



Cultural Creative Industries in Bethlehem



In celebration of
Bethlehem, Capital of Arab Culture 2020

One of Bethlehem Municipality's projects



in partnership with



in the framework of the Re|Shaping Cultural Policies for the Promotion of Fundamental Freedoms and the Diversity of Cultural Expressions project



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As part of the celebration of Bethlehem as Capital of Arab Culture 2020 and in motion with the framework of the 2021 International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, Bethlehem Municipality in partnership with the UNESCO have implemented the assessment of Cultural Creative Industries in Bethlehem in the framework of the Re|Shaping Cultural Policies for the Promotion of Fundamental Freedoms and the Diversity of Cultural Expressions project that is being generously funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	List of Abbreviations	4
II.	Executive Summary	5
III.	Introduction	7
	Creative Industries	7
	Creative Industries in Bethlehem	8
	Purpose and Methodology of the Research	9
IV.	Legal Framework	10
V.	CCIs Key Stakeholders in Bethlehem	12
	Official Institutions	12
	Local Organizations and Academic Institutes	13
	Venues and Spaces offered by institutes and civil society organizations	15
VI.	Reality of Creative Industries in Bethlehem	16
	Heritage Segment	17
	Art Segment	20
	Media Segment	21
	Functional Creations Segments	22
VII.	Economic and Social Impact of CCIs	24
VIII.	Challenges of Cultural Creative Industries in Bethlehem	26
IX.	Opportunities for Creative Industries in Bethlehem	30
	Opportunities and facilities available from the Bethlehem Municipality	31
X.	Recommendations	36
	Annex 1: Table of Participants	39
	Annex 2: Interventions done by MoNE and MoC to revive CCIs	40

I. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALECSO	The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization
BCCI	Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce & Industry
BDF	Bethlehem Development Foundation
BFTA	Bethlehem Fair Trade Association
BPC	Bethlehem Peace Center
CCHP	Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation
CCIs	Cultural Creative Industries
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für International
MoNE	Ministry of National Economy
MoC	Ministry of Culture
MoTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
MSMEs	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PHC	Palestinian Heritage Center
SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WFTO	World Fair Trade Organization

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions that was ratified by Palestine in 2011, ensures that artists, cultural professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, services and activities, including their own.

Creative Industries are “those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent, and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property”. According to the ‘Future of the Creative Economy’ report by Deloitte (2021), such economy is growing at an annual rate of %5.

Purpose and Methodology of the Research:

Bethlehem Municipality and UNESCO have collaborated through the project ‘Creative Industries in Bethlehem’. In the context of this project, through Bethlehem Municipality, UNESCO supported the implementation of this assessment that looked into the origins of Cultural Creative Industries (CCIs) in Bethlehem, while highlighting their development, the legal framework that governs this sector, key stakeholders that play a prominent role in the development of these industries in addition to economic and social impacts of CCIs. The assessment also looked at the challenges and opportunities available for the development of CCIs and presented recommendations to the various stakeholders including Bethlehem Municipality.

Legal Framework:

CCIs in Palestine operate in a complex business environment, where there is a lack of definition for the sector coupled with outdated laws. However, CCIs adhere to a number of legal frameworks, tourism law, intellectual property rights, taxation and many other issues. In Palestine, these policies and legislations are implemented by several official institutions, namely the Ministry of National Economy (MoNE), Ministry of Culture (MoC) and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA).

CCIs Key Stakeholders in Palestine and Bethlehem:

Stakeholders have an important role in the development of creative industries. The various roles and interests of stakeholders must be well managed for the optimization of the program of developing the creative industry. Stakeholders include official institutions such as: MoTA, MoC, MoNE, Bethlehem Municipality, and the Cultural Advisory Council in Bethlehem that operates under the umbrella of MoC. As for local organizations and academic Institutes, these include Dar al-Kalima University, Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BCCI), Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation (CCHP), Bethlehem Development Foundation (BDF), Union of Traditional Tourist Industries in Palestine, Bethlehem Fair Trade Association (BFTA) in addition to other institutes and civil society organizations. Being the main players in the field, artists, cultural practitioners and the audience comprise a yet different level of stakeholders; without who the CCIs do not exist.

Economic and Social Impact of CCIs:

It was clear from all the interviewed stakeholders in the different industries, that Creative Industries represent a source of income. However, it should be noted that the research team had witnessed difficulties in obtaining actual and accurate key figures on the economic impact of these industries. As for the social impact of the CCIs, it is witnessed in their contribution to employment. It can be hence clear that CCIs are an essential element to boost economic and employment opportunities especially for women and young people. However, CCIs need to be more organized and supported – including data collection –to be able to better assess their needs and challenges and hence provide the proper support for their growth and sustainability.

Challenges of Cultural Creative Industries in Bethlehem:

Regardless of the segment, it seems that all CCIs share the same challenges that vary in nature and impact and can be categorized as follows:

- Israeli restrictions on movement of artists and cultural goods
- Legal Framework and Policies
- Governance and Management
- Services and Infrastructure
- Human and Financial Resources
- Marketing and Securing raw materials
- Networking and Coordination

Opportunities for Creative Industries in Bethlehem:

Despite the challenges discussed above and the presented reality of CCIs in Palestine in general and Bethlehem specifically, there are a number of opportunities that the different stakeholders can built on to flourish CCIs in the city, such as:

- Bethlehem as a city is an opportunity of its own. In addition to the tourist and religious importance of the city, it has also become a center for the West Bank's southern governorates, at least on a cultural level due to its somewhat liberal lifestyle.
- Richness in CCIs available in Bethlehem City.
- Official institutions' interest in reviving the CCIs in Palestine.
- Opportunities and facilities available from the Bethlehem Municipality and other institutions as well that own several venues, facilities and locations that constitute a prominent part of the cultural scene of the city.

Recommendations:

The creative industry has become an interesting strategic sector to boost competitiveness, productivity, employment and sustainable economic growth. Thus, in order to promote the creative industries sector, it is recommended that all stakeholders work strategically in some areas, amend practical procedures in other areas and build on existing opportunities. Thus, we recommend the following:

- Coordination and networking among the different stakeholders towards reforming the legal framework and supporting the flourishing of CCIs in Bethlehem.

- Coordination and networking among different stakeholders (artists, artisans, Bethlehem Municipality, Cultural Advisory Council and others) in Bethlehem city to plan for joint activities and festivals.
- Providing reliable data on CCIs in Palestine and Bethlehem in particular, through conducting a mapping study, in coordination with the PCBS specifically for CCIs in Bethlehem and other governorates in Palestine. In order to contribute to the future advancement of the industries and their sustainability, there needs to be serious efforts to track CCIs key figures to measure and track their performance and allow for proper planning.
- Promoting creative industries and activities where all relevant stakeholders need to play an active role in promoting creative industries in the city within their contacts and networks.

III. INTRODUCTION

Creative Industries

Creative Industries are “those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent, and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property”. Over the last two decades the development of the cultural and creative industries and their digitization has marked a significant turning point into the productive sector. Today several countries count a dramatic percentage of people involved in these activities that represent a relevant resource for local economy growth.

The term Cultural Creative Industries (CCIs) had become known and was widely spread in the late eighties, and since then has been disseminated around the world by many agencies concerned in the culture sector, including UNESCO. The definition of CCIs includes a range of industries such as museums, crafts, design, visual and performing arts, writing and publishing, media and fashion. Recently, new sectors were introduced under CCIs such as video games and podcasts, noting that it could be an endless list since new creative segments could potentially emerge in the future.

Additionally, the term also refers to a very large production scale that includes goods and services produced by the cultural industries that depend on innovation. By the beginning of the twenty first century, the term ‘creative economy’ became more popular and expanded to become a source of generating economic growth at a progressively increasing rate. According to the ‘Creative economy report’ by Deloitte (2018), such economy is growing at an annual rate of %5 (Delloitte Report, June 2021).

The UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions that was ratified by Palestine in 2011, ensures that artists, cultural professionals, practitioners and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural goods, services and activities, including their own. In Palestine, UNESCO Ramallah office is keen to cooperate with the relevant ministries and cultural institutions to support and promote Palestinian artists, creative talents and communities, and the cultural and creative industries.

Moreover, the Palestinian National Policy Agenda 2022-2017 , specifically National Priority 6: Economic Independence considers Building Palestine’s Future Economy as a national policy. This policy includes main interventions in rebuilding Palestine’s productive sectors, focusing on manufacturing, agriculture and tourism, attracting domestic and foreign direct investment in construction, tourism, agriculture, and ICT sectors and expanding international trade and exports among other things, all of which are linked, to some extent, to CCI.

Additionally, three key ministries are highly involved in the CCI; Ministry of Culture (MoC), Ministry of National Economy (MoNE) and the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA). Moreover, CCIs in Palestine are also being targeted by other international agencies such as the EU, UN Women, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), DROSOS Foundation, Deutsche Gesellschaft fur International (GIZ), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Norway, in addition to some programs funded by the Belgians, Spanish, and Italians in the field of cultural heritage. There are other sources of funding through diplomatic missions like Germany, Netherlands, Ireland, etc., but it is not regular nor well identified.

It is worth mentioning that the development and sustainability of CCIs is strongly linked with local strategic vision of this industry, as well as laws and policies that are in place to protect it. In fact, some countries have realized the importance of such industries and had developed many policies and strategies that protect and nurture it. On the other hand, Palestine - and some other countries – are still facing many challenges, including the lack of financial support, and improper policies and strategies that could enhance the sustainability and flourishing of CCIs, nor that of the artists and cultural practitioners.

Creative Industries in Bethlehem

Bethlehem is one of the major Palestinian cities, located in the north side of Bethlehem Governorate in the West Bank. Bethlehem is bordered by Beit Sahour to the east, Jerusalem to the north, Beit Jala and Al-Dawha to the west, and Artas village to the south. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the total population of Bethlehem city in 2021 was 30,880, while the illiteracy rate among Bethlehem population is about %2.5 similar to the national rate.

Bethlehem is a touristic city, and therefore tourism is an essential driver for its economy. It used to receive more than 2 million visitors every year before the outbreak of COVID19- pandemic, and around %80 of Bethlehem residents depend on tourism as a source of income. Considering Bethlehem’s importance as a touristic and pilgrimage destination, there has been a huge amount of development and restoration works throughout the town, since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA). A large number of touristic industries have been established and operated such as hotels, restaurants, craft workshops and souvenir shops. Creative industries and more specifically the heritage handcrafts industry had been in existence for centuries, where it had been considered as cultural treasures that represents the national identity – mainly olive wood and mother of pearl crafts. Nevertheless, during the last decades other creative industry clusters had emerged and developed such as museums, music, fashion and design, visual and

performing arts, publications and media.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID19- Pandemic and the continuous lockdown, the creative industry domain, particularly the industries largely depending on tourism, has been paralyzed and its sustainability has been seriously hindered. This domain was not supported nor subsidized by any public nor private sector initiatives to help the industries to resume their work and to recover from the pandemic disastrous impact. Bethlehem Governorate was the most affected by the pandemic and the associated lockdown measures. The performance of the tourism sector continues to decline due to COVID19- pandemic, especially in Bethlehem Governorate, which annually normally receives more than %60 of the total number of hotel guests and visitors coming to the West Bank.

