are not recognized by WB authorities if not registered there; they are not recognized by Hamas authorities; they can't obtain bank accounts since all are considered Hamas banks. Two different modalities of licensing: cultural center of NGO. The cultural is under MOC, while the NGO can add many activities, registered under MoI. In Gaza, cultural centers can still register under MOC
- In addition, organizations which are not licensed by the MOC/Ramallah, can't become members of the Union of Cultural Organizations in Gaza; this means that all organizations established after 2006 are non-members, and therefore denied opportunities to get funding through the Union.
- While describing the formulation of the national policies, the respondents stressed that they were not consulted: "The cultural actors did not participate in the formulation of cultural policies; in addition, the formal cultural media is weak". "There are no policies which are conducive for developing the sector; these policies are not existing, since culture is not a priority for the government/PA".
- "There are no clear policies of the MOC; they grant some projects, but they are unable to work on more important issues such as tax deductions and increase of budgets and new legislations. With the attempt to impose the new law, they will impose more financial and administrative control over the sector.
- In general, there is the issue of corruption, the cancellation of elections and other issues; the sector is distancing itself from the government although they gave very little support for the individual artists.
- On the PCF, there has been a problem in the PCF through the MOC due to bureaucracy, delays in payments and other issues; there has to be a neutral management of the Fund although can't support all needs and fields.
- The respondent mentioned the political issues which hinder dialogue with the MOC:
- There is a problem with our dialogue with the MOC; there are polarities to political parties and highly centralized decision making mechanisms.
- The role of the government is absent from the cultural life; but what we present to the public has to be relevant to the policy of the MOC; yet, they have not presented the minimum to protect the

sector and the artists. There is a big friction between the MOC and the CSOs in general in view of differences in the political visions.
- The role of municipalities is completely absent from the cultural sector in most cities; there are infrastructures under the management of municipalities which are closed and not well used.

Annex 7: Dynamic with donors - Funding through intermediaries

In the different interviews with actors, feedback was given also made on the role, advantages and constraints of intermediary organizations charged by the donor to channel and disburse funding from the donor. As an overall opinion the following perception from beneficiary organizations came to the floor: the extra level of an intermediary organization imposes the conditions of the donor as well as the agenda of the intermediary which becomes de facto the controller of the donor's direction and its funding, while increasing interference and admin costs, decreasing chances for artists and productions and hindering creativity and freedom.

Box 5.2 Direct citations expressed in interviews on intermediary funding

- The modality of Qattan: jury members took decisions, then project management of NGOs should not interfere…. What is needed is more neutrality….; jury members are often the same, intellectuals who do not believe in the new ideas of initiatives, how can this create change; new blood/youth should participate.
- An intermediary organization should not take funding for the same kind of programmes/activities it is implementing to decrease admin costs. There is a conflict of interest; this also curtails the vibrant sector and its livelihood and diversity. There is a question of credibility although there are jury members since the sector (???) and its actors are quite limited and known.
- Donors having an intermediary organization to channel funding is problematic, as if putting a guardian on the sector, to decide who is worthy of the funding, and who is not, with preferential treatment to some. This gives priority to the intermediary rather than the beneficiary.
- The problem is how the "intermediary" looks at the sector and decides on it's (or sector) priorities. If SDC does it directly, it is even cheaper.
- By having an intermediary, the donor allows MOC to curtail the role of the sector and its voice and independency.
- If funds are distributed through an intermediary organization that deducts its own admin cost, then what comes to the beneficiary organizations is quite limited
- Funding through an intermediary increases the loops and admin costs, decreases chances for artists and productions, can increase interference and hinders creativity and freedom
- Donors having an intermediary is problematic, as if putting a guardian on the sector, and the decision who is worthy of the funding, and who is not, preferential treatment to some. This gives priority to the intermediary rather than the beneficiary.
- By selecting one intermediary by two big donors, this gives a unilateral control by one organization controlling the sector at a national level which makes a big gap with the organizations.
- Funding through a 3rd party, increases the loops and admin costs, decreases chances for artists and productions; can increase interference and hinders creativity and freedom.
- The selection of an intermediary means competing with small and intermediate organizations of the sector over the same resources.
- The problem is how the "intermediary" looks at the sector and decide on its priorities. If SDC does it directly, it is even cheaper.

