

June 2019

## **DFID OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES PEOPLE TO PEOPLE PROGRAMME - QUARTERLY UPDATE #4**

This document is the fourth quarterly update to Parliamentarians on the progress of DFID's People for Peaceful Change programme. It covers the period February 2019 – June 2019. The programme brings together participants on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to gain a better understanding of the other, promote tolerance and work on issues which can benefit both the Israeli and Palestinian communities.

### Headlines from the last quarter

- The 2019 Annual Review was completed scoring the programme an “A – met expectations.” The annual review will be published on the DFID Dev-tracker website as per standard procedures.
- A mid-term evaluation study of the programme was completed in March 2019. It reviewed strategies utilised to respond to the changing political context. The study assessed progress towards results including an assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme and produced recommendations for the upcoming year.
- Israeli Palestinian and Jordanian health officials completed an exercise simulating a collaborative response to a potential cross-border infectious disease outbreak.
- A cumulative total of 1219 young Israeli (619) and Palestinian (600) participants took part in to holy sites tours aimed at increasing understanding of religious tolerance.
- All four leaders' groups (women, political, business and community leaders) participated in workshops, training and events to enhance joint relationships and build their capacities to identify opportunities to improve peace in their local communities.

### Detail about the activities

- Under the **health pillar**, Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian health officials completed an exercise simulating a collaborative response to a potential cross-border infectious disease outbreak. This was designed to put to the test the collaborations skills that participants have acquired throughout their participation in programme activities.
- Under the **religious pillar**, a total of 1219 young Israeli and Palestinian participants took part in tours to joint holy sites designed to improve mutual understanding of the religious importance of holy sites shared by Jews, Muslims and Christians. The mid-term evaluation study of the programme found that the religious pillar has the biggest gaps in empathy between participants of different faiths. This reflects the sensitivity of the topic of religion and highlights the perceived centrality of holy sites and religion in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.
- Under the **youth pillar**, all four leaders' groups (women, political, business and community leaders) have now participated in skill development workshops and capacity building training. Participants took part in desert expeditions intended to challenge their existing attitudes and preconceptions and to find common ground

across social and political boundaries. They will apply their training at a final workshop to develop joint recommendations for improving peace and security for both communities.

### Research and Learning

- The programme's monitoring and evaluation strategy is conducted in three stages, two of which have now been complete. A baseline study was completed in May 2018 and a mid-term study was completed in March 2018. A final evaluation will be produced at the end of the programme.
- The mid-term study includes an analysis of the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme and progress against intended results. The study found that:
  - **Health pillar:** outreach levels between each of the three regional (Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian) health groups increased by 14.5%. Despite the positive achievements of the programme, high level sustained trilateral cooperation would require political shifts on a government level.
  - **Religious pillar:** most participants (70%) reported that they share their experience from project activities within their communities. The sustainability of results beyond the lifetime of the programme is uncertain because of the sensitivity of the topic. The study found the largest gaps in empathy between participants of different faiths.
  - **Youth pillar:** despite initial reservations, participants have developed positive and sustained interaction outside of formal project activities. 51% of participants stated that they plan to maintain relationships after the programme ends. This is an indication of potential sustainability of the programme's experiential learning approach.
- Officials have now concluded a selection process to recruit a research team to produce a comprehensive analysis of people-to-people programmes in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories to contribute to the evidence base. Following a comprehensive assessment of bids and potential delivery channels, the DFID Evaluation Panel has selected Search for Common Ground International Learning Team (ILT) to deliver the research. Work on producing an inception research report will shortly commence.