Purpose and Methodology of the Research

The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) announced Bethlehem as the Capital of Arab Culture for the year 2020. As part of the UNESCO's cooperation with national stakeholders, UNESCO and Bethlehem Municipality collaborated through the project 'Creative Industries in Bethlehem', which aimed at shedding light on the most prominent CCIs in Bethlehem that do have an actual role in boosting the local economy.

In the context of this project, through Bethlehem Municipality, UNESCO supported the implementation of this study of the different cultural creative industries in Bethlehem city. The assessment looked into the origins of CCIs in Bethlehem, while highlighting their development and the legal framework that governs this sector. Additionally, the study provided a list of key stakeholders that play a prominent role in the development of these industries in addition to economic and social impacts of CCIs. Lastly, the study looks at the challenges and opportunities available for the development of CCIs and presents recommendations to the various stakeholders including Bethlehem Municipality.

The methodology included mixed-method approach to conduct this research. In addition to the literature review of available research, the consultants relied on preliminary sources of information namely semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and key actors – such as Bethlehem Municipality, Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI), Bethlehem Fair-Trade Association, Bethlehem Development Foundation (BDF), Ministry of Culture (MoC), Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA), Ministry of National Economy (MoNE), Dar Al-Kalima University, the Cultural Advisory Council and other key actors. Moreover, four focus group discussions were organized with representatives of most of the cultural industries in the city.

Several challenges emerged while conducting the research. The most prominent of which was the lack of information and published data on creative industries in general and specifically in Bethlehem city. The lack of data was not only regarding the historical background of these industries but also their contribution to the economic sustainability of the city and most importantly the value that cultural and creative industries create in the economy of Bethlehem and its contribution

to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). There was also an issue with the availability of data even in specialized institutes, organizations, unions and councils that work with CCIs. The only available data was on the Heritage Segment specifically crafts due to registration requirements and the availability of unifying bodies. Despite this, the available data does not represent the reality accurately. More on this is discussed in the section on economic value.

IV. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

CCIs in Palestine operate in a complex business environment, where there is a lack of definition for the sector coupled with outdated laws. However, CCIs adhere to a number of legal frameworks; tourism law, intellectual property rights, taxation and many other issues. The policies and legislations governing these fields (i.e. the regulatory framework) are expected to facilitate artistic creation, protect and enable business activities, while promoting and preserving cultural diversity. In Palestine, these policies and legislations are implemented by several official institutions, namely the MoNE, the MoC and the MoTA.

The MoNE, being the umbrella of the national economy in general, is responsible for the business and investment environment, and the regulation of the local market. Additionally, the MoNE is responsible for the industrial sector and the traditional heritage industries in particular, as well as its responsibility for protecting intellectual property (patents, trademarks, geographical indications and innovation). It is worth noting that Palestine is not a member in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) but only holds the status of ‘observer’. However, an outdated ‘Trademarks and Intellectual Property Law’ that regulates the procedures for registering and protecting trademarks and protecting cultural, intellectual, scientific and literary production in Palestine is in force. Nevertheless, there have been recent efforts to update the Intellectual Property Law through drafting an updated law by Abu Ghazaleh Intellectual Property company. This draft was submitted to the MoNE for ratification by the President.

In an attempt to encourage investment in Palestine, President Mahmoud Abbas approved the new law for companies. This new law allows the establishment of a one-person company and abolishes the minimum capital requirements to establish companies. Thus, it is expected that the new law will encourage and serve small and medium enterprises, including women. This law became into effect at the beginning of April 2022 noting that electronic registration will be adopted for registering new companies.

In addition, MoNE encourages enterprises to move from being part of the unorganized sector into the organized sector in order to protect the rights of these enterprises. Becoming organized will allow these enterprises to benefit from the MoNE’s policies targeting them, such as entering bids, participating in local and foreign exhibitions, obtaining financing from the banking sector, and benefiting from projects which provide technical, administrative and material support. Furthermore, the MoNE works on implementing awareness campaigns and workshops in various regions in this regard and it also facilitates registration for these establishments, especially women’s establishments, by reducing commercial registration fees and exempting them from

some registration requirements such as lease or ownership contracts.

The MoNE launched the classification of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Palestine so as to unify the definition among all institutions in order to facilitate access to finance and economic opportunities. In addition, the MoNE is in the process of developing a strategy for these establishments in order to empower and support MSMEs, especially women led enterprises. Additionally, the MoNE works on regulating the practice of home businesses and has issued instructions to facilitate and regulate these businesses that are practiced inside homes aiming to build a complete system for these home projects pertaining to organization, registration and incentives for these projects.

However, policies related to conducting business are regarded as constraints insofar as they are perceived to lack central coordination and/or do not facilitate the growth of entrepreneurship. According to the World Bank, the overall rank for 'Doing Business' in the West Bank and Gaza (140 out of 189 economies) confirms the need to improve the legal framework, cost and procedures for startup and entrepreneurial activity.

The MoC, despite being responsible for the cultural aspect and the protection of intellectual property rights, suffers from the absence of a regulatory framework that protects and sponsors cultural activities. The absence of a cultural law remains one of the most prominent challenges in regulating the sector in addition to the multiplicity of legal and legislative references regulating cultural work. Moreover, absence of important basic legislation for cultural action, primarily the intellectual property protection law, constitutes a major challenge for the advancement of this sector. The Copyrights and Related Rights Law, also called the Intellectual Property Law, passed the fourth reading in the cabinet and is pending final endorsement by the President. On the other hand, UNESCO is currently assisting the MoC and concerned stakeholders in reviewing the draft law for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, in accordance with international standards and norms and with the international normative instruments in the field of culture ratified by Palestine.

Similarly, the MoTA is governed by multiple outdated laws and regulations that were issued before the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. MoTA is primarily responsible for promoting heritage, traditional and cultural tourism products in addition to issuing licenses and controlling oriental antique and souvenir shops. However, in 2018, the teams of the MoTA along with relevant stakeholders and concerned actors in the field, and with technical support from UNESCO and financial support from Sweden, finalized the Decree Law on Tangible Cultural Heritage in Palestine (No. 2018/11). The Law entered into force in April 2018, providing a comprehensive set of provisions on the protection, management, and promotion of Palestinian tangible cultural heritage. Nevertheless, the ministry is assuming responsibility of following up on the crafts industry linked to the field of tourism.

V. CCIS KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN BETHLEHEM

Stakeholders have an important role in the development of the creative industry. The various roles and interests of stakeholders must be well managed for the optimization of the program of developing the creative industry. This is particularly important in the case of Palestine in general and particularly in Bethlehem where there is no one stakeholder that is in charge or at least coordinates the work of all the CCIs' segments. This section presents the key stakeholders that were identified and that have a key role in advancing the creative industry in Bethlehem and the role of official and local organizations involved in the CCIs in Bethlehem city.

Official Institutions

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities: Within its mandate, the MoTA's role is limited to issuing licenses and controlling oriental antique and souvenir shops which is due to the outdated tourism law. However, the MoTA is assuming responsibility of following up on the crafts industry linked to the field of tourism in terms of financial support, either through providing funding for their development projects from the general budget or through donor countries and institutions, and participation in local and international exhibitions.

Ministry of Culture: The MoC seeks to support and encourage cultural industries and investments in culture as an important pillar of comprehensive development in Palestine, and for this purpose the General Directorate of Cultural Industries was recently established in the MoC. This directorate was adopted in the 2022 structure of the ministry and was mandated to work on serving cultural industries and encouraging investment in this field which is based on human creativity, and the ability to develop new and innovative solutions and ideas based on imagination and creativity.

Ministry of National Economy: MoNE is the umbrella for the national economy in general, and is responsible for the business and investment environment, and the regulation of the local market in general, in addition to its responsibility for the industrial sector in general, and traditional heritage industries in particular, as well as being responsible for protecting intellectual property (patents, trademarks, geographical indications and innovation). MoNE encourages enterprises to move from the unorganized sector to the organized sector in order to preserve the rights of these enterprises, in addition to benefiting from the policies targeting these enterprises such as entering bids, participating in local and foreign exhibitions, obtaining financing from the banking sector, in addition to benefiting from projects that provide technical, administrative and material support. The MoNE also facilitates registration for these enterprises, especially those run by women, by reducing commercial registration fees and exempting them from some registration requirements such as lease or ownership contracts.

Bethlehem Municipality: The Public Relations, Media and Cultural Department at Bethlehem Municipality is mandated with following up and managing many of the creative cultural activities that take place in the city. More specifically, this department is responsible for managing local and international relations, media and promotion of the municipality's work and organizing events. In relation to creative industries, the department receives applications for the use of Manger

Square and Vienna Hall, follow-up on the affairs of the twin cities agreements and reception of delegations and participation in foreign and international conferences. Additionally, the department is in charge of enhancing Bethlehem Municipality's image through the production of audiovisual materials, written publications and brochures and preparing for Christmas events and celebrations, and coordinate for different mega events such as Palestine Marathon, and numerous cultural events.

The Cultural Advisory Council: This council operates under the umbrella of the MoC, where each governorate has a council of its own that cooperates with the office of the MoC at the different governorates. The council plays as a connecting link between the Ministry and the local community including all cultural and artistic institutions in the governorate. The council is responsible for organizing various cultural activities. However, there is no budget allocated to the council, and it is not entitled to receive funding.

The head and members of the council are appointed by the Minister of Culture. The current council in Bethlehem was appointed in March 2022 and is currently composed of 19 male and female members who represent the cultural and artistic sector in the Bethlehem Governorate. The council's strategy will focus on networking and cooperation with all institutional and individuals that are part of the cultural scene. The current council's vision and approach is to engage different stakeholders (public and private) within this council to create work synergy and to maintain sustainability.

Local Organizations and Academic Institutes

Dar Al-Kalima University: In 2013, Dar Al-Kalima was reaccredited by the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education to become a University College that could grant BA degrees. The first BA programs to be offered in 2014 were Film Production and Contemporary Fine Art . Dar Al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture, became the number one address for formal, non-formal, and vocational education in new fields such as film, jewelry, design, theater, music, and contemporary arts. This has enhanced the employability of young people and provided emerging industries with qualified personnel . The university also offers a number of programs that contribute to the human capital within the CCIs such as the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Studies and Culinary Arts Program. The new culinary art program in Culinary Art and Management (CAM) was offered in 2020 for the first time as an associate diploma. Additionally, the university offers the Palestinian Tour Guides Program and the newly introduced BA program in Cultural and Sustainable Tourism Program. In terms of visual and performing arts, the university offers a Film Production Program, Graphic Design, Contemporary Arts, Applied Arts Programs and Music Program.

Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI): Is an independent and non-profit organization representing the private sector in the governorate of Bethlehem. BCCI has an important role in the economic sector and is one of the leading associations that strengthens the economy in the governorate. In spite of all obstacles, it attracts new investments in collaboration with investors. BCCI supports businesses through the preparation and certification of personal

identification certificate, preparation of certificate of origin in addition to organizing training courses and workshops concerned with the affairs of the private sector. BCCI is also keen on promoting local products and organizing specialized training courses that aim to increase the awareness of members on various economic topics, as well as specialized workshops to improve management within the companies and local enterprises.

Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation (CCHP): is an off-shoot of the Bethlehem 2000 Project Authority (BL2000), established in 1998 to prepare Bethlehem for the celebrations marking the turn of the millennium. CCHP is a semi-governmental organization operating under the guidance of a board of trustees which is headed by the MoTA and functions under its supervision. Since its establishment, the center has embarked on preserving tangible cultural heritage resources, targeting towns and villages in Bethlehem governorate in efforts to protect heritage as a manifestation of Palestinian culture, history and identity. The center aims at providing sustainable mechanism for the protection and management of cultural heritage resources and enhance awareness of cultural heritage in the public conscience. Its main objectives are management of conservation and rehabilitation projects, research and documentation, and training among other objectives.

Bethlehem Development Foundation (BDF): Since its establishment in 2012, BDF has been keen on achieving the goals set forth by the Development Initiative which aim to regenerate and revitalize the Bethlehem Governorate and to transform it into a vibrant international tourist destination. BDF focuses on infrastructure projects that include preserving of religious and historical buildings, building of courts and sports centers, efficient street lightening and solid waste management, and building community centers.

Union of Traditional Tourist Industries in Palestine. The Union was founded in 1999 as a non-profit organization officially registered with the MoNE to be the coordinator for the sector of traditional industries in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In 2006 the Palestinian Legislative Council approved that the Palestinian Federation of Industry is the official body that represents crafts and industries in Palestine. The Union aims to develop the capacity of professional marketing of union members as well as enlarging the union base and organization. Additionally, the union focuses on the rehabilitation and development of its members' capacities to ensure the preservation of these industries from extinction. The union also contributes to the development of the necessary laws to protect traditional industry and legislation; and assists in the promotion and marketing of traditional industry products in addition to building the internal and external relationships network.

Currently the union is focusing on three main objectives; the first one is the collaboration with Bank of Palestine to assist the craft workshops to receive financial loans, ranging from USD 70,000 -20,000 to support their businesses in terms of purchasing raw material and technical equipment especially after COVID19-. The second objective in the collaboration with the MoNE and Palestine Standards Institute to develop a quality label /stamp for the industrial crafts. This label is considered as brand that ensures that the product is hand-made within the national

standards. This issue is very important as a quality control procedure, to protect local crafts in the local and international markets. So far, the union has finalized the official labels of six crafts; silver, ceramic, poetry, handmade accessories and embroidery, and currently they are working on quality labels for olive woods, candles and mother of pearl crafts. Lastly, the union is opening discussion with the MoNE on the quality control tools and procedures to protect the local industries, especially in souvenir shops in Bethlehem that are considered the main market for handmade crafts.

Bethlehem Fair Trade Association (BFTA): Is a non-profit NGO established in 2009. It works to spread the fair-trade message in Palestine and links Palestinian producers to global fair-trade markets. In 2015, BFTA became the first guaranteed member of World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) in the Middle East. WFTO is the largest global network advocating Fair Trade principles. BFTA's mission is to empower the most vulnerable producers in Palestine, support them to become active agents in their own livelihoods, and develop their social rights and their communities. BFTA aims to develop the local economy by creating more opportunities to the most marginalized producers, and by creating sustainable livelihoods. By spreading the message of fair trade, BFTA aims to restore the dignity of the most marginalized groups in the Palestinian society and to improve their lives. BFTA supports Palestinian women and youth, by increasing their market share in the domestic and global markets, increasing their incomes, their decision-making role at home and in the community, and creating more sustainable and equitable business models and a better working environment for the future.

BFTA works with producers specializing in olive wood, embroidery, mother of pearl, olive oil soap, felt wool, and recycled products. This is done with the view of promoting and celebrating the Palestinian culture and traditions. BFTA became an umbrella of major support for 53 family-owned olive wood workshops, ceramics and blown glass factories, 50 women's cooperatives and groups working with embroidery, recycled glass, basket weaving and jewelry making, and 5 dis-abled groups making felt wool products and recycled cards. BFTA strategically reached new markets and doubled sales in the past few years, which has helped to lift hundreds of people out of poverty.

Venues and Spaces offered by institutes and civil society organizations

In addition to the key stakeholders mentioned above, there are a number of stakeholders that can play a supporting role in the revival of CCIs in Bethlehem city. These stakeholders possess a number of resources and facilities that are available in the city and close to the main attractions like Star Street, Manger Square and the Bethlehem Peace Center (BPC). These facilities include open spaces, theaters, auditoriums, and show rooms that can contribute to the revival of creative industries in the city.

Parking spaces: Terra Sancta and St. Joseph Schools are very close to the BPC and Manger Square and can provide parking spaces. Similarly, the Catholic Action Center - Bethlehem has an outdoor space that can be used for parking.

Theaters and indoor halls: Terra Sancta, St. Joseph Schools and Catholic Action Cultural Center - Bethlehem.

Academic institutes: Including Dar Al-Kalima University, Bethlehem University, Palestine Ahliyah University, and Bethlehem Bible College, which have theaters equipped with good sound system and lights and can be used for hosting events or festivals. Coordination with these centers and educational institutes can go beyond the hosting of activities to reach coordination on national creative industries and the role these institutions can play in enhancing the creative industry as a whole in Bethlehem. This could be done through the development of academic programs specialized in creative industries that are historically linked to Bethlehem, including olivewood carving, mother of pearl and culinary, and creating a well-prepared generation, equipped with tools and knowledge to further enhance the CCIs status in Bethlehem.

President Putin Palestinian Organization for Culture and Economy, the Russian Center for Science and Culture and the Convention Palace. These facilities could be an opportunity to revive Bethlehem as a hub for conferences and cultural events in addition to promoting the MICE sector (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Events), and the conference or convention tourism.

Street theater and old house compounds Bethlehem, and Star Street particularly, encompass various buildings and spaces of peculiar cultural heritage value, including Hosh Michael, Hosh Abu Jarour, Hosh Al Syrian and Dar Al Sabbagh to name a few, and which are fit to host cultural activities that revive old stories using drama and many other activities attracting youngsters and older people as well.

VI. REALITY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN BETHLEHEM

Creative industries are vast in scope, dealing with the interplay of various subsectors. These subsectors range from activities rooted in traditional knowledge and cultural heritage such as arts and crafts, and cultural festivities, to more technology and services-oriented subgroups such as audiovisuals and the new media. The UNCTAD classification of creative industries is divided into four broad groups: heritage, arts, media and functional creations.

Bethlehem city is unique and rich with the variant available creative industries that are within the Heritage, Arts, Media and Functional Creations segments. In this section, the reality of these creative industries in Bethlehem city is introduced. A presentation of the overall international definition of each segment in addition to the history, uniqueness, and main players in terms of individuals and institutions is elaborated. Challenges and opportunities for each segment are presented in a separate section.

Heritage Segment

Cultural heritage is identified as the origin of all forms of arts and the soul of cultural and creative industries. It is the starting point of this classification. It is heritage that brings together cultural aspects from the historical, anthropological, ethnic, aesthetic and societal viewpoints, influences creativity and is the origin of a number of heritage goods and services as well as cultural activities. Associated with heritage is the concept of 'traditional knowledge and cultural expressions' embedded in the creation of arts and crafts as well as in folklore and traditional cultural festivities. This group is therefore divided into two subgroups: Traditional cultural expressions: arts and crafts, and Cultural sites: archaeological sites, museums, etc.... .

For centuries, Palestinians have used raw materials from their surroundings or imported these materials to produce a distinct identity for many towns and villages. This craft skill has transformed many Palestinian regions into centers for the production of handicrafts and other economic activities, especially cities that include religious destinations by marketing and supporting the handicraft industry, such as the cities of Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Hebron and other Palestinian cities.

In terms of Traditional Cultural Expressions, there are a number of crafts that Bethlehem city is famous for. These crafts include Olive wood, mother of pearl and embroidery.

Olivewood carving is believed to be an ancient heritage that dates to as early as the 4th century with the start of Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land. In the 1980's, an average of 3,000 individuals were employed in the olivewood carving industry, when it was considered to be at its peak, this figure has been decreasing gradually. Additionally, the number of workshops has also dropped. Technology and equipment development had facilitated some of the crafters' tasks in terms of time efficiency and quantities, eventually leading to the reduction of the number of workers / crafters. Nevertheless, they face other challenges concerning lack of human resources and high cost of raw materials that is further elaborated under the challenges section later in the report.

Mother of Pearl was introduced in Bethlehem since the 15th century by the Franciscan monks, and since then it has been involved in the artisans work as a symbol of good luck and prosperity. Mother of pearl together with olive wood, developed and flourished with the pilgrimage tourism in the Bethlehem area. Mother of Pearl carvings and pieces can be seen along the mosaic pieces at the Nativity church. It is worth mentioning that the first exhibition in the west of mother-of-pearl artifacts from Palestine was at The World Fair in New York in 1852. Two brothers, Giries and Ibrahim Mansur from Bethlehem governorate, exhibited their work and were a great success. The introduction of modern tools in the second half of the 20th century, such as small motors and tools for carving, naturally made the work easier. Nowadays in workshops in Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, and Beit Jala one can see industrial tools that copy figures and carve them. After the first intifada in 1987, this industry declined because of Israeli occupation policies. However, it slightly flourished between 1994 and 2000, then declined after the second intifada in 2000 due to the decline in tourism activity. Unfortunately, this craft is currently in danger of extinction due to several reasons, the most prominent of which is the lack of professional carving artists since there is lack of interest of young people in this craft due to its low financial returns.

Embroidery is yet another element of this segment and is an important feature for the traditional costumes for Palestinian. This industry creates job opportunities for women from their homes. During many previous decades, contemporary embroidery designs had been part of the various productions like clothing, home décor, and personal accessories. In addition, embroidery is engaged in many products besides the costume such as personal accessories and home decor.

As per the PCBS (2017) , the number of establishments working in the Heritage segment in Bethlehem governorate is 479 entities. Additionally, and according to a research conducted by the Traditional and Tourism Industries Association in April 2022 on %74 of the association's members - the majority of which are from Bethlehem - the research stated that %60 of the craft workshops are for olivewood carving, %23 for mother of pearl, %16 for embroidery and %18 of the workshops are for silver accessories.

Most craft productions represent religious items as per the demand of the local and international markets. The Traditional and Tourism Industries Association's report mentions that %89 of produced crafts represent Christian symbol items, where the remaining represent Islamic, national and decorative symbols. The local market, which is mainly the tourists' souvenir shops, consumes %30 of the production, whereas the remaining is exported to different countries like the USA, EU and Arab countries.