Donors' inadequate assessment of the sector leading to non-differential funding

*In the different interviews with actors in the culture and arts sector quite a number of remarks were made on the lack of recognition among donors of the highly diverse landscape of artists and cultural and art organizations with very different areas of work, objectives, forms of art, ways of organizing, target groups, etc. Participants in the interviews stressed that such differences should be better taken into account in funding procedures and not putting everybody in the same bag. A list of statements related to these issues, as expressed by the people interviewed, is given in **Box 5.3**.*

Box 5.3 Direct citations expressed in interviews on diversified funding of actor's real needs

- The problem is that organizations are not consulted before hand; only when the funding is already specified. There has to be listening ears to the real needs of the sector and only then build a funding strategy; the needs should be more general and comprehensive to most, not to a specific organization.
- The donor has to be more cautious and aware of the real needs, not only looking at certain trends; this can unintentionally create problems in the sector, for example funding of PPAN was a donor request which curtails the rest of the sector.
- Donors pretend that they have created "outreach"; it is not true as we have been working on it since 2000. It is important for NGOs not to be directed/led by the donor (to impose to work only on one area!). For example, an organization working in Hebron can stay there and does not need to do ~~not to go on~~ "outreach" to please the donor! There is a misconception of the term "outreach").
- Donors can't deal with all on the same basis; modality and programs of NGOs differ so the donor has to realize these differences. Small size organizations and individual artists are on the same footing big organizations. For this donors should make a survey of the organizations' structures, scope, roles, area of work.
- Donors should consider not only financial support, but also technical, policy levels, productions and not only admin and logistics and financial.
- All are competing despite differences in geographic outreach, target groups, objectives. Geographically, donors should be fairer also.

Annex 8: Collaboration and dynamics among cultural organizations

This section represents a description of the challenges within the framework in which the organizations are working and cooperating. Management modalities, strategic plans, coalitions and networks, donor relations, coordination, competition, and complementarity of work rather than competition in the sector. The sudden lockdown due to Covid 19, revealed many weaknesses at this level.

- Challenges or criticism on the level of their internal management and governance included issues on strategic planning, management modalities:
- The thinking modes of the leadership of the cultural organizations is outdated; they are not used to work in emergencies and think long-term. This was evident in view of Covid19 where adaptation modalities were difficult to establish.
- Strategic planning of the organization should take into account the context, the needs of the community, and draw a worst case scenario; the Covid 19 was a real rest. This is not negative thinking, but rather to foresee perspectives of innovation and sustainability. Planning is very crucial.
- "As organizations, we have to develop and grow through our experiences and programs; if we don't develop, fail, and learn, we will not be able to sustain and continue".
- On the issue of networks and coalitions, some respondents were not favorable to this approach:
- The absence of a national coordination body for the sector is a problem; there are networks which were established based on donor's wishes like PAN, in certain fields or geographic areas like Shafaq in Jerusalem. This deepens fragmentation of the sector rather, exclusive, rather than integral and curtailing working on national priorities; let alone their sustainability in view of lack of funding.
- Creating networks led to friction and problems with other organizations in the sector.
- Moreover, in view of limited resources of funding, some coalitions which obtained some funding, have "closed down" on themselves like PAN, to remain the only channel of funding to the performing arts field. This has created unhealthy situation within the sector.
- As an example of working within partnerships: "working through building partnerships with CBOs is important rather than creating new organizations; this partnership and developing capacities is better than opening new organizations or branches which can't sustain and closes down after a while. The reflection process on vision and exchange will strengthen both parties".
- Policies and statements by the sector are not sufficient, and not valid since they are not put as a priority at the national levels. They end up with a signed statement which has no follow up.
- Many CSOs implement without research or studying the context; they follow what the donor wants…
- To survive, there has to be an efficient cultural management which can find solutions and avoid too many risks.
- The organizations are heavily loaded with problems: financial, administrative..etc; the more they grow, the more challenges they will have; it's a dilemma.
- Work in culture should be built on complementarity not conflict; there is no coordination among all actors.
- The development of the sector in Gaza is extremely slow and not sufficient at the organizations level; except at the individual level in view of lack of resources. In Gaza, the unions of artists and authors are not efficient; they are not serving the sector/they are politicized entities.
- Respondents, many of whom took part in the different meetings of discussions, expressed their frustration for lack of practical and immediate steps: "Unfortunately, there is not clear mechanism of follow up or coordination after all the meetings which took place in Sariyee, or PAC. These meeting are only for releasing our frustrations by talking. Such meetings are a reaction to the conditional funding and nothing materialized so far.

