



FACT SHEET

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAM
Local Democratic Reform (LDR) **PROJECT PROFILE**



Woman from A'zzoun voting for a community project.

Project Overview

To ensure that democratic practices are supported at all levels of government, it is essential to improve governance institutions at the local level as well as the national level. USAID supports this approach through the Local Democratic Reform Program (LDR), also named “TAWASOL,” which in Arabic means “being connected.” Specifically, the project creates an enabling environment for an effective, empowered, and democratic local governance system by strengthening the Ministry of Local Government at the national level, building the capacity of Local Government Units (LGUs) at the municipal level, and partnering with communities (specifically youth) at the citizen level. Through this inclusive, holistic and transparent approach, the program assists partner municipalities to provide improved services to their citizens and become more efficient in their service delivery mechanisms. In tandem, LDR supports community infrastructure development projects that build the foundations of a future Palestinian state, along with partnering with youth, both in the West Bank and Gaza, to develop their leadership skills and instill concepts of good governance.

Goals

- Enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG).
- Strengthen the capacity of partner LGUs.
- Expand civic engagement and participation in partner municipalities.
- Increase citizen support for LGUs.

Activities

LDR builds the capacity of partner LGUs to deliver and manage community infrastructure and basic services, with a focus on improving LGU capacity and leadership for the effective assessment and prioritization of needs; the adoption of transparent, democratic and accountable mechanisms; the implementation of strategic planning; and the utilization of performance monitoring processes.

As part of its focus on service delivery, LDR supports the implementation of community development projects in partner LGUs, identified through a participatory planning process.

LDR also promotes civic participation in the delivery of services and public infrastructure through hands-on democratic practices by establishing Youth Shadow Local Councils, voluntary bodies composed of Palestinian youth (15-20 years old) who are elected by their peers to mirror the positions of their LGU. The activities also promote systems for municipalities to engage in dialogue on good governance practices with their citizens.

In addition, LDR conducts institutional assessments and provides support for strategic development planning and capacity building for the MoLG.

CHALLENGES

- Unclear operating and legal environment for local governments.
- Lack of democratic traditions including citizen participation in local governance.
- Local laws do not support decentralization.



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Youth in Gaza work with LDR to promote good governance and youth talent development through a workshops and trainings.

Successes

- Facilitated the selection and implementation of 81 prioritized community development projects by over 1,400 representatives of 56 communities.
- Assisted the MoLG to finalize its five-year strategic plan and the Local Government Inter-Sector Strategic Plan.
- Assisted the MoLG to develop papers on public participation and guiding and monitoring the work of Local Government Units.
- Continued working with the MoLG Information Technology and Guidance and Monitoring staff through trainings and provision of equipment with the aim of enhancing their capacity and increasing their efficiency.
- Held roundtable workshops with key stakeholders from the MoLG and LGU partners that focused on strengthening the local government sector and youth.
- Developed the Local Government Public Procurement and Tendering Manual.
- Trained 368 individuals from partner LGUs on topics ranging from customer service to financial management.
- Provided eight LGUs with financial accounting software.
- Completed a multi-step strategic development framework process with 20 LGUs.
- Helped form ten Youth Shadow Local Councils involving 2,400 youth elected from across the West Bank. Trained 864 youth in leadership and local governance, and 66 youth in advanced media training courses.
- As part of the governance and outreach activities, initiated several innovative partnerships between LGUs and community members such as the Hebron Pioneers Council and the youth and disabled unit in Yatta.
- Completed the construction of eight one-stop-shop municipal service centers.
- Initiated the youth talent and sponsorship initiatives in Gaza with a focus on building skills and inculcating a sense of good governance.

Project Detail

Implementing Partner: CHF International, Life of Project: 09/30/2005-12/31/2011, Total Estimated Cost: \$36,999,952.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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