

Posting Title: **Consultant for the Common Country Assessment for the State of Palestine**

Department/Office: **Resident Coordinator's Office**

Deadline for Application: **14 August 2021**

Job Opening Number: **21/02-RCO**

Terms of Reference:

Background and Context

The United Nations presence in Palestine encompasses development, humanitarian, and political components. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Palestine, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator (RC), comprises all heads of UN agencies operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The UNCT ensures inter-agency coordination and decision making at the country-level on issues ranging from development assistance to issues pertaining to common or shared facilities and services. The main purpose of the UNCT is for individual agencies to plan and work together for the delivery of tangible results that enhance the development prospects for the people of Palestine. The UNCT works closely with the Government of Palestine and other development partners to ensure that its work is aligned with the Palestinian Authority's National Policy Agenda.

The United Nations Country Team in Palestine consists of 22 agencies, funds, and programmes. Resident agencies include the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHABITAT), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), World Food Programme (WFP), and World Health Organization (WHO). Non-resident agencies include the International Trade Commission (ITC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

In January 2020, the UNCT formally adopted a “nexus approach” to its humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding efforts. The UNCT agreed to an ambitious transformation of its strategic planning processes across the humanitarian and development systems. As a first step, the UNCT and HCT merged its data and analysis groups and worked collaboratively on several joint projects, including the Atlas of Sustainable Development, a COVID-19 impact household assessment, and the COVID-19 Socioeconomic Response Plan. In 2021, the UNCT and HCT are conducting a multi-sectoral needs assessment with an explicitly nexus-based approach. From 2021 to 2022, the humanitarian and development systems will proceed to align their strategic planning exercises—that is, the new Cooperation Framework and Humanitarian Response Plans—including identifying collective outcomes and making timelines parallel. Broadly, the objective is to transform the work of the United Nations and partners to reduce humanitarian need, accelerate sustainable development, and build peace.

The State of Palestine’s current national development strategy originally covered the period of 2017 to 2022, but the government has announced that the development strategy will be updated and extended through if not beyond 2023. The Government of Palestine has recently issued over 40 detailed planning strategies addressing different sectors and geographic areas, which will form the basis of the United Nations support in the coming years.

Considering the lessons learned from the previous UNDAF cycles, the global COVID-19 pandemic, the decision to adopt a nexus approach, the 2021 election cycle in Palestine, and the potential for a new government, the DSC/RC/HC and UNCT have decided to:

- 1) Launch the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework in January 2023.
- 2) Update the Common Country Assessment in 2021 and 2022, establishing it as a “living, cutting-edge” assessment and a “real-time, core analytical function, which is more agile and reflective of the evolving country context.”
- 3) Adapt the global strategic planning templates in a flexible manner that remains faithful to the objectives, inputs, and outputs of those templates.
- 4) Ensure that the nexus workstream is fully integrated with the Cooperation Framework process and Humanitarian Planning Cycles, and not a separate or third area of work.

Common Country Assessment: Global Guidance

The “CCA Consultant” will support the delivery of the Common Country Assessment in 2021, which will then contribute to the development of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).

The new generation of the CCA responds to the urgency of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by delivering integrated, forward-looking and evidence-based joint analysis of the context for sustainable development in a country, integrating vulnerable groups. The CCA is no longer just a report prepared once at the start of the programme cycle, but rather a signature function of a United Nations country team that generates tailored analytical products at the country level. It is part of a strategic pivot for the United Nations towards becoming the top source for independent, trusted analysis and policy advisory support on sustainable development in the 21st century. The analysis becomes the foundation for the design of the United Nations programmatic response through the Cooperation Framework. At the same time, the analysis can inform decision-making by the government and other stakeholders.

The new CCA is integrated. It connects analysis of issues for the achievement of each SDG, and across SDGs, in line with the overall commitment to leave no one behind, UN Charter values, and international norms and standards. It reflects systems thinking, an approach that captures the interlinked relationships, resources, information, institutions and capacities necessary to identify and address pathways to achieve the 2030 Agenda. This approach spans national borders, factoring in the regional and transboundary issues that impact a country’s SDG trajectory and reflects the interlinkages between the SDGs and the human rights framework.

