

Change Starts with Oneself

UNDP/PAPP's
Gender-Transformative Journey



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In 1995, representatives from 189 Member States adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, voicing their commitment to “Take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and the girl child and remove all obstacles to gender equality and the advancement and empowerment of women.” However, while significant strides have been made during the subsequent 30 years to advance gender equality, gender-based inequalities and discriminatory attitudes still exist. These persistent barriers, coupled with the rise of anti-gender-equality movements, put at risk the scattered progress made so far.

To address these challenges, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has pledged to help governments shift systems and power structures that perpetuate gender inequalities and women’s disempowerment through its Gender Equality 2022–2025 initiative. In the Palestinian context, the UNDP’s Programme of Assistance to the

Palestinian People (PAPP) is committed to actively contributing to advancing gender equality, recognizing the importance of engaging both women and men, as well as girls and boys, as agents of change towards gender equality.

Unequal power structures, constraining gender roles, and patriarchal social norms are root

Given the significant influence of individual gender biases and stereotypes, it is vital to create an organizational culture that fosters inclusivity and gender equality. To this end, approximately 95 percent of UNDP/PAPP staff members – both women and men – participated in a series of gender-transformative workshops.* These workshops



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causes of gender inequality that not only disproportionately affect women and girls but also take a toll on men and boys, with negative repercussions on society as a whole. Recognizing that fostering positive change in social norms and gender relations is a long-term process, the UNDP/PAPP embarked on an institutional gender-transformative journey, engaging its staff to strengthen an inclusive organizational culture conducive to gender equality.

facilitated critical self-reflection and open dialogue on the constraining gender roles, social norms, and unequal power dynamics that staff members experience in their professional and personal lives.

Learning from the experience of its institutional gender-transformative journey, the UNDP/PAPP aims to increasingly integrate gender-transformative approaches into its programmatic interventions

creating an inclusive and equitable society. With these initiatives, the UNDP/PAPP hopes to inspire progress towards gender equality, not only in the Palestinian context but also in other parts of the world. By fostering inclusive and equitable societies, we can build a world where all people – regardless of gender – have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

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to foster greater gender equality results. For instance, under the SAWASYA II Joint Programme (UNDP, UN Women, and UNICEF), a series of gender-transformative sessions have been rolled out to law students at An-Najah National University in Nablus, offering them the opportunity to critically reflect on their views, values, and norms regarding gender and women's rights. This approach is essential for young men, who are often unaware of their gendered perspectives, privileges, and challenges due to strict and rigid masculine norms.

Under its Investment Programme for Resilience (IPR), the UNDP/PAPP has been exploring pathways to pilot gender-transformative approaches in its work with civil society organizations at the community level. The same applies to other UNDP/PAPP programs in the areas of democratic governance and quality services, inclusive economic

development, and natural resources management, where integration of gender-transformative approaches is explored to complement interventions that promote inclusive political participation, market-relevant skilling and employability, the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), ecosystem management, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. These endeavors are based on the acknowledgement that expanding gender-equitable access to resources and services and encouraging gender-responsive policies and governance across sectors can only go so far without gradually addressing the root causes of gender inequality.

The UNDP/PAPP's ongoing efforts to promote gender equality demonstrate the potential for internal change. By taking a gender-transformative approach, both men and women are empowered to contribute towards



"Knowledge Package - Gender Transformative Workshops," Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, November 13, 2022, available at <https://www.undp.org/papp/publications/knowledge-package-gender-transformative-workshops>.



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