



# CHF International West Bank & Gaza Local Democratic Reform Program (LDR)

TAWASOL - تواصل

Cooperative Agreement # 294-A-00-05-00242-01

## Seventh Quarterly Report

1 April – 30 June 2007



<b>Prime Implementing PVO:</b>	CHF International – West Bank / Gaza
<b>Sub-Contractors:</b>	ARD Inc. and the Center for Engineering and Planning (CEP)
<b>USAID Program:</b>	Local Democratic Reform-TAWASOL
<b>Funded by:</b>	USAID
<b>Cooperative Agreement #:</b>	294-A-00-05-00242-00
<b>Modifications:</b>	4
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<b>Quarterly Report No.:</b>	7
<b>Reporting Period:</b>	1 April – 30 June, 2007
<b>Date of Submission:</b>	31 July, 2007
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This seventh quarterly report for the Local Democratic Reform program (LDR) covers program progress during the period of 1 May—31 July, 2007 under Cooperative Agreement number 294-A-00-05-00242-01. This report follows the activities as proposed in the Implementation Plan submitted to USAID on 31 October, 2007 and reflects the project status at that time. With the recent political development including the Hamas overtake of Gaza and the resulting USAID response, it is expected that several changes will be made to the LDR program including an increase in operational program funds, an increase in Core Group LGUs, a focus on West Bank engagement and resuming the national component. CHF expects a shift towards the original cooperative agreement which still remains in effect but was suspended in part due to political and policy developments.

The focus of this quarter has been on selection finalization and mobilization of community development projects in our targeted 20 core LGUs. Following the PPWs held in the last quarter and continued in-depth meetings and assessments between LDR engineers and the Municipal leadership and departments, projects under Activity Two were selected, tenders awarded, contractors vetted for five projects and three projects have started (Qireh, Abassan Kabireh and Abassan Jadideh). Of the 12 projects submitted for vetting 7 are ready to start-up are waiting for the vetting to be complete to move forward.

In parallel under Activity Two, the LDR program has been developing the municipal capacity building and technical assistance strategy and packages for each targeted LGU. There are two key tracks under this component, one is the technical assistance provided through on-the-job training, systems upgrading and procedural reviews directly related to the implementation of the selected community development projects, this effort is being led by CEP's engineering team. The second track is related to municipal systems and staff capacity building within the 6 core competency areas of Fiscal Management; Planning and Plan Administration; Service Delivery, Maintenance and Operations Management; Institutional Practices; Civic Engagement and; Legal and Regulatory Environments. Priorities for municipal systems and staff capacity building were identified both through the Project Planning Workshops (PPWs) and through in-depth municipal needs assessments which have been undertaken in this quarter.

Initial progress has been made under Activity Three, Civil Society Participation and Oversight. The focus to date has been on civil society participation in the PPWs of last quarter and civil society engagement in the Technical working groups/local action committees which are planned to begin forming in August. Civil Society has been a major topic of discussion in LDR's dialogue with the LGUs and through its in-depth assessment of the municipalities. All LGUs have expressed a desire to increase their systems for engagement. Efforts under this Activity will intensify in the coming quarter with the aim being to integrate initiatives related to LDR's focal areas and the selected CDP and capacity building activities such as environmental clean-up campaigns, community center promotions and related activities, democratic dialogue through town hall informational meetings among others.

The LDR team is further addressing the added component (Activity Four) - Ongoing Analysis of Local Governance Trends. In this quarter our Senior Technical Advisor handed over the responsibility for this component to CHF due to his departure in April, 2007. A third Local Government Sector Update was prepared and is under review together with a draft first Technical Report. In April a draft strategy concept was developed and tested in Bani Zeid for the Sentinel Site Survey's which had originally been designed to be case studies investigating coping mechanisms are selected and representational LGUs. The initial assessment of the work done was that the information gathered was of little value and thus CHF is currently reviewing this activity to determine the best way to maximize impact and value to USAID and our target beneficiaries.