Annex 9: Dynamic of the sector with the community

The reflections of culture and development, and role in the society, was mentioned by the respondents based on their own perspective and knowledge; many stressed that the role of culture has been marginalized in the Palestinian context.

- "Culture is an integral part of development and should not take a separate path; unfortunately, it is becoming an isolated sector instead of being an integral part of the development sectors. The organizations should think collectively of this aspect in order to draw better priorities on how to create real change in people's lives.
- Other respondents confirmed that there is a marginalization of the role of culture and arts by "other sectors, although they can call on arts to help in raising awareness on women's issues, on violence or use it in art therapy for children, although quality here might be at stake".
- Some attributed this to the fact that "the intellectual is "isolated" due to the overall frustration from the effects of the political, socio-economic levels mentioned in section 3.1.. Others criticized the cultural organizations for "not addressing issues of their communities; they are far from the Palestinian society's identity, aspirations and issues.
- Many respondents, made a kind of self-criticism, and said that there is "no real community participation" or outreach work; it has been "insufficient" due to "a lack of tools for these processes among the culture and arts sector" or due to "having limited resources to do an outreach with the communities which hinders our understanding of the needs". "Unfortunately in Palestine, we lack processes of participation, although we have "collective intelligence".
- We are not able to get out of the conventional modalities of work with public, e.g. we are all focusing on the same group in Ramallah/central areas; we have to build new audiences. The quality of what we introduce is not necessarily meeting the taste of all the public; we have to draw the balance between the community taste and our missions. The organizations did not seek alternative modalities of funding and stayed in the same unilateral approach with the donors. Therefore, the "culture incubator" is a different approach.
- Participation "of the diverse groups to voice their concerns or aspirations simply does not exist at the cultural sector level". "We/CSOs have no real tools to involve the society; we only get in touch with the society for performance or opening an exhibition. "Only thematic or target groups are engaged if the donor wants". This was also confirmed by others: "There is no real community participation; however, when this becomes a condition to get funding then this "participation" becomes fake". "Community participation is an anthropological process which requires hard work and real understanding of the society. There must be tools to assess community participation.
- One blamed the organizations by saying that "some organizations present "elitist" type of art, but it is also important to present art which is linked to the society's level, needs and aspirations".
- As for its role in social change, respondents think that "Role of culture and arts in positive social change has regressed; there is a lot of deteriorating values, and weak role of culture. However, the cultural sector can't do it alone: "social change is varying and it needs developing further and more resources; as a sector we are limited in that and this needs efforts from all sectors".
- Working with the communities should not be purely technical/artistic; this will not create a big influence. It is a real partnership because it is the community which protects your work and hosts it.
- Respondents from Gaza stressed that there are almost no opportunities for talented children and youth: "In communities, there are lots of talented persons, and they need opportunities to be developed, but this is missing or gets lost in view of lack of resources, and capacities to identify, manage and market these talents".

Annex 10: Negative effects of Covid 19 on the sector:

New challenges added to the already existing challenges of the sector which was experienced at the organizational and individual levels, not only in Palestine but world-wide. The key words here were: being cut off from some target groups and public, accessibility to electricity and internet especially in Gaza; children mostly indoors; cancellation of events; losing public reflected in losing income from tickets and sales, and organizations had to adapt their programs and budget which was not easy; shifting to digital media was not easy.

- 2020 was a shock for CSOs taken by surprise, not ready on how to go about programs while under life threatening pandemic.
- Due to Covid19 regulations, organizations were not ready for sudden closures and complete suspension of activities and inability to function in view of the unclarity on duration of the status quo.
- Funding was directed towards the health sector. Performances and training were all cancelled. Direct human interaction was impossible with the rise of the virtual contacts.
- Some activities had to be altered. Organizations' infrastructure are very weak in Gaza (electricity cuts, 3G..)! Target groups which do not have access to digital media were cut off
- At the outset, there was a limited number of target groups which sought social media, let alone problems to access it including some cultural actors and artists. This created a gap between the different groups which can't access equally due to power cuts and weak internet services.
- Numeric protection and property rights are not guaranteed over digital media. It was not possible to electronically share productions, and ideas being afraid of piracy.
- Many programs had to be re-adapted and re-programmed; shifting in budget items was done.

