



## **TAMKEEN**

**West Bank and Gaza Civil Society and Democracy  
Strengthening Project**

# **Impact Assessment of Al-Quds University's Center for Development in Primary Health Care**

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### **About the Evaluators**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Civil Society and Democracy Strengthening project known as Tamkeen is a five-year, USAID-funded initiative working to boost the participation of Palestinian civil society organizations (CSOs) in public discourse. Tamkeen provides grants and technical assistance to CSOs that advocate on behalf of the communities they serve and promote public discourse in areas such as civic education, the environment, and human rights.

Tamkeen is built on USAID’s Strategic Objective (SO) 3, which seeks to promote “more responsive and accountable governance.” Under SO 3, Intermediate Result (IR) 3.1 calls for the “increased participation of CSOs in public discourse.” IR 3.1 has three sub-IRs:

- IR 3.1.1: “increased capacity of CSOs to participate in public discourse”
- IR 3.1.2: “CSOs effectively aggregate and articulate citizen issues”
- IR 3.1.3: “CSOs effectively disseminate information to citizens on public issues”

To satisfy SO 3 and its IRs, Tamkeen awards grants in a number of sectors, including the environment and education. Al-Quds University’s Center for Development in Primary Health Care (CDPHC) received two grants under that category to improve public health and environmental conditions in 12 Palestinian villages. Tamkeen commissioned the services of Dr. Shaheen and Dr. Jayyousi to assess the impact of the two grants.

The evaluators carried out documentation review and face-to-face interviews with CDPHC personnel, grant beneficiaries, community leaders, CSO representatives, and members of local government units. They conducted field visits in half of the villages targeted by the grants and reviewed impact in the remaining six villages through documentation review and interviews with project stakeholders.

Key findings of the study are:

- The two grants raised environmental awareness among the project village committees set up to implement grant-funded activities and, to a lesser extent, among village residents in general.
- The project village committees increased public participation in solving environmental problems, especially in villages where the committees were integrated with other CSOs.
- The two grants contributed to achieving USAID’s IRs, particularly IR 3.1.1 (“increased capacity of CSOs to participate in public discourse”) and IR 3.1.2 (“CSOs effectively aggregate and articulate citizen issues”).
- By and large, members of the project village committees and grant beneficiaries agree that the grants succeeded in raising community awareness of safe environmental practices.
- More than half of the 100 people interviewed said the grants raised environmental awareness and strengthened the role of women in society.

- The grants contributed to policy changes at the community level. However, this was not the case at the national level due to the political situation and the longer time span needed to institute reform on a national scale.

These findings suggest a number of improvements are needed to maximize the impact of similar activities in the future. Most importantly, the work of CDPHC should be expanded to raise environmental awareness among a larger audience, beyond individuals directly participating in project activities. In addition, a more concerted effort should be made to achieve the objectives of IR 3.1.3 by strengthening CSO capacity to effectively disseminate information to citizens on public issues.