Although there is no exact number of workshops working in crafts in Bethlehem, yet the association's report states that the majority of workshops have the legal registration through the municipality under 'craft license'. They avoid official registration at the MoNE for fear of taxation.

The second sub-group of the Heritage segment is Cultural sites, which include archeological sites and museums. Since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, archeological sites and museums became under the responsibility of MoTA whose efforts were mainly focused on renovation and restoration of religious and historical sites in the city of Bethlehem.

As for architecture in Bethlehem, particularly traditional architecture, forms an important part of the cultural heritage of the Palestinian people. It is also one of the important tributaries in supporting tourism, especially after the Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2012.

Several efforts have been exerted to preserve the unique architectural heritage of the city of Bethlehem , including of the Church of the Nativity, large parts of the historic quarters of the old town, and along the Star Street as well. The Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation (CCHP) in Bethlehem has been the main actor contributing to preserving tangible cultural heritage resources, mainly in Bethlehem Governorate, in an attempt to link the past with the present and preserve heritage as a manifestation of Palestinian culture, history and identity.

According to MoTA, there are seven museums licensed and operating in the city. These museums are supervised by different sectors including official, religious, academic and nonprofit institutions

and private companies. Museums in Bethlehem regardless of their legal registration, have good infrastructure in terms of management, communication and publications, spaces and resources in addition to the services they offer. According to the PCBS (2017), this subgroup employs a total of 45 people in Bethlehem.

The museums open at least 5 days weekly, 7 hours a day. Most of them are flexible in terms of opening hours and days, conditional of prior coordination.

1.International Nativity Museum - Salesian Convent

International Nativity Museum of Bethlehem is one of the richest and of valuable collections of cribs in the Holy Land. The Museum has a collection of over 200 Nativity representations of different styles and dimensions. It is located in the ground floor of the historical Salesian Convent of Bethlehem. The variety of the cribs exposed, originating from all around the world, creates a rhapsody of customs, liturgy and rituality from all continents and ethnic groups.

2.Olive Oil Museum- Al-Bad Museum

Al-Bad Museum for Olive Oil production is situated in the Old City of Bethlehem. The building which houses the museum dates back as far as the 19th century. The museum houses many ethnographic and archaeological artefacts featuring the entire process of oil production. Furthermore, the exhibit also shows the many uses for oil such as lamps, medicine, food, soap and even cosmetics.

3.Baituna Al-Talhami Museum – Bethlehem Folklore Museum

Established in 1971 by the Arab Women Union in Bethlehem, this ethnographic museum was set up in a traditional Arab house near Manger Square. The collection consists mostly of traditional jewelry, embroidery, carpets and a few domestic vessels.

4.Palestinian Heritage Center

The Palestinian Heritage Center (PHC) aims to preserve and promote Palestinian cultural heritage, especially the art of embroidery. The PHC has a great collection of traditional Palestinian dresses and antique items of everyday use. It also participates in fair trade of hand-made embroidery, crafted by women from villages and refugee camps around the city of Bethlehem.

5.Palestinian Museum of Natural History - Bethlehem University

Palestine Museum of Natural History (PMNH) has a mission focused on research, education, and conservation of Palestinian natural world, culture and heritage. The museum grounds and its botanical garden (integrated ecosystem) is an oasis for wildlife in Bethlehem and an oasis for young people seeking alternatives and a new way of looking at themselves and their environment.

6.Al Kahf Gallery/museum – Dar Annadwa Adduwaliyya (closed due to the pandemic)

Al Kahf is part of the International Center of Bethlehem and is a gallery that hosts local and international exhibitions, with an aim to create a link between local and foreign artists.

7.Al Riwaya Museum

The Riwaya Museum is a located in the basement of the Bethlehem Peace Center, and is organized

around themes capturing the history and identity of Bethlehem, telling stories from various perspectives through interactive multimedia tools. The Riwaya Museum is currently in its last phase of renovation and content design, where the works are implemented by UNESCO with funding from Norway.

Art Segment

This segment includes creative industries based purely on arts and culture. Artwork is inspired by heritage, identity values and symbolic meaning. According to UNCTAD, this segment is divided into two large subgroups; Visual Arts: that includes painting and sculpture; and Performing Arts: which includes live music, theatre, dance, opera and puppetry among others. .

As for the visual art component, it covers individuals and institutions including young professional entrepreneurs, prominent artists and nonprofit organizations. Some of those artists and institutions have been active for the last 30 years in Bethlehem. Given the local economic context, most of this segment's members have other jobs to ensure income sustainability. Young entrepreneurs that are part of this segment rely on technology and social media to promote their work, especially painters, and mostly address and target political and contemporary issues, whereas sculptors produce more religious items and classical works.

Stone sculpting is a well-established industry in Bethlehem. One of the major figures in this industry in Bethlehem is Fawzi Nustas, who has a long experience in teaching at the different academic schools in Palestine and who comes from a family where stone sculpture is inherited. He is a classic artist and had been commissioned to produce many sculptures, mainly Christian and religious sculptures locally and internationally. The most prominent sculptures Nustas produced in Bethlehem are Virgin Mary Statue (-3 meters high), installed on the top of Mary's House convent and Hostel in the Old City of Bethlehem, and St George Statue (a monument of -4 meters high), installed at the main square in Beit-Jala Municipality in the year 2000.

Additionally, under the arts category, there are at least two institutions located in the Old City; the 'Bethlehem Icon School' and the 'Bethlehem Mosaic Center', both provide different craft and painting classes for various audiences, and both have outdoor and indoor spaces that can be used for various activities during seasonal markets or events.

As for the Performing Arts, for the last four decades, the importance of performing arts has increased similar to other creative industries. Performing arts are mostly managed and produced by nonprofit organizations that dedicate their work in preserving folklore and dance. The sustainability of financial and human resources in this sector is challenging and limited. Two major folklore dance groups have been active in Bethlehem. These are the Dalal Dance Group that is led and trained by young volunteers, and is part of Dalal Institution for Culture and Arts, that has limited resources which relies on donor funding. The second is Diyar Dance Theatre, which is part of Diyar Consortium that operates under the umbrella of Dar Al-Kalima University. Unlike Dalal, Diyar Dance Theater has many available resources and spaces for their trainings and music productions.

The status of music differs from that of performing arts. Group members of this segment include individual musicians, bands and nonprofit entities. The nonprofit organizations provide music events and festivals, and music education to those who are interested in music, in addition to their music productions and projects. Many music projects and productions were produced during the last years, specifically for religious and national occasions.

In Bethlehem city there is a good number of young musicians, mainly due to the fact that there are two music conservatoires that teach musical instruments and chorales. These are the Bethlehem Academy of Music and Edward Said Conservatory of Music, both are well established nonprofit organizations that employ an average of 12 employees each. In addition to these two Dar Al-Kalima University also teaches music in addition to drama, film making and visual arts.

Media Segment

As defined by UNCTAD, the media segment covers two subgroups of media that produce creative content with the purpose of communicating with large audiences. The first subgroup is Publishing and printed media which includes books, press and other publications. While the second subgroup is Audiovisuals, which includes film, television, radio and other broadcasting.

Due to the historical, cultural and religious significance of the city, many Bethlehemites are involved in the publishing sector especially in publishing books and booklets. This became apparent when the project Bethlehem 2000, which started in the late nineties, commissioned many writers from the Bethlehem area to issue booklets on the city of Bethlehem and Palestine. These published materials eventually became an important reference that are housed today at the MoTA and are sold at many other bookstores. During the last ten years, there was even more attention to published materials on the history of Bethlehem, especially ones that reflect the Palestinian historical narrative, which previous printed material did not cover.

According to the latest data available from the PCBS (2017) on the number of operating establishments and employed persons, there are three functioning establishments working in printing employing a total of 35 people in Bethlehem governorate. Additionally, there are two establishments working on publishing of newspapers, journals and periodicals employing a total of 26 people, and 17 specialized stores working on retail sale of books, newspapers and stationery employing 26 people.

Moreover, much work was put into reviewing what was written in the late nineties and the early 2000s. As result of this review, booklets that are now issued are better written on the history of Palestine and specifically that of Bethlehem which includes photos and historic background. It is worth noting that there were also other personal initiatives that looked into the historical specific aspects of Bethlehem such as its families, Christians of Bethlehem, and also the hand crafts of Bethlehem – thereby further reviving the historical narrative of Bethlehem in these different aspects.

As for Audiovisuals, several establishments that work within this sub-group are present in Bethlehem city including photography, motion picture, video, radio and television program

production and broadcasting. It is worth noting that Palestine was one of the first places outside Europe in which photography spread: it started in 1839, the same year that the French artist Louis Daguerre announced its invention. Many of the well-known Palestinian photographers have established photography studios in Bethlehem during the Ottoman rule and the British Mandate over Palestine. Karimeh Abbud, is worth special mentioning, as she was the first female professional photographer in the region and opened her own photography studio in her home in Bethlehem in the late 19th century. Several other photographers also worked in Bethlehem. Prominent among them were Zakariya Abu Fheileh (1951–1885); Yousef Shamieh who founded a studio called Middle Eastern Photographers Company in 1942; and Samaan Sahhar, who moved to Bethlehem from Jerusalem in 1948 when his studio was included in what became no-man's land in the divided city.

According to the PCBS (2017), there are 13 establishments working in photographic activities in Bethlehem Governorate employing 23 people. The professional photographers' stream of work mainly focuses on social and documenting photography. They play a major role in documenting events in the city. Most of them have their own social media accounts, with a considerable number of followers, where they share their photos of special events or places in Bethlehem.

In terms of film making, there are very few filmmakers in Bethlehem. When it comes to the production of films, they are mostly funded by international donors, and the films are screened at local and regional events. Since filmmakers mostly rely on international funding, this imposes obstacles on the industry as there is a lack of funding. The majority of filmmakers are graduates of Dar Al-Kalima University, which provides a BA degree in Film Production since 2014.

Other components of the audiovisual sub-group include motion picture, video, radio and television programming and broadcasting activities that are spread out across nine establishments that employ a total of 150 people (PCBS, 2017).

Functional Creations Segments

According to UNCTAD, functional creations comprise more demand-driven and services-oriented industries creating goods and services with functional purposes. It is divided into three main sub-groups: Design (interior, graphic, fashion, jewelry, toys), New media (software, video games, and digitalized creative content); and Creative services (architectural, advertising, cultural and recreational, creative research and development, digital and other related creative services).