Individual artists:

As for the dynamic between NGOs and *individual independent artists,* it was mainly reflected upon from the perspective of the individual independent artists. Some respondents from the organizations also gave their input on this relation. Key words: free expression of artists; limitations by organizations; imposture of donor requirements. Lack of capacities in digital media, marketing and promotion. Unemployment, and sub-contracting of artists…

- From the perspective of individual artists, the challenges they see is their "protection", ability to show-case their works: "The artist is the most vulnerable; no social security, retirement fund or end of service. Individual artists have no social and legal protection, no health insurance and works on the basis of short-term economic booms, therefore, lacks ability to plan long-term"
- These concerns were also for artists in Jerusalem: "Artists risk of censorship in view of the volatile political messages; no end of service or provident fund; income depends on sales". Artists either leave to Ramallah or abroad; artists have to take other jobs as well to make a living. Other young artists resort to Israeli funded projects under social or community organizations in view of limited choices with Palestinian NGOs. They work in other types like teaching or training, since the production costs and budgets of NGO or CSOs are quite limited."
- There are not real exhibition places in Jerusalem, and there is high competition among organizations rather than partnerships"…
- Gaza: "Protection of the individual artists in Gaza in not a priority to the well-structured organizations which seek to safeguard its programs, employees, and resources. (fz FG).
- On the issue of "freedom of the artist" individual artists are quite alert on this; some said that: "some organizations are donor driven; they impose on the artist certain conditions, and paper work, under the pretext of the donor wishes". "Working with an NGO, the artist is caught with paper work, ideas and requirements of the donor, creativity and freedom deteriorate then". The individual artist can remain independent from the NGO and can be selective if he/she wants; and should remain free although some NGOs might softly impose things on the artist, especially on beginners"(Anastasia) Freedom of the individual artist is guaranteed when working independently not with institutions. Sometimes, artists have to compromise
- Frustrations were also said by the artists on the recognition by the organizations to their roles and levels:
- "Artists might become recognized only if linked to organizations; a completely independent artist working from his/her own studio is not known or recognized by the organizations. Organizations from other sectors than art are more capable of accepting the individual artist".
- Some artists -in visual arts - are monopolizing the sector by being highly paid.(gz?) In Jerusalem, artists support the organizations through sales of their works. Artists should not necessarily be the ones who write the proposals/request funding; they might not know this, or can't promote themselves on social media; they need an organization to do that".
- "The artist can question the NGO, and balance its work, and present work from a different perspective and more outspoken therefore can be more influential"(jawabra).
- Respondents from some NGOs rejected the accusations that they are "depleting the creativity of individual artists; this is not true. It is the organizations which hire/contract individual artists. But, if the resources of the organization are exhausted, it will not be able to hire or contract artists. (Marina). "When the individual artist is seen as a victim, and is need for money, this becomes unacceptable" (gz reem)
- Another stand from NGO perspective in support of artists said that there is " friction between the individual artists and the NGOs which can't receive or cater for them; they have become "temporary unemployed". This has affected the continuity/sustainability of the cultural action in general, where the organizations give priority to their sustainability and defend their

existnce rather than working with individual artists. (Sakakini) There has to be decisions inside the organizations on how to deal with individual artist and how to support them. (Khaled) Everybody has the full responsibility to support youth and their projects: NGOs, government and private sector. (yt)

- Finally, "the concept of the individual vs. the organization has appeared lately. I believe that the relation should be reciprocal: the organization has to cater for the individual artist, and he/she has to approach the organization as a cradle, so as not to be left out and to be able to continue.(Iman)

Proposed modalities by the respondents on the NGOs relations with the initiatives, and individual artists came from mainly from the individual artists; these modalities are ideas, some with precise tools:

- As organizations, the respondents said: "There are initiatives in their early stages but need to mature; integration with other sectors needs clear modalities and maturity.(sakakini) "Communication and strengthen relations with the young individuals, consult them and engage them in the dialogue on their priorities and needs.
- As artists working mainly independently, and not necessarily having management and communication skills, they stated that they need support at capacity building levels: For visual artists "Marketing of artistic work is critical. Digitalizing of arts is important for marketing and reaching international markets. Artists are not necessarily managers…NGOs which can support artists develop their skills in this direction through training on digital skills, networking, technical management, marketing ..
- As for recognition: "NGOs should differentiate and recognize artists levels; not all should be dealt with under the same criteria…Criteria should be identified accordingly.
- Artists also said: "Needs assessments of the artists should be studied to answer important questions and create base-lines. Create a databse for contacting and communicating with artists, and informing about opportunities"
- One proposed the importance of establishing a "union" or "collectives" or leagues, a body to protect the artists, in partnership with the government and the NGOs; not necessarily on financial basis, but exchange of experiences, training, resources…
- CSOs should work with individual artists, contract them and trust them and give them freedom to express…this is difficult to find!!

Challenges related to capacity building and resources

Annex 4.3

Major challenges mentioned by respondents focused on the artistic production fields and need important financial resources and management capacities. Specialized infrastructure, employment of technology, copy rights are issues of concern. These issues were shared also between Gaza and WB, yet they differ among the fields:

- Many respondents stated that the limited or underequipped infrastructures are limiting productions and accessibility by large audiences. This applies to almost all fields: visual arts, theatres, cinema..

- Visual artists from Jerusalem and Gaza stated that both specialized exhibition venues which restricts ability to easily make creative productions. No "copy rights" for artists on their work. High competition for limited opportunities, locally and internationally
- Marketing of productions by Gaza artists is an important issue; to promote it and strengthen capacities, resources, and creates more creativity and motivation.
- No quality assurance or critique to any artistic production/field is missing; "we can't judge on the quality of our own". Jamal/gz)
- In Gaza also, the respondents confirmed that there are "no real opportunities for training, expertise, technicians or infrastructure for theatre and performing arts- very modest field".
- Sector development in Gaza is very basic compared to that in WB…there is a big gap in the one country within the same sector (Abu qumsan)
- In Gaza, music groups/armatures stated that "The economic situation hinders people to study professionally music for 9 years or so…Amatures are denied from merging with the academic/professional teaching of music. Teachers can't engage in developing amatures as well.
- At a different level, on the music sector, a respondent said that "infrastructure for music making is not existing in Palestine, no guarntees, no alternatives, and no copy rights (Samer)….
- ==NGOs realized their weakness on the employment of digital media field: There is a weakness in the use and employment of the new technology/digital media in the organizations; this sudden change to new tools was not easy and we were not prepared for it. On the other hand, there are weak infrastructures and technical structures. (Khaled)==
- Culture managements was highly stressed by respondents in Gaza: We need passionate culture managers who can work on development, marketing, and promoting. The young generation need to be accepted by the heads of culture managent in Gaza……"..(gz)
- Many respondents from NGOs and as individuals stated that there is "a lack of knowledge and experience in the digital world". As for individual artists, digital world, writing proposals, and marketing, need to be done by someone else, or the artists have to be assisted and trained. (M
- Many respondents said that "cinema, visual arts, theatre, should provide partial income at least; should not be for free, decreases external dependency".

Artists have innovative ideas out of which we can make products that can be promoted for the purpose of income generating, noting that such promotion can't be sufficient to cover 100% running costs of any organization. A merging between both innovative sectors: the business and artistic may contribute to generating important revenues and gradually open up new opportunities.	The potential from merging both culture/arts sector with the entrepreneurial sector? What is needed to achieve this?

خالد عليان

Khaled Elayyan

We can't achieve the development of the cultural sector unless it is part and parcel of the economic process in the country. This requires huge efforts starting with looking at arts as a profession and the artist not just a volunteer; if such a change in views is achieved then it is possible to have arts as a source of income	برأيك، هل يمكن أن يتحول قطاع الثقافة في فلسطين إلى قطاع مدر للدخل وبالتالي مستدام مالياً ولو بشكل جزئي ويوفر فرص عمل؟ في حال (لا)/ ما الذي يمكن أن يعيق تحقيق ذلك؟ في حال (نعم)/ كيف يمكن أن يتحقق ذلك/ هل من مقترحات؟
It is possible to merge the two sectors but requires tremendous efforts from the MoNE, MoC, MoF as well as efforts by the sector itself; the actors particularly in the NGOs sector, must have this conviction in order to move ahead.	The potential from merging both culture/arts sector with the entrepreneurial sector? What is needed to achieve this?