## SECTION I

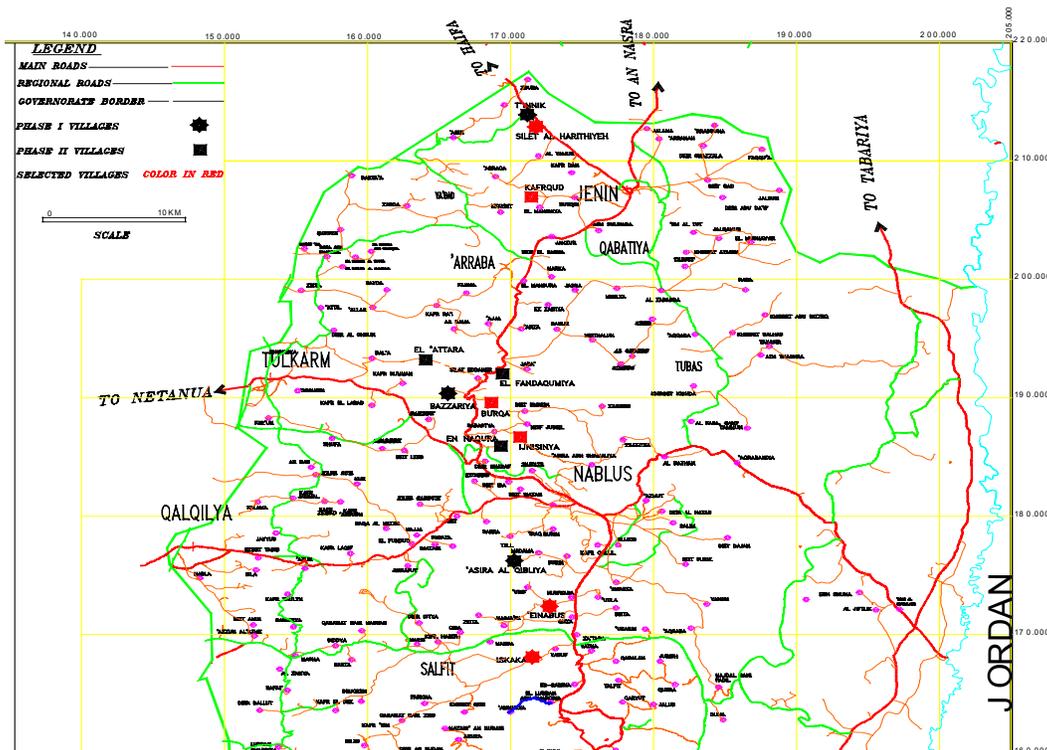
# Background and Objectives

### A. Description of the CDPHC Grants

Between 2001 and 2004, Tamkeen—the USAID-funded Civil Society and Democracy Strengthening project—awarded two grants to the Center for Development in Primary Health Care (CDPHC) at Al-Quds University to promote public health and sound environmental practices in local communities. The grants targeted 12 Palestinian villages facing severe environmental problems. The objective was to increase awareness of these problems and to mobilize local communities in finding solutions.

Each grant involved developing a report on environmental issues, preparing and distributing educational materials, establishing project village committees, training committee members, and organizing workshops, festivals, and other activities for village residents, including women and children. CDPHC implemented grant-funded activities in 12 northern West Bank villages spanning the districts of Jenin, Nablus, and Salfit. Exhibit 1 identifies the targeted villages and those selected for the impact assessment.

**Exhibit 1. Villages Targeted by the Two Grants and the Impact Assessment**



The first grant—“Village-Based Environmental Awareness”—was implemented from July 2001 through October 2002. The second—“Roles of Local Communities in Promoting Responsible Environmental Practices”—was carried out from January 2003 through February 2004. The two grants achieved the following:

- Established project village committees in the 12 target villages, mostly consisting of female members.
- Used participatory rapid appraisal methodology to collect information and write reports identifying environmental problems in the target villages. Members of the project village committees participated in the rapid appraisals and wrote the reports.
- Delivered training on environmental issues related to water, children's diseases, insects, and agriculture. Members of the project village committees and some community residents participated in the training.
- Prepared and distributed awareness-building and training materials, including posters, flipcharts, and stickers.
- Organized a festival in each village, focusing on environmental issues.

### **B. Objectives of the Impact Assessment**

The impact assessment sought to evaluate the extent to which the two grants succeeded in improving environmental education and awareness in the target villages based on data collection and analysis, site visits, and meetings with stakeholders. The study investigated the following questions:

- Did the two grants increase awareness of environmental problems and solutions among village residents? If so, how was this achieved?
- Did the grants increase public participation in efforts to solve environmental problems in the target villages? If so, how was this achieved?
- Did the CDPHC, local CSOs, and project participants have an impact on changing environmental policies or practices at the village level? At the regional level? At the national level? If so, what were these changes and how were they achieved?
- Have project participants, village committees, and local CSOs continued environmental advocacy and awareness-building efforts since the completion of the project? If yes, how was this achieved and to what extent?
- In general, did the two grants contribute to achieving USAID's IRs? If so, to what extent?
- What improvements should be made in future efforts of this type to maximize impact and the achievement of USAID's IRs?

## SECTION II

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### Methodology

The evaluation team initially focused on reviewing all documentation related to the two grants, followed by data collection on the ground and interviews with project participants and stakeholders. The impact assessment methodology can be summarized as follows:

- Selected 6 out of the 12 target villages, taking into consideration factors such as geographic distribution and size. The study examined three villages per grant: Silet Al-Harithiyeh and Kuferqud of Jenin district, Burqa and Ijnisenia of Nablus district, and Einabus and Iskaka of Salfet district. Exhibit 1 on page 3 identifies the villages selected for the impact assessment (in red).
- Applied the following tools and survey instruments:
  - Visited each village at least once, including clinics and/or health centers, one school, and one mosque
  - Held meetings and interviews with the CDPHC project coordinator and director, members of the project village committees and village council, and community leaders
  - Interviewed and observed the behaviors of school children, teachers, women, and others
  - Collected information, verified data, and took photographs to measure the level of success of grant-funded activities and public knowledge of the projects
  - Gathered success stories
- Defined and monitored a set of indicators:
  - Number of ordinary people from each village who are aware of project activities
  - Cleanliness of the schools and streets before and after the projects
  - Level of environmental activities
  - Responses of women and housewives during interviews
  - Responses from local residents to questions about daily environmental problems such as smoking, littering, noise, emission of air pollutants, etc
- Used these indicators to measure the grants' contribution to Tamkeen objectives and USAID's IRs, the level of environmental awareness among local residents, public participation in solving environmental problems, and improvements in environmental policies and practices

We applied the methodology described above through the following steps:

- Developed the methodology and submitted it to Tamkeen for approval. This process included meetings with Tamkeen Civil Society Specialist Waddah Abdelsalam.