Cross Cutting themes this quarter were supported through 1) Two Anti-Corruption Awareness and Practical Strategies workshops for 57 senior municipal staff representing all LDR Core Group LGUs; and, 2) The Tawasol Mayor's Roundtable "Strengthening Decentralized Local Governance" which was attended by all Tawasol Core Group LGU Mayors, USAID's Mission Director, Dr. Howard Sumka, H.E. Consul General Jake Wallis and Palestinian Negotiator, Dr. Sa'eb Erakat.

## 1. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

During the seventh quarter LDR continued to develop its operational and management systems to respond to program implementation. Several staffing changes occurred as follows:

- A West Bank Coordinator/Local Government Specialist, Mr. Nidal Hassan, was hired and began working with the LDR team on 8 April, 2007.
- LDR's Senior Technical Advisor, Dr. Kenneth Ellison, closed out and handed over to LDR's COP, Mrs. Lana Abu Hijleh, on 19 April, 2007. The remaining of Component 4 of the submitted Program Implementation Plan is currently under review following the recommendation of Dr. Ellison to discontinue this component.
- LDR's Local Governance Associate, Mrs. Tamara Tamimi, resigned her post as of 31 May, 2007.
- LDR is currently in the process of hiring two Field Coordinators for the West Bank to work with the Capacity Building and Technical Assistance Team.

### 1.1 Program Start-Up

Following the successful implementation of the Program Planning Workshops (PPWs) and the identification of key community development projects (CDPs) in the last quarter, the LDR team continued their one-on-one meetings with Tier I LGUs in order to finalize the selection of the projects, negotiations on budgetary limits, design and preparation of tender documents, tendering and selection of contractors and vendors. The LDR team submitted all necessary vetting forms as per USAID regulations as of the first week of April.

**Select Projects.** The selection of community development projects, which started in the last quarter, was finalized in this quarter with the selection of projects in Abu Dies, Salfit Cluster and Tubas.

**Vetting Process.** After the finalization of the tendering process and the selection of contractors and vendors, relevant vetting forms were submitted to USAID for approval. Out of the 12 vetting forms submitted by the LDR team, six have already been approved including: Arrabeh (Multipurpose Hall), Illar (Football Playground), Azzoun (Public Library), Beit Fajjar (Community Social Center), Al-Musader (widening the City Entrance), and Al-Thahrieh (Public Parking Facility). Vetting for the above projects was received on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

**Al-Tharriya Project Site:** The selected CDP project is to develop this land into a transportation hub for community taxis and buses. Once completed this project will reduce congestion on the towns streets and provide a safe area for the public to access local transportation.



## Program Start-up— Continued

**CDP Startup:** During this quarter the implementation of three projects began in Qarara (Internal Roads, 60% complete), Abassan Kabira (Internal roads, 65% complete), and in Abassan Al Jadideh (Internal roads, 98% complete), these projects did not require vetting. The remaining projects are still waiting for receipt of vetting or approval for waiver requests from USAID/WBG.

### 1.2 Select Target LDR Project Sites

Following the selection of Tier I LGUs in the previous quarter, the LDR team identified the following Tier II LGUs:

- Ithna
- Hebron
- Doha
- Beit Sahour
- Al-Ram
- Birzeit
- Kufer Thelth
- Baqa Al-Sharqieh
- Aqaba
- Zababdeh
- Ya'bad
- Hawwara
- Aqraba
- Kufer Deek
- Salfit
- Wadi Gaza
- Wadi Al-Salqa
- Al-Maghazi
- Rafah
- Gaza City

### 1.3 Contact with LGUs

Contact with LGUs and relevant stakeholders is maintained on a near daily basis.

### 1.4 Conduct Community Mapping Exercise

The mapping exercise has been completed and the program database is operational.

## 2. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

### ACTIVITY 1: Enabling Environment & "National Level"

This Activity shall not be implemented at this time. Proceeding with its elements requires the written approval of the Agreement Officer.

