



Construction and Equipping of the Hebron Courthouse Facilities

Overall Goal: To increase the availability of safe, efficient, and well-managed courthouses in the occupied Palestinian territory.

Duration: 2023-2011.

Location: Hebron Governorate, State of Palestine.

Approximately: 800,000 + citizens.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Development Programme / Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP).

Evaluation by:

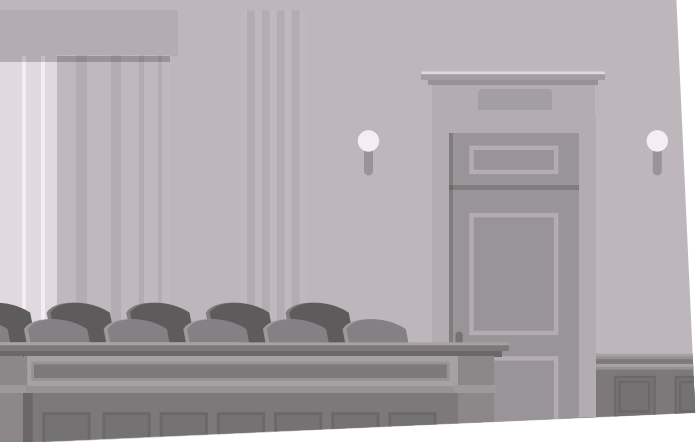


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SNAPSHOT OF ACHIEVEMENTS

From the evaluator's perspective, the baseline for the project was Sub-standard rented office and residential buildings that are:

- Non-conductive to dispense the rule of law.
- Not equipped for litigation and service delivery overcrowded.
- Unsafe.
- Not accessible by disabled.
- Not comfortable for women.
- Not designed with respect to the human rights of witnesses, case seekers, defendants, or juveniles.
- Not safe.



The final output of the project is a symbolic courthouse that signals the strength of the state, warrants respect for the rule of law, and most importantly a space that is safe and conducive to dispensing the rule of law.

- The project was successful in providing essential infrastructure that enables the dispensing of justice in an appropriate and well-equipped environment, thus serving to strengthen the rule of law.
- Unlike the previous building the new courthouse can accommodate current and anticipated needs for space and rising caseload.
- The new courthouse and additional space can accommodate an increased number of judges which will increase efficiency and decrease processing times.
- Symbolize support for Palestinian state building. "A physical manifestation of the state."
- Administration of justice strengthened, and modern infrastructure was provided.
- Support of National Priority #7. Major contributions were made to increase access for those with mobile disabilities and women.

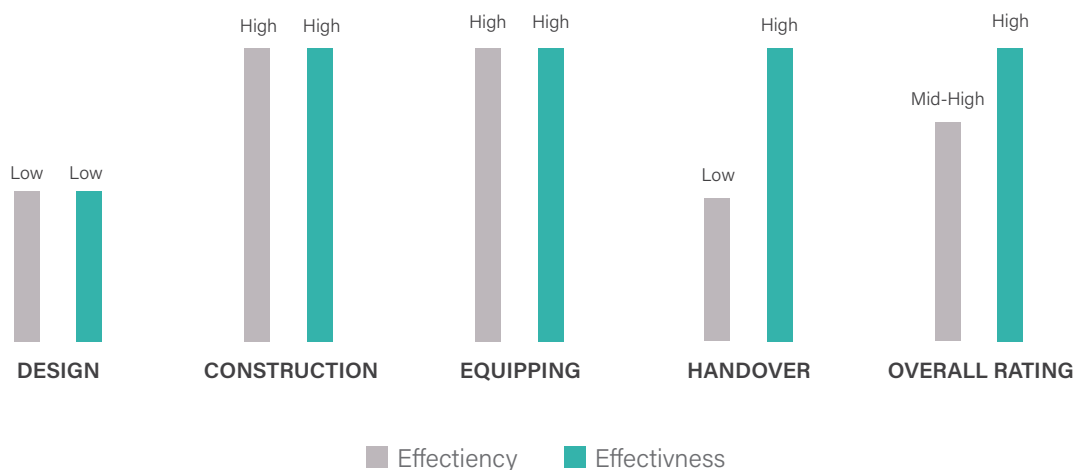


In terms of process performance, the project managed to complete the:

1. Design (*low efficiency and low effectiveness*);
2. Construction (*high efficiency and high effectiveness*);
3. Equipping (*high efficiency and high effectiveness*);
4. Handover (*low efficiency, high effectiveness*).
5. Overall rating: *Mid-high efficiency and high effectiveness in delivery.*



PROCESS PERFORMANCE OF DIFFERENT PHASES



Positive Unintended Consequences:

- Adding to the relevance of formal judicial mechanisms.
- Building a culture and a commitment to safety guidelines and procedures in constructions.
- Building a culture of knowledge-based decision making, decisions that are based on sound analysis.
- Positive contribution to incorporate environmental considerations in government infrastructure, the addition of the PV solar system as an example.
- Increased the capacity and experience of HJC to manage and implement construction projects
- Increased know-how of maintenance staff of advanced building management.