لينا حرامي

Lina Haramy

Culture and arts can auto-finance itself, at least partially except for projects which are not feasible to the society; e.g, people go to watch theatre at the Hakawati because they want to enjoy themselves.	برأيك، هل يمكن أن يتحول قطاع الثقافة في فلسطين إلى قطاع مدر للدخل وبالتالي مستدام مالياً ولو بشكل جزئي ويوفر فرص عمل؟ في حال (لا)/ ما الذي يمكن أن يعيق تحقيق ذلك؟ في حال (نعم)/ كيف يمكن أن يتحقق ذلك/ هل من مقترحات؟
Role of technology: the pandemic had a positive aspect which is enabling the people to access cultural activities, including Palestinian culture through mobiles, while being at their homes. It	The potential from merging both culture/arts sector with the entrepreneurial sector? What is needed to

is an accessible simple means. There is an opportunity to develop digital tools which help disseminate culture and arts; role of youth and initiatives supported by organizations become crucial here. As Palestinians, we have quite an important technical knowledge which we have to invest in; the organizations have to re-think its roles, specializations and how to increase its efficiency.	achieve this?

محمود أبو هشهش Mahmoud Abu Hashhash

This would be an ideal situation but does not happen overnight. There are different types of income generating which are applied by the organizations. One example can be "community solidarity" meaning the richer contribute more; other forms like promoting on-line as music bands do. You can also promote a certain artistic production like the theatre work "Taha". .... In addition to that, the organizations can promote productions which are economically more feasible, while encouraging more cooperation and minimize production input costs at the same time focus on quality and impact on the audience. Although there are a lot of productions, but promotion and marketing are not enough; it is a pity to product a high cost production, which can be only performed for very few times. Experts in marketing are highly needed.	برأيك، هل يمكن أن يتحول قطاع الثقافة في فلسطين إلى قطاع مدر للدخل وبالتالي مستدام مالياً ولو بشكل جزئي ويوفر فرص عمل؟ في حال) لا /(ما الذي يمكن أن يعيق تحقيق ذلك؟ في حال) نعم /(كيف يمكن أن يتحقق ذلك /هل من مقترحات؟	12.

شذى صافي/ رواق Shatha Safi

The cultural sector is built on providing services, seeking funding to cover programs as a non-for profit like all CSO; cultural market does not exist, no one buys the cultural product. This requires a structural change in modalities of work, in infrastructures and other policies until the sector finds this example. The sector now is not knowledgeable or experienced in this. The private sector has to move also in this direction (Riwaq)

To become a self-sufficient and a sustainable sector requires a structural change including infrastructure as well as the cultural thinking of the society. It is a non-for profit service provider sector and the cultural market does not exist in Palestine; people are not ready or willing to spend much on culture and arts. This will take time and much efforts until you find a profitable pilot or model.	برأيك، هل يمكن أن يتحول قطاع الثقافة في فلسطين إلى قطاع مدر للدخل وبالتالي مستدام مالياً ولو بشكل جزئي ويوفر فرص عمل؟ في حال (لا)/ ما الذي يمكن أن يعيق تحقيق ذلك؟ في حال (نعم)/ كيف يمكن أن يتحقق ذلك/ هل من مقترحات؟
Some ideas on this merging might exist, but the cultural sector does not have the experience in this. Unfortunately, communication between the private sector and the culture/arts sector is almost inexistent. The private sector in Palestine is a consuming sector and can't accept culture as part of it; this requires a long-term process.	ما هي إمكانات الاندماج بين قطاعيّ الثقافة والفنون من جهة وقطاع ريادة الأعمال من جهة أخرى؟ ما المطلوب عمله لتحقيق ذلك؟