### ACTIVITY 2: Strengthen the Capacity of LGUs to Provide Basic Services

#### A. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (CDPs)

LDR is rapidly building momentum towards improving basic community services provided by Tier I LGUs.

The focus of this quarter has been on selection finalization and mobilization of community development projects in our targeted 20 core LGUs. Following the PPWs held in the last quarter and continued in-depth meetings and assessments between LDR engineers and the Municipal leadership and departments, projects under Activity Two were selected, tenders awarded, contractors vetted for six projects and three projects have started (Qarara, Abassan Kabireh and Abassan Jadideh). Of the 12 projects submitted for vetting 7 are ready to start-up are waiting for the vetting to be complete to move forward. Below is a review of the three projects currently under implementation:

#### Qarara

The first project is underway to renovate internal roads for Qarara in Gaza. Currently LDR is paving Aljeyya Entrance Road, leveling and laying of the base course layer is complete and the project stands at 60% completion. Due to the closures of the Karni Crossing, construction supplies are unable to enter which is delaying further progress.

Work in progress on Qarara's Aljeyya Entrance Road in Gaza. The project is currently 60% complete.





Mrs Etaf Abu Lebda (Im Nada), a resident of Abassan Kabireh, was previously injured in a car accident on the narrowest part of the street. She thanked CHF and USAID for the project and added that she was *"really happy that finally some one listened and addressed the neighborhood need for fixing this terrible road"*.

#### Abassan Al-Jadideh

The second project is being implemented in Abassan Al-Jadidah, and once finalized a 250 meters road will be tiled. The road benefits more than 500 direct beneficiaries of local residents and 2500 of indirect beneficiaries who regularly travel through the area.

#### Abassan Al-Kabireh

Road No. 22B., the third project, is a 1500 meter main road that connects Khan Yunis with Abassan Al Kabireh, Abassan Al Jadideh, and the European hospital. Direct beneficiaries of this road exceed 5,000 inhabitants. The street is originally 5.0 meters wide, with washed shoulders, and loads of solid waste improperly disposed on both sides. The road itself has created a number of potential hazards to local residents and commuters alike. The road itself is used by large numbers of students, which has increased traffic jams, number of accidents and deaths among pedestrians. The neighborhood health clinic is located in the middle of this road, with traffic regularly preventing the movement of ambulances to and from the clinic. The project was identified as a priority in the PPWs and aims at widening the street to 7.0 meters. Once finalized the road will improve movement conditions for commuters passing through the area, provide safe passage to students and will improve living conditions for residents in the area. The road is further expected to increase traffic for local farmers and in so doing improve their market outreach.

## LDR Community Development Projects—Employment Generation Table

LGU	Project No.	Project Title	Completed Activities	Ongoing Activities	% Achievement (end July 07)	Employment Generation (Person Days)			
						May 07	June 07	July 07	Total
Qarara	LDR-G-CQ1	Paving Aljeyya Entrance Road	Excavation, leveling and laying of base course layer	None—No supplies reaching Gaza	60%	123	0	0	<b>123</b>
Abassan Kabireh	LDR-G-CAK1	Maintenance of Street No. 22B	Excavation, leveling and laying of base course layer	None—No supplies reaching Gaza	65%	0	102	101	<b>203</b>
Abassan Jadideh	LDR-G-CAJ1	Paving Abu Baraka Street	Excavation, leveling, casting concrete end beams, tiling, compacting	Preliminary hand over	98%	0	195	218	<b>413</b>
						<b>123</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>739</b>



**Abassan Al Kabireh Work in Progress**

**Enhancing Community and Creating Employment through Improved Democratic Local Governance**



Dr. Mohmoud Musaabeh, Head of the Health Clinic located on the street being enhanced in Abassan Al Kabira, said that “*the clinic and its ability to provide health services to local residents was always hindered by the situation of the road*”. He added that “*traffic was always a problem, but the biggest problem we faced was the accumulated solid waste... it was a nightmare. I hope that with this project underway, and with proper follow-up, local awareness campaign can be implemented so that we can maintain the road and prevent its situation from deteriorating as before*”.