- Reviewed all available materials prepared by CDPHC under the two grants, including the grant applications, grant agreements, periodic reports, awareness-building materials, and final reports. This allowed us to verify that all the deliverables required by the grant agreements were actually produced.
- Interviewed CDPHC personnel, including the project coordinator, Samer Sawalha, and the CDPHC director, Mohammad Shahin, to obtain their feedback on project implementation and impact.
- Conducted site visits and interviews in 6 of the 12 target villages: Silet Al-Harithiyeh, Kuferqud, Burqa, Ijnisenia, Einabus, and Iskaka. This selection provided both geographic and demographic coverage representative of the project sites. Those interviewed in each village included:
  - Members of project village committees. Not all members attended the meetings.
  - Community leaders, including representatives from CSOs, village councils, public centers and institutions, school directors, and clergymen (*imams*).
  - People in the streets to gauge their participation in project activities and level of awareness of the projects.

In total, the evaluators interviewed more than 100 people. In some cases, open discussions took place on specific problems facing the villages. In Ijnisenia, for example, extensive talks were held on the need to reuse the gray water collected during tree irrigation instead of dumping it in the *wadis*, and on ways to reap greater commercial benefits from the huge production of apricots and other fruits produced by the village.

Survey instruments considered both genders and ranged from face-to-face and phone interviews to site visits and data collection in the field. Travel difficulties within and between villages, which were mentioned in the final reports for the two grants, were felt by the evaluators. This is indicative of the challenges faced by the project teams during implementation, particularly under the first grant.

## SECTION III

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### Findings

#### A. Documentation Review

The evaluators reviewed the following documents provided by Tamkeen: the two grant applications submitted by CDPHC; the final reports for the two grants; environmental reports from the 12 target villages; the training manual used by CDPHC; and awareness-building materials such as posters, stickers, T-shirts, and flipcharts.

The documentation review revealed the following:

- CDPHC produced all the materials mentioned in the grant applications. The quality of the materials was found to be acceptable and the technical content appropriate to the level of education of most village residents.
- The first grant targeted the villages identified in the grant application. For the second grant, the villages of Al-Tayba, Al-Zababdeh, and Nisf Jubeil were replaced by Kuferqud, Al-Funduqumia, and Burqa. The reasons for this change were not explicitly stated in project documents, but were approved by Tamkeen.
- The two grants were identical in almost every detail, except for different titles and the addition of activities targeting children under the second grant. The first grant was titled “Village-Based Environmental Awareness” and the second “Roles of Local Communities in Promoting Responsible Environmental Practices.” The second title reflects Tamkeen’s objectives more clearly. The implementation approach and training provided under both grants were identical, although the quality of both was improved under the second grant.
- The criteria for selecting target villages and members of the project village committees were not fully adopted as stated in the grant applications. There was no gender balance as most village committee members were women. In the final reports for both grants, CDPHC attributed this to social, cultural, and accessibility issues. Committees in some villages such as Burqa and Ijnisenia suggested establishing two parallel committees, one for women and one for men, with a coordinating mechanism between the two.
- The grant applications and final reports failed to recommend methods for following up on project activities after completion of the grants or ways for local CSOs to begin the process of changing environmental practices and policies at the local and national levels. This is directly related to IR 3.1.3 (“CSOs effectively disseminate information to citizens on public issues”).
- The training workshops did not cover Palestinian environmental laws and legislation, as stated in the grant applications, although these were briefly addressed in the training manual.

- The success stories featured in project reports and responses to questions posed before and after each training session reflect the positive impact of the grants on village residents. However, it should be noted that the responses are biased to the conditions of the training sessions and to the participants attending each session.
- Female participation was high, particularly since the project village committees consisted almost entirely of women. On the one hand, this is a positive aspect of the projects considering prevailing social conditions. On the other, many environmental problems are caused by economic and other activities that mostly involve men (e.g., farming). Limited male participation was attributed to lack of motivation, busy schedules in the daytime, and the difficulty of having men and women work together. Future activities should make a concerted effort to ensure greater gender balance. The idea of establishing two parallel committees—one for women and one for men—is a practical solution that should be considered.
- Most training participants were women and generally did not include representatives of village councils, the public and private sectors, and community organizations. Since these individuals are engaged in public discourse, their participation should be encouraged in future programs.