ريناد قبج / Renad Qubaj مؤسسة تامر

Partnerships and cost sharing is very possible and decreases dependency; there are clear issues which can be shared among organizations, this will shift funding to our productions and work (Tamer) Clear basis for sharing our resources is very important and can decrease running costs; focus can be directed to quality and more effective productions.	**برأيك، هل يمكن أن يتحول قطاع الثقافة في فلسطين إلى قطاع مدر للدخل وبالتالي مستدام مالياً ولو بشكل جزئي ويوفر فرص عمل؟** في حال) لا /(ما الذي يمكن أن يعيق تحقيق ذلك؟ في حال) نعم /(كيف يمكن أن يتحقق ذلك / هل من مقترحات؟
لا يوجد علم لدي حول قطاع ريادة الأعمال وتعريفه. I have no idea on the entrepreneurial sector and how it works!!	**ما هي إمكانات الاندماج بين قطاعيّ الثقافة والفنون من جهة وقطاع ريادة الأعمال من جهة أخرى؟ ما المطلوب عمله لتحقيق ذلك؟**

Sakakini

Income generating is possible but requires constant research and innovation. There are lots of creative industries which can bring income but the cultural sector has to think of business models, and study the market well and the needs. This requires time and efforts before it can succeed in addition that this requires policies to help it take off (Sakakini)

Entrepreneurial aspect: don't agree; it is a term without real content; culture has its specific experience and has to be given this space of experimentaiton; context has to be well studied.(Sakakin)

<u>**Iman Hamouri:**</u>

Q: The potential from merging both culture/arts sector with the entrepreneurial sector? What is needed to achieve this?

If entrepreneurship is a mature process, then we accept it, but if imposed, we can't! For us entrepreneurship has to do with "individualistic" approach not a collective and constructive approach.

<u>**Marina Barham:**</u>

This depends on the type of arts: visual arts, and cinema can generate income, but not in a commercial form; legally speaking, as NGOs registered in the Ministry of Interior, we can't have income generating projects.

Mohammad Issa:

Entrepreneurship should not be seen as a trend, but as modality of thought and practice; it has its eco-system which requires quite a lot of time to develop and change.

Annex 1. List of Focus Group Attendees

Gaza Strip	
FGD #1: (Invited: 14- Attendees: 7)	
Name	**Organization**
Rania Shriehi	Al Sununu for culture and art
Mohammed Al-Alami	Al Sununu for culture and art
Khamis Abo Shaban	Water band / Idward saeed
Mohammed Allomani	Watar band/Qattan/ Kamanjati
Ayman Moghames	Delia Arts foundation
Mohammed Shoman	-
Ibrahim Al-Najjar	Gaza Music School
FGD #2: (Invited: 42- Attendees: 12)	
Name	**Organization**
Awad Qandeel	Palestine Families Gathering Center
Sofian Hamad	Nazareth Center for Culture
Belal Abo Daqa	Sheikh Ahmed Yassin Foundation
Ahmed Al-Shari	Nazareth Center for Culture
Kamal Wafi	Tajawal Center for Culture and Arts
Taghreed Shafout	Kayan Cultural Center
Hala Abo Mebied	Kayan Cultural Center
Mohammed Abo Hasna	Jod Center
Mahmoud Rouqa	Al-Sarraj Center for Culture and Arts
Kamal Daloul	Gaza for culture and art associtation
Ashraf Sehwiel	Gaza for culture and art associtation
Dieb Abo Qumsan	Abnaona

FGD #3: (Invited: 21- Attendees: 6)	
Name	**Organization**
Hani Biary	-
Riziq Biary	story house / Bait Al-Qasied
Oawn Abo Safia	-
Mohammed Tayyem	-
Mahmoud AlShaer	24 Magazine
Ghassan Ibrahim	Fekra
West Bank	
North: (Invited: 25- Attendees: 14)	
Name	**Organization**
Loai Tafish	Naqsh for Popular arts
Amani Sa'di	Beit Alfonon Wa Thaqafa
Anastasia Qarawani	Independent artist
Haneen Amin	Independent artist
Mais Jaradat	Alkamandjati
Maysa AlShaer	Shagaf for Digital Expression
Ala' Shihada	Independent artist
Faisal Abu Higa	Independent artist
Rawand Arqawi	Fragment Theater
Ahmad Tobasi	Freedom Theatre
Aziz Aziz	Independent artist
Saeed Hajja	Library of Arraba
Mustafa Sheta	Freedom Theatre