## **B. CAPACITY BUILDING**

To address the six core competency areas outlined in LDR's Implementation Plan, and the varying technical needs for Tier I LGUs, a capacity building framework has been developed. In addition to the technical assistance activities mentioned below, training will be provided to Council members, Mayors and staff as part of the technical assistance/capacity building track. The LDR team will conduct in depth interviews and field visits to Tier I municipalities in the WB to finalize the Training Needs Assessment. A Training Action Plan will be developed by end of July and will constitute part of the overall Tier I LGUs Action Plans. Tier II LGUs will also directly benefit from this training, by inviting mayors and key staff members to attend some of the training to take place under this component. The points below outline the activities to be implemented:

### Strengthening Sound Financial Management

Capacity building activities implemented under LDR relevant to this core competency and identified during PPWs and in follow-up meetings includes the development of (i) revenue system, (ii) financial & accounting packages, (iii) and asset management system.

### Developing Functional Planning and Plan Administration

Capacity building activities to be implemented will include the (i) creation of open process for citizens to express their views on and priorities for local services, and to take part in making decisions regarding resource allocation and planning (zoning). The tools to be utilized and implemented under LDR activities will include the facilitation of a number of local focus groups, public hearings, and surveys.

### Improving Service Delivery, Maintenance and Operation Manage- ment

Relevant capacity building activities to be implemented will include (i) revising local procurement policies and the development of relevant transparent internal procedures and regulations, and (ii) developing service delivery standards and performance measurement indicators.

### Enhancing Civic Engagement

Relevant capacity building activities will include (i) the development of public complaints systems in a number of Tier I LGUs, (ii) increase the capacity of Tier I LGUs to disseminate information to the public on timely and objective manners, through web sites (where relevant), press releases, public announcements, public hearings, periodic reporting and the development of public relations offices, (iii) the development of archiving and documentation systems, and (iv) revising local policies governing access to public records and adhering to the principal of open records and open meetings policy.

## Building Community

Community Committee in Abassan Al-Kabireh



Mr. Mostafa Al Shawaf, Mayor of Abassan Al-Kabireh, said that “as a result of the LDR (Tawasol) program, the women’s community in the area lobbied for a project to increase citizen awareness of and responsibility towards beautification and environmental clean-up”. LDR coordinated with Khan Younis municipality, and the Office of Transition Initiative (OTI) to carry out the project towards enhancing the residents’ well-being. The Mayor added that members of the local community will directly contribute to the implementation of the project through building walls, painting, tree planting and placing street signs. He concluded by saying that he hopes this project will be considered as a pilot that could be implemented in other areas.

## Improve Institutional Practices

Relevant activities will include (i) the development and institutionalization of personnel policies associated with professional development of employees and (ii) improving organizational structures and developing relevant job descriptions, duties and responsibilities and putting into practice a suitable staff performance appraisal system.

## Enabling Legal and Regulatory Environment

Participants in the PPWs raised the importance of civic education and the importance of raising the level of understanding and awareness of local citizens of the duties and responsibilities of their local government units as well as their obligations and rights as good citizens. LDR will implement a number of activities relevant to this core competency, (i) Local perceptions survey will be conducted in a number of localities in the WB to measure the level of understanding of local citizens of the function of their LGUs. The results will be discussed in a number of local workshops (to be facilitated by the LDR team and in full coordination with local civil society organizations), in order to develop recommendations and possible activities to be implemented at a later stage. Awareness material will be developed and distributed by LGUs in their communities as part of (ii) local awareness campaign to be conducted in partnership with local civil society and private organizations.