## B. Achievement of IR 3.1: Increased Participation of CSOs in Public Discourse

To measure the success of both grants, the study focused on assessing the extent to which they contributed to IR 3.1 and its three sub-IRs. Exhibit 2 summarizes the activities carried out under both grants and links them to the appropriate IR, providing a conceptual framework for the study's findings. Exhibit 3 presents expected results and indicators for both grants.

### Exhibit 2. Grant Activities and Their Relationship to USAID's Intermediate Results

IR 3.1: Increased Participation of CSOs in Public Discourse		
IR 3.1.1: Increased capacity of CSOs to participate in public discourse	IR 3.1.2: CSOs effectively aggregate and articulate citizen issues	IR 3.1.3: CSOs effectively disseminate information to citizen on public issues
Grant Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of project village committees</li> <li>• Training of project village committee members</li> <li>• Raising environmental awareness among local CSOs and project participants</li> </ul>	Grant Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participatory rapid appraisals</li> <li>• Clean-up campaigns</li> <li>• Training courses on first aid and other issues</li> </ul>	Grant Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Production and distribution of posters and stickers</li> <li>• Encouraging members of project village committees to train others</li> <li>• Preparation of educational modules and materials</li> </ul>
Findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project village committees were formed and trained.</li> <li>• Environmental awareness was raised among project village committees and some CSOs.</li> <li>• The capacity of local CSOs in some of the villages was enhanced.</li> <li>• Male committees should be formed in parallel with women's committees.</li> <li>• The work of the project village committees should be continued and expanded.</li> </ul>	Findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in the rapid appraisals was limited to members of the project village committees.</li> <li>• Training materials did not reflect the outcome of the participatory rapid appraisals in each village.</li> <li>• Some training courses on topics such as first aid were of interest to village committee members, while others were less relevant.</li> <li>• Training on methodologies for tackling environmental issues should be included.</li> </ul>	Findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of posters and stickers was limited in some villages.</li> <li>• Project activities mostly targeted local schools and students.</li> <li>• Community leaders such as <i>imams</i>, policemen, and others should also be involved.</li> <li>• Project village committees should capitalize on local talents and capacities.</li> </ul>

### Exhibit 3. Expected Results and Indicators

Expected Results	Indicators	Comments	Related IRs
Environmental conditions pertinent to people's awareness of their rights, concerns, and practices are defined.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People's behaviors and practices changed</li> <li>• Participatory rapid appraisal reports prepared</li> <li>• Project village committees selected</li> <li>• Gender balance considered</li> </ul>	This task was to make use of participatory rapid appraisals. However, project reports do not reflect proper application of the methodology.	IR 3.1.1
Training modules on environmental rights, issues, and behaviors are prepared.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop materials developed</li> <li>• Participation expanded beyond the project village committees</li> <li>• Awareness of the training materials and project activities expanded beyond the village committees</li> </ul>	Training materials are available through Tamkeen. However, availability of the materials through the project village committees is somewhat limited. In Einabus, no materials except the village report were available. In other villages, training materials were found in some households.	IR 3.1.1 IR 3.1.2 IR 3.1.3
Members of the project village committees complete 33 workshop-days on environmental education and awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre- and post-tests conducted to measure the extent of knowledge gained</li> <li>• Number of members who attended the workshops</li> </ul>	Tests were conducted before and after each training session. The results thus reflected the conditions of a given session, the trainer, and the timing. Not all participants attended all training days.	IR 3.1.1
Four types of information and education materials conveying specific environmental messages are produced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters, stickers, flipcharts, and T-shirts produced and distributed</li> <li>• Local community exposure and awareness of these materials</li> </ul>	The number of materials distributed was limited.	IR 3.1.2 IR 3.1.3
Five workshops and one festival are held in each village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documentation on the villages and training workshops produced</li> <li>• Local community attendance and knowledge of the workshops and festival</li> <li>• Number and types of attendees</li> </ul>	Reports and documentation are available on the workshops and festival, but the topics covered do not reflect the actual problems facing the villages, which differ from one village to the next. In some villages, only women and children attended the festival.	IR 3.1.2 IR 3.1.3

#### B1. IR 3.1.1: Increased Capacity of CSOs to Participate in Public Discourse

Both grants contributed to IR 3.1.1 through networking and coordination with local CSOs and the participation of beneficiaries in decision-making. Project village committees and other local organizations took part in implementing project activities and in training programs on environmental issues.