The design subgroup, which comprise interior, graphic, fashion, jewelry and toys is relatively young in comparison to other industries in Palestine and particularly in Bethlehem. The fashion and jewelry sector in the city of Bethlehem is led by young individuals, who dedicate their work and effort to develop the industry with modest capacities and workshops. They mostly work by themselves or employ some people on specific tasks whenever there is a need. However, according to the PCBS data (2017), there are 22 establishments working in manufacturing of wearing apparel employing more than 60 people, and five establishments working in manufacturing of jewelry employing 17 people in the Bethlehem Governorate. The large discrepancy in the size

of the industry between the city and the governorate can be attributed to the fact that most of the establishments working in manufacturing of apparel and jewelry are located outside Bethlehem city, either in Beit Jala, Beit Sahour or surrounding villages.

As for Functional Creations, there are four main Fashion designers. The oldest of which is Ibrahim Murad, who is the owner, manager and fashion designer since 1988. Additionally, Nadya Hazboun, Jewelry and Fashion designer, she has more than ten years of experience in this field and works as a creative designer for many projects locally. Moreover, she has her own shop that sells her designed jewelry made of olivewood.

Another designer is Sandra Wadie , a young designer who has her own workshop and store, her business is still growing gradually and gives designing courses. Jabra Khouri is also another young fashion designer who owns his workshop at home and does some designs for customers upon request.

Business model:

Sandra Wadie Fashion House

Fashion design and vocational center

Sandra Wadie, a young talented fashion designer - established her design fashion brand store in Bethlehem in 2015, as fashion house to design fashion pieces for the various customers, in 2019 – she started establishing a vocational center that should provide certified courses and diploma in fashion design.

In 2018 -2017 She participated at “The Palestinian Market Development Programme (PMDP)”, a program funded by UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union (EU) in-cooperation with the Ministry of National economy. The program has been designed to improve market and capacity building for young entrepreneurs to improve their skills.

23The training encouraged her and inspired her to expand the fashion house, and to establish a vocational center for fashion design courses and diploma. She applied a feasibility study for this project for PMDP to get fund for her project, and the application was approved.

Since then, she started working on the official registration is at the Ministry of Labor, the procedures of the official certificate took at least a year, although the required documents and physical setup were ready, yet the bureaucracy at the ministry – and lack of coordination and management at the vocational certification center/Ministry of Labor took so much time.

Never the less she was able to start her vocational training at the fourth quarter of 2021, the courses she offer includes design-trailing-cost management and other. Since then the center is providing different workshops based on the needs of the sector, such as sewing machines maintenance, Fashion design photography ...etc. Additionally, the center maintains job opportunities for graduates. In May 2022, she started her second courses terms, and both courses graduate will rejoin the center to continue their education and get the diploma certificate, to be graduated in 2024.

Although the center is still young but its economically independent and make profit. On the other hand, since 2021 Sandra has been working on her fashion line, hoping she will be able to do her first fashion show in 2023. The preparation of this line, offered job opportunities for 30 women, to be part of this project, where they are responsible for some detailed designs such as sewing stones and beads on some pieces. Each women get at least NIS 300 per day.

Challenges: she is facing – lack of professional tailors to assist her in finalizing her production line. She hopes by end of the diploma course, she will be able add to her team some of the graduates. Networking and exchange experience.

The awareness and support of official and local community for fashion design. There is no official body that present them and try to solve their problems as a sector.

VII. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF CCIS

It was clear from all the interviewed stakeholders in the different industries, that Creative Industries represent a source of income. However, it should be noted here that the research team faced difficulties in obtaining actual and accurate key figures on the economic impact of these industries. For example, only %40 of the olivewood carving workshops are registered at the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) . Also, other workers in the creative industries are hiding the size of their sales and productions and refused to provide such information in order to avoid paying taxes. Furthermore, and as explained by the MoTA, it is difficult to provide an accurate statistical number for handicraft and traditional workshops or their workers since the vast majority of workers in the field of traditional crafts work from their homes or in unlicensed and unregistered workshops, especially women, housewives or workers in rural areas.

Nonetheless, as per the latest key figures by the PCBS (2017), the number of enterprises working in crafts in Palestine was 479 with a total output of USD 24,574,000.00. These enterprises employ 772 workers. As for creative and artistic activities, there were 2061 activities with an output of USD 99,957,000.00 employing 4688 people. In total, there were 5,167 employees working in these industries and they generate a total value of USD 124,531,000.00 which represents approximately %18.5 of the GDP. This is in Palestine including Bethlehem – however, there is no specific data by the PCBS on Bethlehem.

On the other hand, the head of the Traditional and Tourism Industries Association in Palestine mentioned that %70 of craft workshops productions are exported to different countries mainly the US, Germany, Arab countries and Austria. Unfortunately, he could not provide the total amount of sales due to unavailability of data. However, the association mentioned an example of the total sales in Expo Dubai in 2022-2021 only that reached USD 200,000.

On the other hand, the 2020 annual report of the BCCI indicated that there was a drop in exports

compared with 2019 in all sectors, mainly due to COVID19- pandemic. As for the handicraft, the export value was USD 120,194.25 which is an average of %1.10 of total exports in Palestine – noting that this does not include export to Israel and EU countries. Hence, we can conclude from the association’s example above of Expo Dubai and the figures provided by the BCCI that indeed such industries do bring income to their owners/workers and do contribute to the GDP of Palestine. However, no accurate data is available.

Despite the fact that comprehensive figures and data with regards to CCIs’ social and employment contribution is missing, yet according to UNCTAD report, employment rates in CCIs normally account to around 2 to 8 % of the workforce in the economy depending on the scope of the sector and policies of the region. Furthermore, based on the focus group discussions, the different segments groups (individuals and institutions) have an average number of employed persons between 2 to 20 employees, the majority of whom are women mainly working in embroidery and crafts.

Additionally, as per the latest PCBS statistics in 2017, the number of operating establishments and employed persons in the private sector, non-governmental organization sector and government companies in Bethlehem Governorate in creatives industries consist of %80 of total sectors, and the number of employees within this sector is %66 of total employed persons in the various sectors. Additional data provided by the Traditional and Tourism Industries Association indicated that the number of crafts workshops in Bethlehem area is 440 workshops, with employment that varies between 2 to 4 employees per workshop, resulting that at least 1600 persons obtain their source of income from the crafts sector.

In light of the above, it can be concluded that there is a somewhat significant social impact of the creative industries as a result to their contribution to employment. It is hence clear that the creative industries are an essential element that boosts economic and employment opportunities especially for women and young people. However, this sector needs to be more organized and supported – including data collection – so as to be able to better assess their needs and challenges and hence provide the proper support for their growth and sustainability.

VIII. CHALLENGES OF CULTURAL CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN BETHLEHEM

Regardless of the different segments of the CCIs, it seems that they all share the same challenges as mentioned by some of the interviewed stakeholders which was also reaffirmed during the Symposium that was organized by Bethlehem Municipality on the 24th of May 2022 on CCIs in Bethlehem. These challenges vary in nature and impact, and range from the political level, legal framework and policy level, to challenges regarding available infrastructure, services, human and financial resources, marketing, in addition to securing affordable raw materials. This section of the report provides a list of challenges that are facing CCIs at the different levels.

Israeli Occupation Policies on Restriction of Movement

CCIs, similar to all other sectors and industries in Palestine, fall victims to the Israeli policies especially in terms of restriction on movement locally and internationally. The Israeli policies that force the fragmentation and isolation of Jerusalem from the West Bank and Gaza, its complete siege over the Gaza Strip, and complete control of borders, leave Palestinians separated by checkpoints and the apartheid wall, and isolate them from the rest of the world. As a result, these restrictions affect the freedom of movement of artists, artisans and cultural practitioners within the West Bank and East Jerusalem, in and out of Gaza, and also their ability to travel abroad, which ultimately hinders the ability of artisans, artists and cultural practitioners to sell, perform, share, market or promote their productions (crafts, music, theater and dance ...etc.). The aforementioned restrictions also hinder Palestinian cultural practitioners of all forms and backgrounds from normal integration, interaction, exchange and engagement in international cultural activities and events abroad due to the Israeli control over borders. At the same time, the entrance of international artists and cultural practitioners to Palestine can also be challenging, which reduces the chances of exchanging experiences and knowledge, hence hindering the development of CCIs.

Legal Framework and Policies

There is a set of outdated laws and regulations that govern the sector as a whole, especially since the PA and the Palestinian Legislative Council have not worked on amending laws in harmony of international conventions. The Copyrights and Related Rights Law, also called the Intellectual Property Law, passed the fourth reading by the Cabinet of Ministers and now, pending the endorsement of the president. Additionally, many of the legal frameworks managed and implemented by the MoTA, MoNE and MoC, the three main reference for the CCIs, are outdated and in need of revisions and updating.

Another challenge that is linked to the legal framework and policies is the complex rules and procedures imposed by MoNE on new businesses that hinder the development of these creative industries and hence their sustainability . This is even more complex to NGOs that are supporting these creative industries. For example, these NGOs cannot obtain revolving cash credit account from the bank to support their operation just for being an NGO. These complex policies lead to the reluctance of artisans to register their businesses in the MoNE.

According to the Bethlehem Fair Trade data, an average of %40 of artisans are not registered at the ministry.

Lack of protection mechanisms for local productions and the open market policies that the PA adopts, lead to lower prices of imported goods especially from India and China in terms of crafts. This has a tremendous negative impact on the competitive ability of Palestinian crafts. The MoNE, which is the main reference on this, has a minimal role in passing protective measures like increasing taxes on imported goods.

Governance and Management:

One of the most challenging aspects of the CCIs in Palestine is the absence of an umbrella that sets national strategies, policies and interventions that support the flourishing of this sector. At the institutional level, CCIs are scattered across three ministries, and either function under multiple unions or there is an overall absence of a governing body like the music and art industries for example. This scattering hinders any serious developmental efforts, which eventually imposes challenges on economic sustainability of this sector. This was very apparent during the COVID19-outbreak that resulted in devastating economic implications due to the lengthy lockdown periods, especially with the absence of an official body or union that could have supported and protected cultural practitioners, artisans and artists, and lobbied on their behalf.

Moreover, there is weak coordination and division of roles between the main stakeholders that manage this sector, especially in Bethlehem, where many of the CCIs' segment are present. For example, the MoTA has a prominent role in following up with hotels, tour guides and souvenir shops, but since the capacity of the MoTA is limited in terms of observers and supervisors, the supervision on tour guides is not sufficient [which occasionally leads to the guides' requests of high commissions from museums and other attractions].

Additionally, the supervision on the quality of books, booklets (that do not support the Palestinian narrative) and crafts (falsely labeled as made in Palestine while they are actually made in China for example) that are sold in souvenir shops is also insufficient. On the other hand, this important role is not mandated to the Bethlehem Municipality for example or any other umbrella that can take responsibility for this oversight, rather it falls under MoTA's responsibility. This is but an example of many others spotted on the different fields that fall under CCIs, which definitely show how CCIs in Bethlehem can go unprotected, unsustainable and undeveloped.

On another front, there is insufficient capitalization on the many cities' twinning agreements that the Bethlehem Municipality has. Such agreements can be utilized as solid basis that can connect Bethlehem and its cultural productions with other similar producers and industries. Noting that there is more than 100 twinning between Bethlehem Municipality and other cities around the world, ensuring the exposure of the Bethlehemite artists, artisans and cultural practitioners to those from twin cities could serve as a bridge to market, to learn and to further develop these industries through these connections.