Negative Unintended Consequences

- Despite UNDP's effort to go beyond the project scope and develop parking solutions increased traffic was the major negative consequence reported.



TESTIMONIES

Court owners, court users, and experts across the board reported positive gains:

Policy Makers

The courthouse will support strengthening the justice system and is in line with high need in Herbon.

The matter of the Hebron courthouse facility has been a national priority since 2002.

Providing an environment that enables adjudication is a national priority, this project is fully aligned with this priority.

Judges and Lawyers

Gains in morale, spirit, confidence, safety, and security reported

Court Staff

Gains in efficiency and processing times reported

Private Sector

Reported positive perceptions and increased willingness to engage with the courts.

Citizen Users

92% reported being satisfied with the new facility, including design features including signage (**85%**), temperature inside the building (**82%**), safety and security (**81%**), and waiting areas (**81%**).

Gendered Perspective

Women report gains in privacy, personal and social safety, and security. Experts report that the new space provides important improvements for gender-related cases such as gender violence and the ability of women to prosecute family cases.

Disability Perspective

Increased access especially for those with mobile disability.

Human Rights Perspective

Respect for juveniles and female prisoners increased and respect for inmates increased through the provision of separate cells, dignified holding cells, and facilities.

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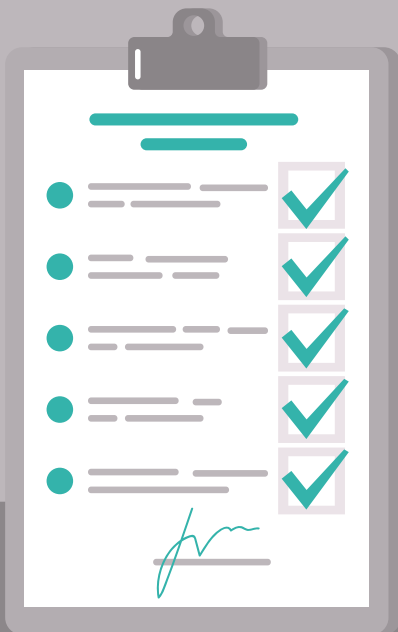
Unintended Consequences

Building a culture of knowledge-based decision-making, decisions that are based on sound analysis.

Positive contribution to incorporate environmental considerations in government infrastructure, the addition of the PV solar system as an example.

Increased the capacity and experience of HJC to manage and implement construction projects

Increased know-how of maintenance staff of advanced building management



OECD-DAC CRITERIA

Coherence

The project was compatible with strategic interventions in the country that are aimed at state building, indeed all the evidence illustrated that this was a highly strategic intervention that fits within ongoing efforts for governance, rule of law, justice sector, and for the Governorate of Hebron.

Relevance

The project is fully aligned with national policies, sector policies, and strategic plans of the Higher Judicial Council. With time the relevance of the Hebron Courthouse only increased, following multiple security incidents at the old court the need for a safe and conducive court became more pressing, and the re-scoping and focus on Hebron contributed positively to its appropriateness.

The scale of need is really high and can be indicated through multiple factors:

- 1. Population:** Hebron is composed of 800,000 citizens making it the largest governorate in Palestine.
- 2. Caseload:** about 50,000 cases a year.
- 3. Backlog:** 10,376 cases as of 2023.

Effectiveness and Likely Impact

The project proved successful in increasing the availability of a safe courthouse in Palestine by completing the construction and equipping of the Hebron Courthouse. The courthouse has a gross floor area of approximately 16,170 m².

When assessing the constituent elements of overall success (as defined by Intermediate Outcomes and Outputs), the project exhibited positive results. Positive trends are observed in the project's progress towards its four intended outputs: services, facilities, inclusiveness, and sustainability. The evaluation concluded that the character of services has improved as intended, evidenced by the presence of separate and secure circulations to separate different categories of individuals, the provision of ramps and elevators, and an increased number of service counters and windows.

Satisfaction of court users with the court and its features dissagregated by gender



The new courthouse was effective in minimizing certain gender-based barriers to accessing courts. Civil society partners as well as female citizens, lawyers, and judges reported that the new courthouse and open spaces within it are more comfortable for women which may in turn incentivize women to access the formal justice system. Moreover, additional privacy and added safety features within the courthouse decrease the worry around stigma and fear for personal security which may also incentivize women to seek resolution of family issues through the formal justice system.

Evidence shows that the courthouse was appreciated for being accessible, comfortable, safe, and stately. Court users reported that their trust in the justice sector as a whole didn't change because of the courthouse, but their confidence in the Hebron Judiciary has increased.

The rise of informal justice mechanisms is threatening Palestinian institutions, governance, rule of law, and social justice, especially for women and on family-related issues. Against these pressures, the courthouse represents a challenge to these alternate mechanisms and is a strong symbol of institution building, rule of law, and justice. The construction of a courthouse represents a challenge to the rise in informal justice mechanisms.

Efficiency

The success of the project in adhering to the budget reflects the strength and depth of experience of the project management unit and that of UNDP/PAPP in dealing with multi-layered and complex problems.