Local capacity to participate in public discourse was enhanced through the training workshops and the work of the project village committees. The limited participation by men and community representatives were the main shortcomings in achievement of this IR.

## **B2. IR 3.1.2: CSOs Effectively Aggregate and Articulate Citizen Issues**

IR 3.1.2 was to be achieved through education about public issues, environmental awareness, and mobilization of community resources. To that end, the two grants involved members of the project village committees and others in the participatory rapid appraisals in each village. Although application of the participatory rapid appraisal methodology was somewhat inadequate, this effort strengthened linkages within local communities and built the confidence of the participants, especially women.

The main goal of participatory rapid appraisals is to effect change by linking priority actions to local needs. This was not properly reflected in project activities. Notably, the village committees and trainees had little say in training program design. Training content was previously defined in the grant applications and was applied uniformly in all the target villages. Some topics were of interest to all participants, such as first aid, while others were of limited relevance, such as courses on farming activities and the life cycle of insects. Interest in such courses varied from village to village.

In the future, we recommend designing a general framework for the training program to be modified based on the specific needs and priorities in each target village. For example, site visits revealed that the main environmental problem in Ijnisenia is the need to reuse collected gray water for irrigation. In Iskaka, solid waste dumping is of major concern. Training in these villages should have focused on those issues.

Capitalizing on existing local talents and capacities is an important element of achieving IR 3.1.2. For instance, local artists, *dabkeh* (folk dance) troupes, mosques, and *imams* should have been encouraged to participate in project activities and in articulating public issues.

## **B3. IR 3.1.3: CSOs Effectively Disseminate Information to Citizens on Public Issues**

IR 3.1.3 essentially seeks to strengthen CSO capacity to raise public awareness through the dissemination of information designed to educate citizens and influence public opinion. Under both grants, awareness-building activities mainly targeted members of the project village committees. Such efforts should be broadened to a larger audience. In some cases, project village committees were integrated with existing CSOs, such as in Silet Al-Harithiyeh, or provided the impetus for establishing an active local CSO, such as in Iskaka. In those cases, awareness-building efforts reached large numbers of people, significantly contributing to this IR.

In Iskaka, the project village committee exerted considerable pressure on the village council to address solid waste dumping. Awareness-building efforts led to a change in the make-up of the village council, with new council members taking action to solve the problem. In both Iskaka and Kuferqud, training provided by Tamkeen motivated and prepared local communities to apply for and receive grants from other donors. Leveraging of donor funding helped these villages resolve some of the environmental problems they face.

In some villages, the project village committees were instrumental in initiating activities such as clean-up campaigns, environmental education of school children, establishment of women's groups, and organization of festivals and workshops. To build on this momentum, the committees should continue to hold monthly meetings to discuss environmental issues and plan further actions.

## C. Assessment Results

### C1. Community-Level Impact

By and large, the local community members we interviewed agreed that the grants contributed to resolving environmental problems, but that much work remains to be done. The key accomplishment was in generating interest in environmental issues and raising local awareness of sound environmental practices. This was clear from increased participation in training activities. “With time, people got more motivated, attendance increased, and it was hard to keep the number of trainees within an acceptable limit,” said Mr. Sawalha.

Testing administered before and after each training session indicated a higher level of environmental awareness among the participants. For some questions, the percentage of correct answers increased from 5 percent prior to training to 100 percent after training. On average, the percentage of correct answers went from 24 percent pre-training to 83 percent post-training. Further details are available in the final reports for the two grants.

However, most village committee members said the training courses were generally too long, sometimes lasting three to four hours per day. They recommended shortening the sessions and spreading them out over a longer period of time. Last-minute changes in training schedules as a result of the volatile political situation was also cited as a problem in some villages. This, coupled with long training sessions, created tensions between female participants and their husbands or brothers. “In some cases, I found out about a particular training session only a few hours before it was scheduled to start, and that caused problems with my husband,” said Naimah Saleh from Iskaka.

Improved environmental awareness has led to positive changes in community practices. For example, several respondents said their children were now applying water-saving techniques at home. In Ijnisenia, greater awareness of solid waste disposal issues, a major environmental problem in the village, has led to changes in behaviors. One respondent said she now practices garbage separation as a result of participation in the project. In Iskaka, the village council has procured a truck for solid waste collection, and littering has decreased significantly since the project organized street clean-up campaigns. Abdul Rahim Mohammed, a resident of Iskaka, said more people were cleaning their cisterns and roof tanks on a regular basis as a result of environmental training. This is further evidence that the training courses not only raised awareness of pollution issues, but also helped to effect real change at the community level.