## **ACTIVITY 3: Civil Society Participation and Oversight**

One of the main activities to be implemented in the technical assistance/capacity building track is the participatory development of performance measurement indicators for each of Tier I LGUs. A 2-3 day central workshop will be held during the fourth week of August with the participation of Tier I LGUs' Mayors, key staff, LAC members, where the methodology, of creating benchmarks, relevant indicators, measurement tools and reporting methods will be addressed. Following the centralized workshop, each LGU will hold a one day participatory workshop to go through the same process, but with examples of possible benchmarks and their relevant measurement indicators. It is anticipated that each LGU will agree with its local community representatives on the performance indicators to be measured, how to measure and when to report them. The LDR team will keep close track on the process.

During the implementation of LDR's technical assistance/capacity building activities a number of hall meetings, participatory workshops, focus groups, LAC meetings, and surveys will be utilized in a similar manner to improve local community involvement and oversight on their LGUs. The LGUs Action Plans and MOU will have clear indicators to measure the successful implementation of this activity.

## **ACTIVITY 4: Ongoing Assessment of Local Governance Trends**

The LDR program is continually monitoring and analyzing the developments in the local government sector as well as the rapidly changing political scene to better ensure that LDR activities respond to the realities of the sector. After completing several activities under this

component, the LDR COP at the advice and recommendations of the Senior Technical Advisor, Dr. Kenneth Ellison of ARD Inc., is requesting a review of the component and its value added to the program and to USAID. With the fluid political environment of the past few months, analysis is quickly outdated and irrelevant for use in making decisions about local governance trends at this stage. CHF will be forwarding Dr. Ellison's recommendations to USAID for their review and consideration. CHF is discussing with USAID options to either continue with the Activity or to replace it with higher impact activities such as Mayor Roundtable, Discussions with the Private Sector on Public-Private Partnerships and Community-Municipal Dialogues. The activities under this component that took place in this quarter include the following:

***Local Government Sector Updates:***

The third Local Government Sector Update was developed through meetings with several relevant parties and donors to collate information on developments in the sector. The draft was completed but its finalization was postponed due to the unprecedented political developments and the need to assess the impact on the local governance sector which is still undergoing resulting changes. It was therefore decided to postpone submission of the 3rd update until next quarter to ensure accurate reporting of relevant developments particularly following contact with the Ministry of LG which has been enabled recently.

***“Sentinel” Site Surveys:***

A pilot for the first Sentinel Site Survey was carried out in Bani Zeid on the 18th of April, 2007. The goal of the survey was to gain a better understanding of municipal and community coping mechanisms in the current difficult economic conditions. After an initial write up, it was determined by the ARD Inc. Senior Technical Advisor that the Sentinel Site Survey activity may be difficult to implement to have valid and interesting results.

***Special Technical Reports Addressing Key Issues:***

An internal workshop with the Local Governance advisor (Dr. Hussein Al-Araj) was held to discuss the most important thematic areas to be covered by the Technical Briefing notes to be prepared by LDR. The first Technical Briefing Note Draft was reviewed by the senior team and a second draft was produced by Dr. Ellison. CHF is currently reviewing to see relevance of the assessment to overall governance issues in the West Bank & Gaza. A draft was submitted to the LDR CTO for his feedback.

## **CROSS CUTTING THEMES**

Program impact will be monitored against set performance indicator targets as listed in the Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP) prepared by the LDR team and further through the monitoring of cross cutting governance and democracy themes. Every effort will be made to maximize opportunities and partnerships with local stakeholders to promote these Good Governance themes to increase the overall impact of the program. Cross cutting themes will include (but are not limited to): [Support to Emerging Democratic and Moderate Leaders, Democratic Participation, Transparency and Accountability, Reform Initiatives, Civic Awareness, Donor Leveraging and Partner Support, Local Government Dialogue, and Employment Generation.](#)



Opening of Mayor's Roundtable Jericho 9-10 May, 2007 "Strengthening Decentralized Local Governance" —H.E. Jake Walles, Dr. Howard Sumka, Dr. Sa'eb Erakat, and Mrs. Lana Abu Hijleh (right to left).