The complexity and risk involved in construction projects are high for implementing agencies and donors. They also often hold unrealistic timelines and underestimate costs.

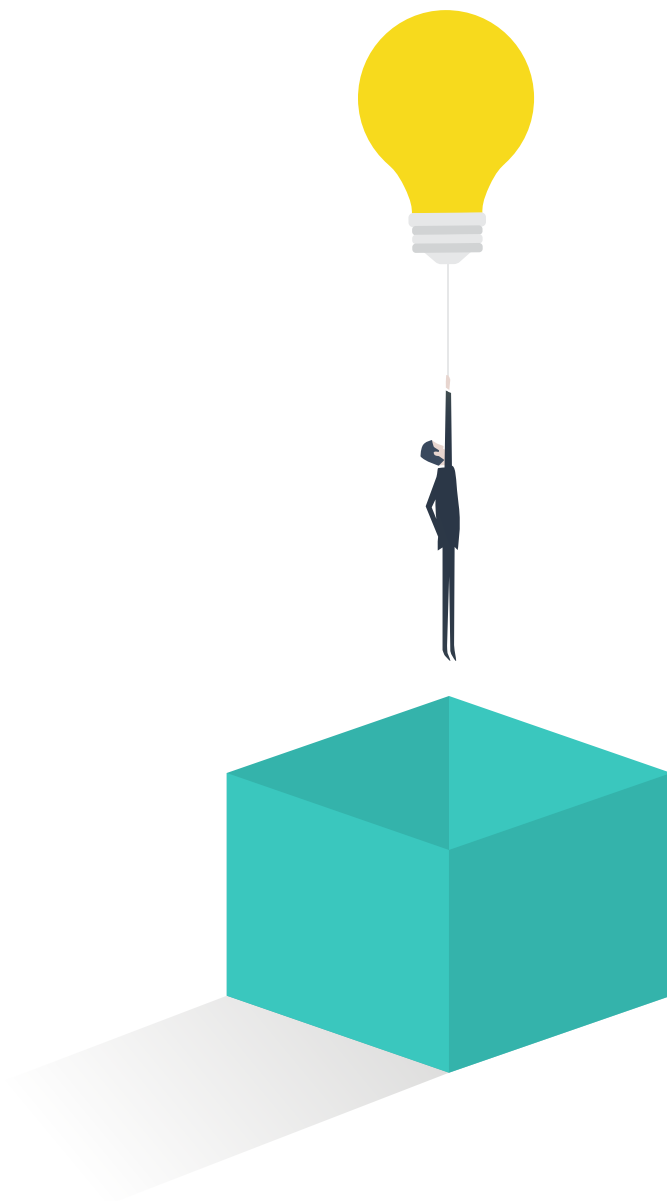
The project incorporated a series of strategies and practices that added value, such as the establishment of the CTC, the positive working relationship with local government actors, and the high capacity for adaptation and learning.

The project strategies were especially successful during the national emergency response to COVID-19, as UNDP managed to continue its operation and the site works with support from local partners including the Hebron Governor.

Sustainability

The project worked to incorporate environmental considerations, soliciting the input of a range of experts, while also relying on studies, such as a Cost Benefit Analysis and Life Cycle Cost Analysis, to help inform decision-making.

The project incorporated a range of environmental elements and practices, including the installation of the PV solar system, the installation of a water harvesting system on the roof, KNX systems, and others to reduce energy consumption, and tree planting and greening of the Courthouse grounds.



KEY LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Learnings

Specialized project management units are essential and boosting them with institutional, operational, and corporate resources is key to success.

Adopt a more expansive perspective on disability and gender.

Obtain commitment from the government that all agreed and installed systems will be used and maintained.

Quality control planning, management, and implementation should span both the design phase and the construction phase.

Recommendation

When considering the sustainability of the courthouse, additional attention must be devoted to the fact that influential actors will attempt to challenge its legitimacy and capitalize on its faults and deficiencies. Thus, efforts focused on promoting the sustainability of the courthouse should also consider how to shore up and defend the legitimacy of the Courthouse as an institution for seeking justice.

Where possible linkages should be explored with projects that focus on policy-level and system-level reform. This combination of infrastructure and soft components related to service delivery can lead to catalytic results. This cake and carrot method provides important incentives and can provide a good ground for reform.



Unless additional space translates to the provision of additional judges and public servants, then the positive impacts of the courthouse may be reduced to its symbolic values.

Without increased efficiency and decreased cost barriers to seeking resolution, formal courts will continue to be challenged by less just but more efficient systems, such as the informal tribal system.

Stakeholders confirmed the positive effect of the project on indicators associated with the facility, however, they emphasized the scale of improvement would remain limited if not combined with significant reform and increased budget provisions, resources, staff, and judges.

At present, UNDP is implementing projects focused on the welfare of Palestinians in Area C and has further historical experience in promoting the resilience of these communities. Reflecting the "Leave No One Behind" commitment, as well as the intensity of needs in Area C, it is pertinent to explore whether future programs should direct more greatly focus on the justice needs of these Palestinians.