Another main weakness that can be categorized under governance and management is the absence of accurate and complete data. The research team struggled to get numbers, figures and facts about CCIs in Palestine in general, and Bethlehem city in particular. A main reason for this lack of data is the fact that not all individuals working in the CCIs are registered. As mentioned earlier, this is mainly due to the fact that individuals and small businesses are afraid to have their businesses or enterprises registered to avoid having to pay taxes and costly fees. On the other hand, data can be scattered among the various stakeholders and bodies overseeing the different details and aspects related to CCIs.

Services and Infrastructure:

The main attractions of Bethlehem are located in the old part of the city, which is characterized by narrow streets and limited parking spaces. Thus, Bethlehem residents are often hesitant to come to the Manger Square or to Star Street, mainly due to the lack of cleanliness, enough parking spaces, proper lighting and the feeling of insufficient security. Additionally, there are not enough signs in the old city that give sufficient directions to visitors leading them to where they are trying to reach, whether museums, cultural centers, etc....

Another challenge related to infrastructure and services is the unavailability of dedicated, known and accessible showrooms for local and foreign visitors to showcase the work of local artists and cultural practitioners.

Moreover, there is no annual calendar of events available to artisans and artists that includes and clarifies in details all the activities and festivities that they could participate in, to show, present promote and markets their works. This negatively impacts their planning and preparation for such activities, and makes their involvement in such events difficult and challenging.

Human and Financial Resources:

The lack of financial resources is one of the main obstacles that hinders the flourishing of CCIs. On one hand, this is due to insufficient and limited budgets allocated to culture and creative industries at the national and governorate levels for the three ministries involved in CCIs. On the other hand, newly-imposed donor policies, especially those linked to conditional funding that many organizations refuse to adhere to, creates another layer that limits the financial resources available for this sector.

Moreover, the high cost of raw materials whether for crafts such as mother of pearl and olivewood, or for fashion design to mention a few examples, constitute a challenge for artisans and designers, which ultimately leads to increasing the production cost, making them less competitive than imported cheaper products.

The last two years of COVID19- Pandemic had a specific and significant negative impact on Bethlehem and its economy. Tourism was enormously affected and hence sales suffered immensely. In addition, no support was provided to the CCIs by any governmental body or local authority. Such significant impact on their economic situation is still deepening during the lack of tourism, and there is a very good possibility that such economic hardship could cause people relying on tourism for their livelihoods not to recover at all.

Human resources working in the different CCIs is yet another challenge, whether in terms of knowledge, skills or number. There is lack of academic resources/trainers for certain crafts and skills in order to save it from diminishing – an example is the lack of trainer for icon drawing and sculpture, which are part of Bethlehem's craft industry for hundreds of years. Additionally, and due to the political and social context, and limited opportunities and independent funding for film makers, many talented and professional film makers left the country (immigrated) looking for a better opportunity. Similarly, certain industries, like performing arts and western music, require

employing and exploiting international experts to enhance local capacities, yet the entrance of internationals to the country is controlled by the Israeli authorities. This renders their presence in Palestine dependent on Israeli policies that usually allows the presence of musicians, and internationals in general, for a few months only.

The lack of human resources was exasperated by the COVID19- pandemic where people working in the CCIs were hit the most. During the lockdown, people had to close their workshops and left their jobs in the touristic industry and went to work inside the green line (Israel) with much higher income than they used to make. Now it is challenging for them to go back to invest in the creative sector.

Marketing and Creating Audience:

A major challenge that faces local artisans, artists and cultural practitioners in Palestine in general is the lack of marketing opportunities for their productions whether at the local or international levels. The local markets, even though they provide a good opportunity for the artists to sell their products, they remain very limited. Thus, artisans, cultural practitioners and artists naturally aspire to enter international markets. However, entering international markets is not something that individuals can access on their own and require support from large organizations and networks like the BCCI, the Bethlehem Municipality (through twinning agreements), unions and the government. However, a big portion of artists, artisans and cultural practitioners are not part of these unions, hubs and networks.

Another challenge for performing arts and film making is establishing a local audience that is interested and also willing to pay for these shows and films. For the last three decades the performing art sector is mostly run by nonprofit organizations or companies that depended on funded projects to develop, produce and present a specific production. This means that most of the performances are provided for free to the various audiences, which hinders nurturing of a culture of paying money to attend a specific production, hence reducing awareness of the importance of supporting and promoting such an approach. Thus, it is more accurate to call performing arts in Palestine as a cultural and artistic sector instead of an industry that generates income.

On the other hand, for filmmaking for example, most Palestinian films handle Palestinian daily life and its complexity and tragedy caused by the occupation, and thus such stories are not of interest, and sometimes even repulsive to the local audience who live and experience these daily events. Therefore, people prefer to go to the cinema to watch other entertaining films. This limits the screening for Palestinian films in local or international film festivals, or at local cultural organizations. This by itself has a negative impact on the economic sustainability of this industry.

Networking and Coordination:

With the scattering of the CCIs across many networks and official institutions, as discussed above, proper coordination and networking becomes essential. However, one of the challenges that faces this industry is the absence of interest in cooperation on more than one level. The first is between the different crafts and cultural practitioners to jointly design and manage activities.

While the second level is between the crafters and designers. This hinders the development of cultural goods and products that would meet today's customer demand and gain a competitive edge in local and international markets with modern designs and up-to-date productions.

Another challenge related to networking and coordination is the lack of social harmony among the different creative industry members, as some don't know each other or their work, which reduces the collaboration between the artists of the different creative industries segments. There is also a lack of coordination and synergies between the different segments of CCIs and the subgroups within each segment. However, even if they have the will to work with each other, there is no driving body to lead this coordination (ad hoc committees or networks).

IX. OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN BETHLEHEM

Despite the challenges and the current reality of CCIs in Palestine in general and Bethlehem specifically elaborated above, there are a number of opportunities that the different stakeholders can build on to flourish and advance CCIs in the city. The opportunities presented in this section are linked to the positioning of Bethlehem city, the richness and diversity of its CCIs, policies, procedures and opportunities offered by official institutions and the positive role that Bethlehem Municipality can play.

Bethlehem as a city is an opportunity of its own: in addition to the touristic and religious importance of the city, it has also become a center for the West Bank's southern governorates, at least on a cultural level due to its somewhat liberal lifestyle. This importance has turned Bethlehem into an attraction for local and international tourists. The touristic importance of the city is a driver for development to CCIs that are highly linked with tourism, especially in the Palestinian case. This encourages international organizations, foundations and the government to invest more in the city's CCIs and support their flourishing.

Richness of the CCIs available in Bethlehem City: there is uniqueness and richness in the city's CCIs, which is evident in the many crafts that are specific to the city, the availability of workshops, facilities, academic institutions, skilled workers and marketing opportunities at the local level despite the limited support. This richness constitutes an opportunity to invest in this sector as a whole; an improvement in one aspect gradually leads to improving the sector as an entirety.

Official institutions' interest in reviving the CCIs in Palestine in general and Bethlehem in particular: This interest can be seen in the work done by the MoNE and the MoC. There are many interventions that the MoNE undertook and is also currently working on to support all industries, including creative industries, and some are related particularly to traditional heritage. The most prominent of these activities and interventions is leading the comprehensive economic reform program to improve businesses and provide appropriate environment for carrying out economic activities.

Moreover, the MoNE laid the foundation for the Indian Palestinian Center for the Empowerment of Women 'Turathee (My Heritage)'. This center aims to support and empower women and youth, and aspires to find solutions to the challenges Palestinian women and youth entrepreneurs face in business management due to the lack of knowledge and necessary expertise, including technical, administrative and financial aspects of project management.

On the other hand, the MoC has an increasing interest in CCIs, and this is reflected in the establishment of a new General Directorate within its structure in support of CCIs. The General Directorate of Cultural Industries is assigned to serve cultural industries and to encourage investment in this sector. The Directorate has three main departments: Cultural Enhancement and Empowerment, Cultural Products Marketing and Cultural Incubators.

Opportunities and facilities available from the Bethlehem Municipality

Bethlehem Municipality is one of the active municipalities in term of CCIs, which organizes several cultural activities that brings together a big number of artists from different area, such as the yearly Christmas celebrations that extend for about of two months, the diaspora convention, Palestine's Marathon, the several cultural activities along the year, and the cultural productions like operates, theatrical performances and so.

In addition to that, Bethlehem Municipality owns several advantages, facilities and venues that constitute a prominent part of the cultural scene of the city. In order to enhance the cultural life and enhance the prosperity of creative industries in the city, Bethlehem Municipality can capitalize on the following attractions and opportunities:

Bethlehem Peace Center (BPC): Established in 1999 and located in Manger Square, the BPC is a cultural center that offers many services to different sectors of the society. It houses a Tourist Information Center, a book and gift store and a museum, and it hosts various cultural events including exhibitions, concerts, festivals, workshops, specialty courses and film screenings. BPC plays an important role in local and international tourism; however, a number of initiatives and actions are required to enhance this role.

For international tourism, it is important to capitalize on the large number of international tourists and pilgrims that visit the BPC daily by enhancing its positioning as a one-stop- shop for tourists through investing in the already existing Information Center by including updated maps of all the locations and attractions, guidebooks on what can be done in Bethlehem as a city and in the governorate, in addition to a calendar of events that are of interest to both locals and internationals, including alternative tourism activities among other things in several languages. These maps, guidebooks and calendars can be transformed and integrated in online digital platforms that are accessible for all.

The BPC, as an entry point to tourists, can also support the promotion of Bethlehem as a city and the prosperity of many of its various creative industries. As such, it is important to take advantage of open area in the lobby of the BPC to display short films and performances (7-5

minutes) that shed light on the city of Bethlehem, its history, religious value, creative industries and attractions. The performances can include light-and-sound shows and opera productions on the story of Christmas. The films can also include performances from local artists, bands and groups that the Bethlehem Municipality commissions.

Moreover, the BPC can provide a hub and platform for all handicrafts especially the ones Bethlehem is famous for; mother of pearl, jewelry, olivewood crafts, fashion and embroidery. Thus, the facilities within the center can include a souvenir shop and/or a display area that provides a space for several creative industries to be displayed and promoted for sale for local and international visitors.

The BPC, in addition to its museum and indoor auditorium, has a rooftop that overlooks the city of Bethlehem and can host seasonal activities and festivals. These activities and festivals can be organized in partnership and coordination with local creative industries' operators, including performing artists, fashion designers and artisans. An annual calendar of festivals and activities can be developed and organized in collaboration with artists and cultural practitioners, and shared on different online and offline platforms for visibility and promotion. The Bethlehem Municipality can coordinate for ad-hoc councils for these events where such councils could bring onboard several relevant stakeholders including representative from the different creative industries participating in the festivals / activities, designers and artists to elaborate the themes of these proposed festivals or events, in addition to the Bethlehem Municipality that can coordinate for logistics, parking spaces and security. It is also important to have a fixed program of weekly or monthly activities so that people can learn and be informed about when and what is happening.