Various success stories mentioned in the final reports for the two grants were recounted to the evaluators during the field visits. People told these stories with a great deal of pride and enthusiasm. Many of the stories related to first-aid training. Siham Ali from Ijnisenia said she faced two critical situations in which she had to help a person with asthma and another with a serious injury: “It is because of the training I received from the session on first aid that I was able to help these people.” In Burqa, several individuals told the story of a truck driver who had a serious accident and got help from one of the people trained through the project. In Kuferqud, a 9-year-old girl refused to let her mother pour gasoline on her head to get rid of lice after a workshop she attended at school.

By and large, people randomly interviewed on the streets said they were aware of project activities, except in Einabus where the project had virtually no visibility or impact on

community behaviors. Out of the 20 members of the project village committee in Einabus, only 5 women participated in the meeting with the evaluators. They noted that only women and girls had attended the festival organized by the project and that no activities or meetings had taken place since the end of the grant. Awareness-building materials were not distributed at the festival although they were handed out at a festival in the nearby village of Beita, which was not covered by the grants.

Lack of impact in Einabus is partly due to severe travel restrictions and to the fact that implementation took place in 2002, a time when hostilities were at their highest in the area. It should also be noted that the village is close to several Israeli settlements as well as Nablus, which was under a blockade. Furthermore, more than 80 percent of the men in Einabus work inside Israel proper and many only come to the village on weekends, which severely limited their participation in project activities.

On a more positive note, respondents in every village cited women's increased confidence and involvement in community activities. Many are now able to hold public talks and discuss various environmental issues. "Women are more motivated to discuss different issues in general and environmental issues in particular," said Siham Ali from Ijnisenia. "We have more courage now."

Graduates of the Tamkeen-funded training programs delivered training on environmental issues at local schools during implementation of the grants and, to a lesser extent, after completion of the projects. In Al-Funduqumia, project participants are still holding seminars and workshops at local schools. In Silet Al-Harithiyeh, village committee members who participated in the first grant trained participants in Kuferqud under the second grant.

Although Tamkeen does not directly award grants to improve organizational capacity, members of the project village committees said their own organizations were stronger as a result of the grants. Silet Al-Harithiyeh and Iskaka are two pertinent examples. In those villages, the project village committees have evolved into permanent women's committees. Continued female participation in solving environmental problems is more evident in those villages where women's committees are still active.

Based on these findings, it is evident that the grants had a positive impact at the community level, although this varied from one village to another. That being said, the main shortcoming is that the projects failed to motivate participants to widely disseminate information to others. Project village committees should be encouraged to meet on a regular basis to discuss ways to engage larger numbers of people in solving environmental problems. Coordinating these efforts with local CSOs is also important to maximize impact.

## **C2. Impact on Specific Environmental Problems in Target Villages**

Each target village faces specific environmental problems, some of which were resolved by the Tamkeen-funded projects. For example, hair lice is a common problem in most of the villages. The issue received greater attention under the second grant as a result of a painful incident in the village of Bizzarya, where a young mother sprayed her two children with insect pesticide to get rid of the lice. The next morning, one of the children had died while the other was sent to intensive care for treatment.

Mosquitoes are also a major issue in several villages, which have addressed the problem by improving wastewater collection systems. In Burqa, the municipality has begun using chlorination for all water pumped from village springs to reduce groundwater pollution.

In Ijnisenia, solid waste disposal is the key environmental problem. The village council now hires a truck three times a week to collect garbage from households. Most residents were in the habit of placing their garbage in front of their homes at nighttime, attracting stray cats and dogs. As a result of the project, they now dispose the garbage in the morning rather than the night before, and children are less prone to littering.

In Kuferqud, solid waste and gray water disposal directly in front of houses attracts insects and flies, threatening the health of the local community. The project village committee raised funds to purchase garbage bins to be placed in the streets and in front of houses for garbage collection. The metal frames for the cans have been installed in certain locations, but the bins themselves have not.

In Silet Al-Harithiyeh, lack of a wastewater collection system is causing groundwater pollution. The project was instrumental in raising awareness of this problem. Jamal Tahayneh, head of Silet Al-Harithiyeh's Charity Committee, said the number of people disposing gray water into village streets had decreased by 70 percent.