### **Anti-Corruption Training for Tawasol Mayors and Municipal Staff:**

The second and third Anti-Corruption Awareness and Practical Strategies were held on April 6-7<sup>th</sup> in Jericho and May 2<sup>nd</sup> in Gaza for the remaining Tier I LGUs representatives. A total of 57 participants attended the workshops. Overall three workshops has been implemented in cooperation with The Coalition for Accountability & Transparency – AMAN. The main purpose of the workshops series was to raise the awareness of Tier I LGUs' council members, mayors and staff members of the various forms of corruption prevailing in the public, private and civil society sectors in WBG. The workshops aimed at identifying current gaps in procedures and regulations governing the work of LGUs and on proper measures that can be taken by each LGU to create an work environment that helps lower the chances of corruption to take place in their institutions. The workshops also addressed the importance of ethical behavior and codes of conducts for council members, mayors and staff.

### **Tawasol Mayor's Roundtable (9-10 May, 2007)**

CHF International held a two-day Mayor's Roundtable under the rubric of "Strengthening Decentralized Local Governance", in Jericho on 9-10 May, 2007. The Roundtable took place with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and under the auspices of the U.S. Consul General, Mr. Jack Walles and USAID Mission Director Dr. Howard Sumka, as well as the support of Dr. Sa'eb Erekat, Head of the Negotiations Team for the Palestinian Authority.

The Roundtable was attended by 23 mayors and six local experts specializing in development of systems of local government from the West Bank and Gaza Strip who are partners in the implementation of the Local Democratic Reform "TAWASOL" program. This Roundtable constituted the first step towards institutionalizing the components of good governance in Palestinian institutions, whether civil or governmental organizations, and assure the

achievement of the minimum requirements for building future Palestinian state built on the foundations of good governance. A key success of the event was the signing of the Anti-Corruption Code of Conduct for Local Governments by all municipalities in attendance (though two had previously signed in December 2007 through a separate mechanism).



The roundtable meeting provided an opportunity for Tier I LGUs mayors to discuss and identify key issues related to the obstacles facing the local government sector in terms of achieving a decentralized local governance system from the point of view of practitioners in the field (A full report is currently being designed in Arabic and English and will be distributed to all LDR LGUs). Core Competency Areas were addressed and led by recognized local experts including:

- Strengthening Sound Financial Management Administration (Dr. Nasser Abdel-Kareem the lead consultant on Fiscal Management and Decentralization)
- Developing Functional Planning and Plan Administration (Dr. Rami Abdel-Hadi on Physical Planning and Nibal Abu-Lawi on Regional Planning)
- Enhancing Civil Society Engagement in Governance (Mr. Abdel-Rahman Abu-A'rafah, Director of the Arab Thought Forum)
- Enabling Relevant Legal and Regulatory Environments (Dr. Ahmad Majdalani Ex-Minister and Local Governance Legal Expert)
- Improving Institutional Practices and standardized operations for efficient Service delivery (Engineer Mounif Traish, Service Improvement Lead Consultant and Isam A'kel Executive Director of APLA our former LDR Colleague.

**KEY ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS** to come out of the Roundtable centered on the main Core Competency Areas of Local Governance as follows:

#### Thematic Area 1—Legal and Regulatory Environment

- Reaching consensus on the vision for local government that includes public awareness.
- Work with the Ministry of LG through APLA to initiate discussions around the vision.
- Obtain Cabinet approval of the vision and its relevance to the current law followed by submission to the Legislative Council
- Advocacy to lobby the Legislative Council to make legal amendments in accordance with the new vision.
- Start working with APLA to develop a project proposal for the development of an LGU administrative system.
- Submit the proposal for discussion and endorsement of the Cabinet.