The BPC can also host seasonal activities that promote different creative industries. For example, the BPC can host and organize a Fashion Week during which several Palestinian and international designers can participate to show their designs, which provides local designers an opportunity for exposure. Another seasonal activity can be designed around specialty food and cuisine that Bethlehem is famous for around certain times of the year.

Additionally, the BPC can host the annual Christmas Market in its indoor facilities since most of the participants in the research commented on the cold weather that prevented many people from participating in the latest market organized in the vicinity of Star Street.

The Manger Square: the Manger Square is one of the top attractions in Bethlehem city and is usually the site of many religious and national events throughout the year. Located in the heart of Bethlehem's Old City, and surrounded by the 4th century Church of Nativity; Church of St. Catherine; the Mosque of Omar; Bethlehem Municipality building; souvenir stores and the BPC, the Manger Square is the center for the majority of touristic activities, and the starting point of most Bethlehem tours. It is important to capitalize on this importance not only for religious activities but also as a place for traditional and artistic festivals (Bethlehem Nights) and open bazars and markets. This cannot be planned however without taking into consideration the time/ type of events, security measures and parking spaces or transportation alternatives through

networks with surrounding schools and institutes that have parking spaces.

Another main activity that can promote creative industries in the city is the organization of an annual market that ensures the participation of artisans and artists from Bethlehem and the surrounding cities. The market can host traditional crafts and handicrafts, where the Bethlehem Municipality can introduce the richness, diversity and aesthetics of the Palestinian cultural heritage to the Palestinian public, which also contributes to encouraging handicrafts, promoting and protecting it from theft and disappearance. The market can also host performances by local artists, theaters and performers to support the municipality's efforts in creating a lively social cultural atmosphere in the Old City, and provide additional attractions for the public. The market, similar to Al-Harajeh Market in Ramallah, can be organized to take place once a week (Friday or Saturday) over several weeks during the Spring/Summer seasons to take advantage of the good weather and the limited number of international tourists that visit the city apart from the Christmas season.

The organization for such a market requires proper coordination and networking among several relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to, representative of creative industries, performing artists, and nearby facilities and institutions that can provide parking spaces for visitors. Invitation to participate in the market can be done through open calls to local creative industries based on a pre-set criteria that goes along with the Municipality's vision and mission. The Municipality can also capitalize on its wide network and good relations with artists and social media influencers that have a large number of followers to promote the market.

Star Street (Al Nijmeh): In 2012, the Church of the Nativity and Star Street were included on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites under the name 'Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem'. Old residential buildings define the route that is believed that Mary and Joseph took to approach the Grotto of the Nativity when Jesus was born. Historically, the Star Street was a bustling spot in the heart of Bethlehem with nearly 100 shops selling almost everything – from groceries and meat to antique items and souvenirs. Over the last twenty years, and due to political turmoil, many of these shops closed, and the value the street once had started to decline. During the past 2 decades, several attempts were put in place to restore and attempt revive the street and its economic contribution to Bethlehem by transforming it into a touristic attraction and a tourist gateway to the city of Bethlehem. However, the street comes to life only for a short period of time during the Christmas season, and through some summer activities, the latest of which was the Christmas Market organized by Bethlehem Municipality during December 2021.

It was apparent from the interviews and discussions with different stakeholders that the prosperity of the Star Street is facing many challenges. Some of these challenges are due to infrastructure problems and shortage in electricity supply to all shops, availability of nearby parking spaces, the resistance and fear of the street's residents to lose their privacy and safety, in addition to economic and financial hurdles. This is coupled with the limited role, as seen by the residents, of the Bethlehem Municipality in providing financial incentives, or fees and taxes' exemptions, in

addition to the fact that the municipality does not own any of the shops or facilities in the street which could facilitate their functioning and operation.

In order for the Bethlehem Municipality to capitalize on the potential of Star Street as a major attraction point within the city of Bethlehem, for both local (Palestinians from the 1967 and 1948) and international tourists, it is important to learn from other similar experiences around the world that managed to revive old neighborhoods into touristic attractions that contribute significantly to the local economy. Bethlehem Municipality can lead efforts in transforming the Star Street into a commercial street which is defined as a road or corridor lined with shops providing a range of options and business, shopping and services, which attract tourists and offer entertainment by the vitality of its commercial activities. However, the Municipality will have to work strategically on this development project and engage all relevant stakeholders including the private sector and the residents themselves to work holistically on reviving the street all year round as a major attraction in Palestine, focusing on aspects that build on the religious specificity of the city, but also beyond that.

Several steps can be taken by the municipality over several years starting with the development of a comprehensive plan that takes into account the feedback from residents and the participants in the Christmas Market. The plan should give considerable attention to setting the foundation with the residents of Star Street to get their buy-in and support. This step is crucial to ensure the success of the project, and to open dialogue with the residents on their expectations and role in the success of such an initiative. Once the local residents are onboard and ready to transform and revive their street, it is important for the Municipality to play an active role in opening the empty shops and utilizing them for different businesses:

- It is important to work on the branding of the street by focusing on the authenticity of the city through selling authentic products (food and spices), with proper marketing to focus on the uniqueness of the products sold like hareeseh, simsimiyeh, Salesian bread, spices...
- Linking local shop owners with successful businesses from the private sector, facilitates the rental process and provides protection for landlords. Successful businesses can include well known restaurants, wineries, coffee shops and other traditional industries that can form a major attraction for the residents of Bethlehem and tourists. For example, the businesses can include; Philokia Wine, Afteem Restaurant, Sabat Arak, Cremisan Wine among others.
- Supporting creative industries and artisans to open workshops in which they can produce create their pieces and display their productions for sale.
- Connecting all the attractions along the street together; restaurants, hotels, shops and festivals, and include proper coordination and networking among the different artists and creative industries.

Twin Cities

Twin Cities, known as sister, twin, or partner cities, twining is a legal or social agreement between cities, towns, or even whole geographical areas that reinforces cultural and commercial ties. Since the 2000s, the ties are often used to encourage trade and tourism, or to strengthen strategic business links between the twin towns. To do so, cities often seek out partners that match their

characteristics. Therefore, sister or twin cities don't necessarily only look good on paper, but might actually help boosting respective profiles and economic ties.

Bethlehem Municipality has twinning agreements with almost 100 cities all over the world. The twinning of two cities extends beyond the official relationship between these municipalities to include institutions and centers from both cities. Thus, it is very important for Bethlehem municipality to capitalize on this large number of twinning agreements to promote and support creative industries in Bethlehem. Therefore, it is recommended that a specific section for the promotion of creative industries and cultural life is added to the twinning agreements to allow cultural centers and creative industries in Bethlehem to benefit from these agreements in various ways:

Educational exchange that could include participation in exchange programs, capacity building opportunities for artists and designers. It is important to connect and open opportunities for creative industries in Bethlehem to connect with similar sectors within the twin cities, such as the participation of artists from Bethlehem in residency programs offered by the twin cities or vice versa, or to allow artists, designers and people involved in creative industries to enroll in capacity building programs offered in twin cities and that are of interest to these artists.

Raising international profile of Bethlehem: Twinning agreements assist authorities to promote their city's profiles to international and local audiences, which in turn contributes to local tourism as it informs the local population of their own city's international standing. Economic benefits: Long-term partnerships and twinning agreements give local companies more opportunities to assess the key strength of each other's markets, and to identify relevant market needs and demands. Another economic advantage of twinning is its ability to connect key decision makers between two cities. Thus, these twinning agreements can play a key role in the promotion of Bethlehem's cultural productions through participating in markets and bazars that the twin city organizes either seasonally or year-round.

Financial sustainability for cultural activities within the municipality. It is important to allocate a fixed amount of money (1000-500 euros for example) on an annual basis from each twin city. This amount can contribute to feeding a cultural fund run by the public relations department at the Municipality which can be open for donations from the private sector and other donor agencies, international cooperation, the diaspora and others. The Municipality could also appoint coordinator (from this fund) to lead the development of the cultural plan, procurement processes, networking with the different stakeholders and overseeing the calendar of events proposed earlier. The coordinator can also be responsible for the exchange program within the twinning agreements with other municipalities; training workshops specified in different clusters, exhibitions, bazars and festivals, residencies and other opportunities that the twin cities could offer.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

This research clearly demonstrated the significance of the city of Bethlehem on the religious and cultural arenas and provided insights on the reality of the CCIs, the key stakeholders, challenges and opportunities available. The city of Bethlehem is famous for the uniqueness of some of its creative industries like olivewood carving, mother of pearl crating, embroidery among other sectors. Moreover, the creative industry has become an interesting strategic sector to boost competitiveness, productivity, employment and sustainable economic growth. Thus, in order to promote the creative industries sector, it is recommended that all stakeholders work strategically and comprehensively in some areas, amend practical procedures in other areas and build on existing opportunities mentioned in the report. This section presents a number of recommendations that need to be read in tandem with the sections above.

Coordination and networking among the different stakeholders

- Lobbying towards reforming the governing legal framework with support from relevant stakeholders, including CSOs and unions.
- Ensuring that the proposals developed and funding received corresponds to the provisions of UNESCO's cultural conventions that were ratified by the PA after joining UNESCO 2011, where attention could be given to the economic value of CCIs.
- The development of a master plan to engage all stakeholders in the development and revitalization of CCIs in Bethlehem city.
- Networking with hotels to bring tourists to attend shows that are developed by local artists.
- Bethlehem Municipality can play a leading role in coordinating the different CCIs segments based on the opportunities discussed in details below:
 - Creation of ad-hoc councils for major events that the municipality or the Cultural Advisory Council plan to organize, such as the Christmas Market or Bethlehem Nights that could be hosted in the Start Street or the BPC. These councils may include several relevant stakeholders including representative from the creative industries participating in the festivals, designers and artists who can contribute to proposing the themes of the events, while the municipality can coordinate for logistics, parking spaces and security.
 - Networking with other institutes that have facilities and that are willing to host and support the Municipality's activities
 - Planning for joint activities and festivals where more than one sector participates in. This can help enhancing the ownership among these creative industries, build on their experiences and provide equal opportunities for all. Partnership programs can give artists the opportunity to work with like-minded artists in harmony, and encourage partnerships and exchange among the different sectors and communities.
 - Work jointly with the Cultural Advisory Council that is currently developing a new inclusive plan for the cultural sector.

Providing reliable data on CCIs in Palestine and Bethlehem in particular.

- A mapping study should be conducted in coordination with the PCBS specifically for CCIs in Bethlehem and other governorates in Palestine. In order to contribute to the 36

future advancement of the industries and their sustainability, serious efforts are needed to map CCIs' key figures in order to measure and track their performance and allow for proper planning.