In Einabus, the major environmental problem is solid waste disposal. One of the women we interviewed said that sometimes more than a week goes by before waste is collected. Another problem is the old water network and the lack of a wastewater collection system, which seriously threatens water resources in the area. The project failed to resolve these issues.

In Iskaka, priority environmental concerns include solid waste disposal, water pollution, and damages caused by wild pigs coming from the nearby Israeli settlement of Ariel. Through the efforts of the project village committee, the village council has provided a solid waste collection and disposal facility. This has significantly improved people's lives and eliminated the dumping of wastes in abandoned houses of the old city sector. In addition, workshops and training seminars have raised public awareness of water pollution issues.

In general, project activities helped raise environmental awareness and contributed to solving some of the environmental problems in the target villages. Impact varied, however. Specific problems were solved in some villages, such as Iskaka, whereas there was no noticeable change in Einabus.

### **C3. Impact on Policies and Practices**

Instituting environmentally friendly policy reform takes time, especially when communities are more concerned with the effects of the Israeli occupation. Moreover, most local CSOs typically focus on delivering services that meet immediate community needs rather than long-range policy work. Although there was no measurable impact on policies at the regional and national levels, significant changes were recorded at the village level, especially with regard to people's attitudes and practices.

Kuferqud is a case in point. As a result of a training course on insects, the project village committee provided 100 solid waste collection bins to improve sanitation. The village council, the local women's organization, and CDPHC shared the costs of purchasing and

installing the bins. Those interviewed also noted a positive change in people's attitudes with regard to male and female participation in environmental activities. Mr. Sawalha said participation gradually increased over the course of the project. In addition, surrounding villages expressed an interest in implementing similar activities.

There was also evidence of improved community practices in Silet Al-Harithiyeh. After taking part in workshops on honey production, many women are now engaged in this activity. In addition, the project village committee educated CSO leaders about the environmental threats posed by flies and mosquitoes, leading them to pressure the municipality to spray the streets. The municipality now sprays the streets twice a week in the summer months.

Though it can be said that the grants planted the seeds for change at the national level, no tangible changes were reported nationally. This is partly due to the political situation but also to the fact that such changes take time. Changes at the community level were much more evident. The use of chlorination to sanitize water pumped from village springs in Burqa is one example. In Iskaka, awareness-building and advocacy efforts led the village council to take action to improve solid waste collection.

A major change mentioned in each village targeted by the impact assessment is increased female participation in environmental activities. As a result of their involvement with the projects, women have gained greater self-confidence and are more motivated to take action, said Um-Mahmoud from Kuferqud, a sentiment echoed by Um-Khalid, a member of the women's committee in Silet Al-Harithiyeh.

Project village committees also succeeded in raising environmental consciousness at the family level. Committee members are educating families about the importance of environmental protection. Though this does not constitute policy-level advocacy per se, it is an effort to bring about social change.

In conclusion, although the projects failed to change policies at the national level, positive changes in people's attitudes and practices have been achieved at the community level. To build on this work, several CSO representatives stressed the need for training on ways to promote policy reform.

## SECTION IV

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### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### A. Achievement of Strategic Objective

In assessing the extent to which the grants promoted more responsible governance and citizen participation in public discourse, the evaluators drew the following conclusions:

- The establishment and continued existence of project village committees is a major indicator of success. The second grant was more successful in this regard as the number of active committees is higher than under the first grant.
- In general, the streets and schools we visited were clean. Many of the people we interviewed attributed this to grant-funded activities. This is evidence that the grants helped raise environmental awareness among the public, including students.
- In most villages, clergymen (*imams*) were not included in project activities although they have significant influence within local communities. The only exception is Ijnisenia, where the *imam* is a member of the village council and was invited to deliver a speech at the festival organized by the project village committee. However, most of the *imams* we interviewed did not know about project activities.
- The school teachers we interviewed were aware of project activities, largely due to the direct involvement of local schools and students. Most festivals and workshops were held at local schools.
- Children participated in raising environmental awareness, notably through drawings and artwork. Some of the people we interviewed suggested publishing the drawings in booklets to further recognize and stimulate youth participation.
- Training courses contributed to responding to public concerns, albeit to a limited extent. Because the same training modules and materials were used in all the villages, they failed to address problems unique to some villages.
- Ordinary people interviewed as part of the assessment said that the activities and their impact were limited to participants in the training courses, workshops, and festivals. The next round of grants should consider means of reaching out to a larger audience, including the private sector.
- Greater consideration should be given to integrating project village committees within well-established organizations. This was a major success factor in Iskaka and Silet Al-Harithiyeh.