The CCA needs to go beyond past or “snapshot” analysis to be forward-looking and anticipatory, estimating, modelling and projecting to 2030 and beyond. With a heightened focus on risk and foresight analysis, the CCA will be more relevant and valuable for countries seeking to “future proof” their sustainable development strategies. This imperative also speaks to the United Nations Secretary-General’s statement that “we spend far more time and resources responding to crises rather than preventing them”. The CCA thus examines the underlying and structural factors affecting the lives and livelihoods of women, men, girls and boys, with a focus on vulnerable groups, and addresses historical, current and emerging political, security, social, economic, disaster and environmental risks. As such, the CCA needs to draw upon expertise, information and knowledge across the development, peace

and security, human rights and, where relevant, humanitarian pillars of the United Nations system. As the joint analysis of the development context by the United Nations, the CCA will identify the underlying structures and root causes of inequalities, vulnerability, human rights violations and crisis.

At every step, the new CCA will be data-driven and build an evidence base sensitive to dynamic changes. As such, the CCA will need to look beyond official national statistics to draw on all sources of qualitative and quantitative data from across the data ecosystem, including primary research as appropriate, nontraditional data sources, and emerging technologies to address gaps in reliability, disaggregation or timeliness.

Common Country Assessment: State of Palestine

The general approach for the CCA update in 2021 is to undertake two outputs:

1. Launch an online, interactive platform presenting data analytics, visualization, and analysis. This platform serves as knowledge base for all future, annual CCA updates. Completed end Q4 2021.
2. A published CCA report, which is a UNCT-owned product that is publicly available, including on the online platform. Text completed end Q4-2021, Published and distributed before end Q1 2022.

Given the existing wealth of research, reports, data, and studies in the Palestine, the CCA consultant will synthesize existing resources and identify and address any gaps as needed. The starting point should be to build on the existing work of the following sources: the 2016 Common Country Analysis; the Atlas of Sustainable Development 2020; recent Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Response Plans; the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and related analysis; reports by treaty bodies and special procedures; the Socioeconomic and Food Security Surveys and related analysis; the ongoing Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment; the reports of the UN Secretary-General; reports by the World Bank, IMF, and UNSCO to the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee; reports, strategies, and data from the Government of Palestine, Prime Minister's Office, and PCBS; NGO and INGO sources; academic sources; and other high-quality sources. To gather updated qualitative and expert assessments, the UNCT and the CCA Consultant will also organize thematic consultations and discussions with relevant stakeholders, for example the Government of Palestine, donors, research institutes, academia, vulnerable and marginalized groups and NGOs.

In parallel to the CCA Consultant, the RC and UNCT are engaging a "Data Analytics and Visualization, Consultant" (DAV Consultant) to build and launch an online, interactive platform presenting data analytics and visualization by the end of 2021. This platform will serve as the quantitative knowledge base for the CCAs and the annual CCA updates as well as serving other data needs of the UN system. Like the CCA report itself, the platform will also include textual analysis of the humanitarian, development, and peace situation in Palestine. Under the overall supervision of the RC and the UNCT, the CCA Consultant will collaborate closely with the DAV Consultant to provide and use analysis that is featured on the online, interactive platform.

Main tasks

The CCA consultant will implement the CCA research, consultation, drafting, and finalization, under the overall supervision of the Resident Coordinator and the United Nations Country Team and following the UNSDCF and CCA guidelines. The substance of the report will be determined by the Resident Coordinator and the United Nations Country Team. An indicative outline has been developed, but the final outline will be drafted by the consultant under the guidance and after the final approval of the Resident Coordinator and United Nations Country Team.

In particular, the consultant will:

- Undertake a desk review of the main analytical products developed during the implementation of the 2017-2022 UNDAF cycle, and further back as warranted.
- Develop a methodology to collect inputs from the UNCT and other stakeholders and synthesise analytical inputs from agencies into a coherent CCA, encompassing the mandatory pieces of analysis outlined in the CCA guidance
- Collaborate closely with the DAV Consultant to ensure consistency of data and analysis as the Online Platform is developed.
- Describe the current humanitarian, development, and peace situation in Palestine, including recent trends; the status of LNOB, human rights, and gender inclusion and empowerment; and progress towards the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Palestine.
- Identify and describe the drivers and root causes of need, vulnerability, and risk in Palestine, including on economic, social, environmental, political, geographic, and security dimensions.
- Identify national policy and capacity gaps, map the Government's national strategies that will be implemented during the next UNSDCF cycle, including strategies that are already in place and will be pursued during the next cycle.
- Assess the approach taken in the 2016 CCA to identify 20 vulnerable groups and populations in Palestine. Assess the status of these 20 groups and propose revisions or updates to these groups
- Identify national priorities for the next five years that address the nexus.
- In consultation with the RC and UNCT, and following global guidance on the HDP nexus, propose collective priority areas for humanitarian, development, and peace actors in OPT.