- A complete study on the economic contribution of CCIs in the GDP, tackling the total number of workshops, the total number of people working in the sector and so on. The study should also take into consideration the economic value on direct and indirect beneficiaries. For example, when there is a festival, the direct economic benefit goes to the main art performers, but there are also indirect beneficiaries such as hotels, taxis and buses, restaurants, to mention a few, that without doubt influence the economic value generated from CCIs.

- Promoting creative industries and activities

- All relevant stakeholders can play an active role in promoting creative industries in the city within their contacts and networks with diplomatic missions and other municipalities....

- Utilizing a modern marketing strategy in which the Municipality and other stakeholders rely on social influencers and local artists that have a large number of followers on social media platforms to promote certain events or activities that the Municipality is sponsoring or organizing.

- The creation of a virtual showroom on the Municipality's website for the creative industries, in addition to data and information including bios and portfolios (digital catalogue) for artists, with samples for their work, digital catalogue and portfolios.

- Working on the promotion of Bethlehem city guidebook implemented by BCCI; which is an interactive smartphone application that includes all attractions within the Bethlehem Governorate.

- Engaging the creative industries in developing of weekly events; music, coral, dabkeh or Palestinian films, targeting pilgrims and tourists. These events can be added to a calendar (hard or soft copy) to be shared with tourists in partnership with the hotels, where tourists can buy tickets for these events for symbolic fees (ranging from 10-5 dollars). This will also expand the role of hotels in promoting CCIs.

- Including endangered practices, such as mother of pearl and olive carving, in UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in need of Urgent Safeguarding, in partnership with the MoC and other organizations

- In order to increase the diversity of the audience for certain activities and promote a more inclusive creative industry, it is important to encourage artists, bands and other forms of CCIs to take into account 1) the place and location of the activity so that it is convenient for all (clean, safe...), and 2) organizing activities in partnership with different sectors and communities so that to ensure the maximum outreach to the different audiences and communities.

Cultural management and financial resources within Bethlehem Municipality

- Due to the limited number of human resources within the Municipality to follow up on cultural activities, it is advisable that the Municipality maintains an overall management for events and activities, leaving the technical details of implementation to the artists and cultural practitioners. This will also enhance the sense of ownership among artists and

creative industries.

- Setting specific budget for cultural and creative activities from the Municipality's budget, and building on twinning agreements to secure more allocations. Additionally, it is recommended to create a Cultural Fund within the Municipality that is open for donations and sponsorships from the private sector.
- Improving the procurement process inside the Municipality to provide opportunities to a wider set of individuals and artists. This would also increase competitiveness among creative industries to provide higher quality productions and allow the municipality to work with a wider set of artists. Setting of an evaluation committee from representatives of creative industries, or the ad-hoc council could also support these efforts.
- Supporting youth directly as individuals (musicians, films makers, fashion designers and designers...).

Bethlehem Peace Center; infrastructure and working hours:

- Increasing the working hours of the BPC to extend beyond 3 pm since most activities take place in the afternoon or during weekends.
- Investing in the infrastructure in terms of sound system and lighting, and safety of the premises.
- Decentralizing decision making in terms of the center itself, apart from the municipality.
- Developing an annual calendar of events and capitalize on the opportunities highlighted in the above section.

Star Street revival and infrastructure

- The development of a comprehensive plan that takes into account the feedback from residents and the participants in the Christmas Market. The plan should give considerable attention to setting the foundation with the residents of Star Street to get their buy-in and support through working with key figures from the residents.
- Supporting shop owners with reduced fees and taxes for the first year.

ANNEX 1: TABLE OF PARTICIPANTS

	Sector	Participants	Date
1	Semi Structured Interviews with stakeholders		
1.1	Bethlehem Municipality	Carmen Ghattas Nicole Shomali	26/2/2022
1.2	Bethlehem Fair Trade Association	Susan Sahouri Shaden Abu Zulof	26/2/2022
1.3	Bethlehem Development Foundation	Dr. Kholoud Daibes	1/3/2022
1.4	Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce & Industry	Amjad Janazra	2/3/2022
1.5	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities	Osama Staiti G.D of tourism services	8/5/2022
1.6	Ministry of Culture	Yousef Tartouri G.D of Creative Industries department	25/4/2022
1.7	Ministry of National Economy	Rashad Yousef Director of Policies department	18/4/2022
1.8	Cultural Advisory Council	George Al Ama - Council Director	6/5/2022
1.9	Dar Al-Kalima University	Faten Nustas- Dean of Visual Art Dep. Dr. Nael Salman- Dean of Design dept.	10/5/2022
1.10	Traditional and Tourism Industries Association	Majed Abu Farha -Union Director	11/5/2022
2	Focus Group Meetings (individuals and organizations)		
2.1	Introductory session	Municipality and selected artists	15/2/2022
2.2	Creative Industries and Design	1. Bet women - a Pro Terra Sancta project - Ms. Ghada Hanna 2. Bethlehem Icon Center -Ms. Mona Khader 3. Bethlehem Mosaic Center - Mr. Khaldoun Balboul 4. Sandra Wadie - Fashion designer 5. Jabra Khoury - Fashion Designer 6. Fawzi Nustas - Artist	2/3/2022
2.3	Museums (religious -heritage -historical)	1. Baitouna Al Talhami Museum- Ms. Helen Samaan and Ms. Faten 2. Palestine Heritage Center- Ms. Maha Al Saqqqa 3. International Nativity Museum- Father Laurence 4. Al Bad Museum for olive oil -Ms. Eman Moghrabi	1/3/2022
2.4	Performing Arts	1. Diyar Academy for Children and Youth - Ms. May Hadweh 2. Dalal Institution of Culture and Arts- Nelly NemeH 3. Bethlehem Academy of Music - Dr. Suleiman Loussy and Dr. Samir Baddour	10/3/2022
2.5	CCIs Symposium	Representatives from Municipality, UNESCO, MoC, BCCI, BDF, diplomatic missions and artists and crafters.	24/5/2022
3	In-Depth Interviews		
3.1	Al Hara theatre	Marina Barham	1/3/2022
3.2	Cultural Department- Ramallah Municipality	Sally Abu Baker	19/3/2022
3.3	Historian and former Bethlehem councilor	Khalil Shokeh	19/3/2022
3.4	Piccirillo - Craft Center	Samer Baboun	2/3/2022
3.5	RJ production company	John Handal	7/3/2022
3.6	Independent Film Maker	Tamara Abu Laban	9/3/2022
3.7	Cultural activist and municipality council member	Lucy Thaljiyeh	9/3/2022

ANNEX 2: INTERVENTIONS DONE BY MONE AND MOC TO REVIVE CCIS

There are many interventions that the MoNE undertook and is also currently working on, some of which are partially global in nature to support all the industries including creative industries, and some are particularly specific to the traditional heritage industries. The most prominent of these activities and interventions are:

1. The MoNE is leading a comprehensive economic reform program to improve businesses and provide the appropriate environment for carrying out economic activities.

The MoNE had laid the foundation stone for the Indian Palestinian Center for the Empowerment of Women ‘Turathee (My Heritage)’. This center aims to support and empower women and youth and attempts to find solutions to the challenges that Palestinian women and youth entrepreneurs face in business management due to the lack of knowledge and necessary expertise, including technical, administrative and financial aspects of project management. The center also aims to support women and small enterprises in CCIs to enhance competitive production, helping artists and artisans to design their unique identities that are derived from Palestinian heritage, to ensure competitiveness in local and international markets.

The MoNE also:

- Launched a project to provide a grant for women's projects affected by the COVID19-pandemic.
- Established the ‘Khaitan’ Center, in the Jenin and Gaza Governorates. The center aims to strengthen and support the clothing and textile sector by enhancing training capabilities in the field of fashion design and everything related to this field.
- Launched the Excellence Award for women's products in traditional industries sector.
- Organized two bazaars with the slogan of ‘Insistence to continue the journey’, for women's products. Approximately 75 women participated in each bazaar working in various industrial sectors, including traditional crafts.
- Prepared to launch a women e-souq website to support the marketing of women's home industrial products.

The General Directorate of Cultural Industries was recently established within the MoC’s structure. This department is assigned to serve cultural industries and to encourage investment in this sector that depends on human creativity and the ability to develop new and innovative solutions and ideas based on imagination and creativity (art).

These industries produce innovative tangible and intangible artworks in the traditional and modern fields and do in fact achieve financial return. They include music, performing arts, advertising, graphics, contemporary cinema, architecture, crafts, furniture design and clothing, provided that the said industries have an identity, contain art and have the ability to produce cognitively.

In light of the above, the MoC established the General Directorate for the purpose of supporting and encourage cultural industries and the investment in culture being an important pillar of comprehensive development in Palestine. Currently this unit will be forming a single committee representing all concerned authorities whose interests and responsibilities intersect in the field of cultural industries, in order to reach a formula that serves the government's directions in supporting and encouraging cultural industries. Noting that until today, there is no mapping studies done on these industries yet and this could be done by the General Directorate mentioned above.

Objectives of the General Directorate:

1. Investing in culture, with the objective of making it one of the pillars of comprehensive development in Palestine.
2. Developing policies that encourage projects in the field of culture.
3. Shedding light on youth, and creating a stimulating environment for them to support their talents and establish their cultural projects.
4. Promote cultural products to compete locally and globally.

In addition, it should be noted that the MoC had as well laid the following infrastructure within its hierarchy so as to support these industries. The following details the efforts of the MoC:

1. Department of Cultural Enhancement and Empowerment:

This department aims to provide a stimulating environment for cultural activity by developing local policies that encourage the cultural sector and networking with local community institutions, especially those working in youth and women empowerment sectors. This department consists of the following sections:

- Cultural Industries Promotion Department: Establishing basic laws and legislation related to cultural industries; Networking with institutions and bodies working in the field of cultural industries; Supporting and assisting youth in designing the implementation of their projects related to cultural industries.
- TrainingandRehabilitationDepartment:Formingaspecialtrainingprograminthefields of cultural industries for youth in partnership with local and international institutions; Holding workshops on cultural industries in universities and vocational training centers.

2. Cultural Products Marketing Department:

- Cultural Product Protection Section: Develop policies and legislation that contribute to the protection of local cultural products; setting specifications and standards for Palestinian cultural products.
- Promotion Department: Utilizing modern promotions methods through social networking sites away from traditional methods. In addition to organizing digital exhibitions and producing documentaries on cultural industries.

3. The Department of Cultural Incubators:

It aims to establish cultural incubators in partner institutions, cities, villages and camps in order to encourage cultural industries and provide the necessary infrastructure for cultural incubators to ensure their sustainability. Its mission is to introduce cultural incubators, their importance and role in protecting the Palestinian identity and cultural heritage.

Furthermore, this department chooses the places in which the cultural incubators will be established. It also assists in enhancing the work of cultural incubators by providing the necessary theaters, halls and spaces while developing plans for the development of cultural incubators. In addition, it coordinates with the local community and the private sector in order to enhance the work of incubators and improve their performance.