## B. Sustainability Issues

A definitive finding of the impact assessment is that the two grants succeeded in raising environmental awareness in the target villages, albeit to varying degrees. In Einabus, for example, we were unable to record any impact, whereas grant-funded activities were highly successful in the neighboring village of Iskaka.

There is evidence of ongoing awareness-building efforts in some villages since the end of the projects, particularly in Iskaka and Silet Al-Harithiyeh, where the project village committees have merged with existing women's organizations.

Activities that have taken place since the end of the grants include:

- Occasional clean-up of village streets in Al-Naqurah
- Ongoing seminars and training courses at schools in Al-Funduqumia
- Three workshops and a field trip for school children in Ijnisenia
- In Burqa, lectures at schools, street clean-up campaigns, meetings of the project village committee, and a meeting with the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction
- In Kuferqud, workshops and seminars, weekly meetings of the women's committee, clean-up campaigns, and plans for weekly lectures at schools in the coming school year
- In Silet Al-Harithiyeh, biweekly meetings of the women's committee, clean-up campaigns, and public awareness initiatives in neighboring villages such as Zbuba, in cooperation with the Village Charity Association
- In Iskaka, workshops, clean-up campaigns, training courses for children and women, a first-aid course for girls aged 13 to 18, and weekly meetings of the Iskaka Women's Organization

Overall, however, sustainability has been limited. Although the grants raised environmental awareness among members of the project village committees, this did not flow to other village residents to any significant extent. Lack of funding and of a permanent space for the project village committees were cited as the main constraints to continued awareness-building efforts. All the CSO representatives we interviewed said continued donor funding was a determining factor in their ability to sustain project activities.

## C. Recommendations

In general, the impact assessment found that the two grants met the key objectives they set out to achieve: increase environmental awareness in the 12 target villages and build the capacity of local CSOs to solve local environmental problems and participate in public discourse. These directly relate to IR 3.1.1 and IR 3.1.2. Little was accomplished, however, in terms of disseminating information on public issues (IR 3.1.3) as this was largely limited to project participants.

In light of our findings, we offer the following recommendations to maximize the impact of similar activities in the future:

- *Continue to integrate service delivery with democracy and governance activities.* At the start of the projects, many participants were skeptical about the idea of

integrating democracy and governance concepts with environmental awareness efforts. This attitude quickly changed as activities began to produce results. The project stakeholders we interviewed wholeheartedly support this approach and many are now applying it to other non-Tamkeen programs.

- *Consider providing grants for longer terms so that impact can be more measurable.* Although the first grant to CDPHC was renewed, making it in effect “long term,” the groups involved in implementation could not make long-range plans since renewal was uncertain. At the very least, each village should consider providing the project village committee with permanent office space, with computers and other equipment possibly supplied by Tamkeen, to sustain the work of committee members beyond the life of the grants.
- *Deliver workshops on how to effect policy changes.* Such a program could target a wide range of CSOs, including those that have not received grants from Tamkeen. Many of the people we interviewed support this recommendation.
- *Set clear criteria for selecting participants in training activities.* The criteria should ensure adequate balance between women and men, and should encourage the participation of village council members, public and private sector employees, and representatives of various community organizations.
- *Organize afternoon training programs and activities to facilitate the participation of men who work in the daytime.*
- *Continue to produce educational materials to raise awareness.* Many people used these materials in their homes—for example, by placing water-saving stickers over their sinks. Members of the project village committees also referred to such materials to disseminate key messages in the community.
- *Distribute awareness-building materials equitably between the villages.* Under the two grants, the same number of educational materials was distributed in each village. For example, Ijnisenia, with a population of 500, received the same number of stickers and T-shirts as Silet Al-Harithiyeh, which has more than 10,000 inhabitants. Future activities should consider the size of local communities when disseminating communication materials. In addition, distribution should take place either right before or immediately after the environmental festival to build on the momentum generated by this event.
- *Design training courses that address environmental problems specific to each target village.* Under both grants, training was uniform across the villages even though problems differ from one location to the next. In Ijnisenia, for example, workshops are needed on reuse of treated gray water since this is a salient environmental problem there.
- *Capitalize on local talents and artists in efforts to raise environmental awareness.* In Burqa, the project village committee motivated a *dabkeh* troupe to participate in the environmental festival by hanging wall clocks with pictures of the dancers, giving them exposure in exchange for their support. The Ijnisenia committee could have adopted a similar approach to encourage a well-known local artist to

create wall mosaics conveying environmental messages. Concerted efforts to tap into local talents should be made in future activities. A CD featuring the best activities from each village could be showcased at a festival involving multiple villages, giving added recognition to project participants and supporters.