Necessary steps for achieving these deliverables include:

- Conducting desk review and analysis; collecting relevant data and information.
- Facilitating substantive discussions and workshops among UN agencies and stakeholders, centred on the nexus. Holding other meetings and consultations as required.
- Briefing the RCO, UNCT, and relevant subsidiary bodies on a regular basis on the progress.
- Preparing a detailed outline and then a first draft of the CCA document; distributing it to the RC, UNCT, and others for peer review and comments;
- Providing analysis and text to the DAV Consultant for use on the online platform.
- Incorporating peer review in the document and submitting final version of the CCA report to the Resident Coordinator's Office;
- Preparing a presentation of the main findings of the CCA, which will be shared with partners during the UNSDCF prioritization workshop.

Expected deliverables

The CCA consultant will be accountable for producing the following products/deliverables:

- **Inception report:** The inception report should outline the proposed methodology for conducting the CCA process, the initial desk review of relevant literature and a detailed workplan for the CCA development.
- **Draft CCA report:** A draft CCA report in line with the UN CCA guidance and a presentation of the main findings to be delivered to the UNCT and the Deputies group for peer review.
- **Final CCA Report:** Final CCA report (max 50 pages), in line with the CCA guidance incorporating the feedback from the UNCT and the Deputies Group.

Workplan and indicative timeframe

The consultancy will be for a total of 40 working days, in the period from 1 October to 31 December 2021. The tentative deadlines are:

- 1 October: Start date
- 20 October: Inception report submitted to the UNCT
- 30 November: Draft CCA report submitted to the Resident Coordinator and the UNCT
- 31 December: Submission of finalized CCA document

Coordination and supervision

The CCA Consultant will work under the overall supervision of the RC and UNCT. The position will be located in the Resident Coordinator's Office and will report directly to the Head of the Resident Coordinator's Office on a day-to-day basis.

Close collaboration with the UNCT and its subsidiary bodies will be required to ensure that all relevant information needed for the drafting of the CCA is collected in an effective and timely manner.

Evaluation budget, remuneration and payments

The maximum budget allocated for this consultancy is US\$15,000.00. Payment of fees will be based on submission of deliverables, according to the following schedule:

Deliverable	Payment
Approval of the inception report outlining the methodology and desk review	20%
Submission of the draft CCA report	40%
Approval of final CCA Report and presentation	40%

Qualifications and experience of the consultant

- Master's degree in international development, gender, economics, evaluation, social sciences or related fields.
- Minimum of seven years of relevant experience in data-driven, evidence-based social science and/or public policy analysis. Knowledge of the UN architecture and modus operandi will be required.
- Extensive knowledge of, and practical experience with the UN development cooperation system. Strong knowledge of UNSDCF planning procedures and analytical requirements is required.
- Prior experience of working in international development in a complex setting and with multiple stakeholders
- Experience from working in the State of Palestine or Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is desirable
- Have strong research and analytical skills and good communication skills (oral and written)
- Fluency in spoken and written English; knowledge of Arabic is considered to be an asset.

How to Apply:

- The Job Opening is advertised on UNSCO Jobs page <https://unsco.unmissions.org/jobs>
- To start the application process, download a Personal History “P.11” form from UNSCO Jobs website. Note: Any other form of application will not be accepted.
- Once the download is finished, complete and save your Personal History Form (P.11) and then e-mail it to the following e-mail address: unsco-va@un.org
- In completing the P.11 form, please note that all fields must be completed accurately to the best of your knowledge.
- Submit a written cover-page application in addition to your completed P.11 form
- Indicate the JO number on the subject heading in your email application

Special Note:

- QUALIFIED FEMALE CANDIDATES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO APPLY
- APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE DEADLINE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED
- ONLY SHORTLISTED CANDIDATES WILL BE CONTACTED FOR FURTHER ASSESSMENT