Osama Sa'di	Fragment Theater
East: (Invited: 25- Attendees: 14)	
Name	**Organization**
Wafa Briwish	Beit kahel Forum for Women
Zakia Ayyash	AlNadwa Cultural club
Rashad Sameer	Nersan Center
Abdel Majeed	Yes Theatre
Rani Sharbati	Independent artist
Ahmad Amelh	Beit Ola Cultural Center
Amani Abu Areesh	Beit Ola Cultural Center
Hekmat Qawasmi	Masahat Imitative
Ma'ali Tamimi	Cultural Forum for Music and Arts
Kholoud Mreish	Hebron-France Association of Cultural Exchanges
Elien Qumsieh	Finjan Wa kitab Forum Wasata for Youth
AbdelGhani Ja'bary	Dreams for Youth and Childhood
Mona AbdelFattah	Tanweer for Culture and Innovation
Ahmad Herbawi	AlNadwa Cultural club
Ramallah: (Invited: 23- Attendees: 5)	
Name	**Organization**
Lina Ghanem	Animate Palestine initiative
Firas AbuHeiba	Independent artist
Mohammad Musa	Independent artist
Mahmoud Ramahi	Shal Band
Ayoub Falaheen	Shal Band

Annex 2. List of interviews

Name	Position	Organization	Date
Gaza Strip			
Tania Murtaga	Executive Manager	Theatre Day Productions	5th May 2021
Reem Jaber	Chairman	Nawa for Culture and Arts Association	6th May 2021
Mahmoud Al-Balawi	Project Officer	Iwan Center for Architecture Heritage	7th May 2021
Jamal Abo Qumsan	Theater specialist	Gallery	3rd June 2021
Shareef Sarhan	Visual Artist	Shababeek for Contemporary Art	6th June 2021
Yusri Darwish	Chairman	Central union of cultural centers	7th June 2021
Osama Damo	Project Officer	NPA – Norwegian people aid	8th June 2021
Husam Jouda	Cultural Manager	Culture and free thought association	9th June 2021
West Bank and Jerusalem			
Samer Makhlouf	Programme Manger	Kasaba Theatre and Cinematic	3rd May 2021
Marina Barham	Executive Director	AlHara Theatre PPAN	5th May 2021
Reem Khalil	Regional Director	Drosos Foundation	6th May 2021
Khaled Elayan	Executive Director	Sareyyet Ramallah	9th May 2021
Izz Ja'bary	Co-founder	Masahat Initiative	9th May 2021
Renad Qubbaj Haneen Khairi	Executive Director Programme Manager	Tamer Institute	11th May 2021
Renad Shqirat	Executive Director	Khalil Sakakini Cultural Center	11th May 2021
Mustafa Alhaj	Programme Manager	Palestinian Techno Park	16th May 2021

Shatha Safi	Executive Director	Riwaq- centre for architectural conservation	20th May 2021
Samer Jaradat	Executive Director	Jafra for Music Production	23rd May 2021
Iman Hamoury	Executive Director	Popular Art Center	24th May 2021
Rania Elias	Executive Director	Yabous Cultural Center Shafaq Network	25th May 2021
Fadya Salfiti	Co-founder	Rawa Fund	25th May
Maria Arda'ji		SIDA	27th May 2021
Mohammad Issa	Executive Director	Yes Theatre	29th May 2021
Hanna Atallah Ola Salameh	Programme Manager Executive Director	FilmLab	30th May 2021
Anastasia Qarawani	Independent Artist	/	31st May 2021
Malek Rimawi	Senior Educational Researcher	Qattan Foundation/ Educational Research and Development Programme	1st June 2021
Ahed Zhiman	Independent Artist	/	1st June 2021
Munther Jawabreh	Independent Artist	/	1st June 2021
Mahmoud Abu Hashhash	Programme Manager	Qattan Foundation/ Art and Culture Programme	2nd June 2021
Lina Haramy	Programme Manager	Welfare Association/ Taawon	10th June 2021
Tina Sherwell	Lecturer/ Artist	Birzeit University/ Faculty of Art	18th June 2021
Saed Karzon	Founder	Aljabal Business Incubator	29th June 2021