



Press Release

The Government of Germany, PA and UNDP/PAPP sign an 8 million Euro agreement to tackle unemployment in the oPt

Ramallah, September 10th, 2008- The Federal Republic of Germany and its Development Bank (KfW), in partnership with the Ministry of Planning and the United Nations Development Programme/Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP) signed an 8 million Euro memorandum of understanding on Wednesday, 10th September 2008, during a ceremony at the Ministry of Planning in Ramallah, to launch the seventh phase of the Poverty Oriented Infrastructure through Employment Generation Programme. H.E. Dr. Samir Abdullah, Minister of Planning and Labour, H.E. Dr. Ziad Al Bandak, Minister of Local Government, Mrs. Gudrun Isphording, Deputy Head of the German Representative Office, Mr. Mattias Schlund, Head of KfW, and Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, UNDP Special Representative of the Administrator attended the ceremony.

With unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza at alarmingly high levels of 29%, and poverty reaching over 30%, facilitating job creation is seen as imperative in the effort to reverse these trends. Through its programmes, UNDP/PAPP, in alignment with the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan, continues its support to sustaining livelihoods and encouraging productive employment to enhance Palestinian prosperity.

The seventh phase of the employment generation programme will have a strong emphasis on non-governmental organizations, refugee camps and small local authorities that are not classified as municipalities. To this effect, a total value of approximately eight million Euros will be used on supporting priority service infrastructure needs of poverty-stricken communities across the West Bank and Gaza. Part of the funding will also be used for financing other projects that have been prepared under phase six of the programme such as labour intensive repair and rehabilitation works and women employment.

"We are happy that the EGP programme will create immediate short term employment opportunities through small and medium scale infrastructure works that meet the priority needs of local communities. Today's agreement once again clearly demonstrates Germany's commitment to welfare and development of the Palestinian people". Said Mrs. Gudrun Isphording, Deputy Head of the German Representative Office in Ramallah.

"This collaboration adds another opportunity for the Palestinian people to combat poverty and regain a sense of self-reliance and self-sufficiency," stated Mr. Jens Toyberg-Frandzen, UNDP Special Representative of the Administrator. "UNDP and KfW's community-driven approach to projects has enabled communities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to play an active role in the development process, through the submission of projects that address their main needs and priorities", he added.

To date, the Government of Germany has funded, through KfW and executed by UNDP, over 520 projects in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip through its €80,000,000 Employment Generation Programme (EGP), generating approximately one million workdays. The diverse range of projects have included the rehabilitation or creation of water, sewage and road networks; sports facilities; youth clubs; women's centers; community service buildings; health clinics; kindergartens; vocational training centers; and hospitals.

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