#### Thematic Area 2—Sound Financial Management

- Development of a computerized unified accounting system.
- Training for LGU financial accountants and staff members.
- Support to LGUs in the development of financial and administrative systems.
- Allocate portions of central government resources for LGUs according to procedure.
- Expedite the change in property tax collection from the Ministry of Finance to the local governments.
- Review of the fees and taxes collected by LGUs for the purpose of unification and explanation of the types of fees collected.
- Endorsement of a law by the government that requires citizens to present an official statement from their LGU that states that they do not owe any taxes or fees to be able to proceed with documentation such as passports, birth certificates, IDs, etc.)

#### Thematic Area 3—Improved Institutional Practices and Service Delivery

- Study and Evaluate Current Practices.
- Develop templates for organizational structures that are suitable given current services and development plans of LGUs.
- Adoption of a unified structure by LGUs with the approval of the MOLG.
- Develop a Cost Center for every service.
- Activate community participation and provide information to citizens.
- Conduct awareness workshops and allow for citizen participation in decision making.
- Enhance appreciation for cooperation in the delivery of services by uniting parties/institutions.
- Set procedures to ensure citizen contribution in the service department.

#### Thematic Area 4—Improved Planning and Plan Administration

- Develop a GIS database for national, regional and local levels.
- Develop a national fund to reimburse citizens for private property taken for public use.
- Formation of a lobbying /advocacy group.
- Formation of an advisory committee.
- Formation of special courts for municipalities and building regulations.



**Collaborating for Success**



Enhanced Civic Engagement Group

### Thematic Area 5—Enhanced Civic Engagement

- Awareness programs
- Development of neighborhood committees.
- Training program for committee members
- Training courses in communication and outreach.
- Enhancing understanding of community participation.
- Adoption of policies enforcing community participation.
- Provide support to Committees to facilitate their work.
- Development of information channels to keep citizens informed.
- Development of a special unit within the LGU specialized in community participation.
- Develop linkages between neighborhood committees and LGU committees.
- Development of guidelines for LGUs to organize efforts between LGUs and communities.
- Conduct polls and surveys to collect information on citizen opinion and satisfaction with LGU services.

### VISITS & VISIBILITY

In order to increase the visibility of the program and its community outreach, the LDR team is currently preparing for a number of publicity events for the startup of implementation of six CDP Projects to be launched during July. Media and press representatives will be invited to the launch. In addition to press releases in local newspapers, Radio and TV networks, the possibility of utilizing national visibility campaign is under study and is bending on available budgetary allocations.

LDR continues its visibility through press releases in local newspapers (see Annex C for copies of press releases from this quarter). An LDR Profile, both Arabic and English versions, have been developed as part of the program's viability. Currently the website of CHF WBG is undergoing final preparations and will be launched soon.

## 4. COORDINATION AND LEVERAGING

### **Leveraging with other USAID and Donor Programming (Avoiding Duplication while Maximizing Impact)**

Some donors are remobilizing the provision of support to the Local Governance Sector including the KFW, the World Bank, France, Belgium, Japan (mainly through UNDP and JAICA), and the Arab and Islamic funding organizations mainly through PEC DAR and the Welfare Association. LDR is looking into potential areas for cooperation with other donors and is hoping to assist LGUs to reach out to donors to help them fund priority projects (identified in their LG Action Plans) which cannot be covered by LDR alone. CHF submitted an Arabic proposal in June for the Arab Fund for Development related to larger scale investments in LDR LGUs.

CHF continued discussions with other USAID programs, such as EWAS-ANERA, RA FEED-ARD, and RUWWAD-EDC, to see how best we can leverage resources to meet some of the needs identified by the LGUs. Under the auspices of the USAID D&G team leader and Water and Infrastructure team leader, CHF-LDR and ANERA-EWAS met at USAID and agreed upon the basis for cooperation and coordination between the two programs. CHF forwarded several requests for emergency water assistance for the LDR target LGUs to the EWAS CTO. The cooperation will continue throughout the life of the two programs. A preliminary meeting with the RUWWAD EDC team was held and potential cooperation areas were agreed upon (an email was sent on the meeting to LDR's CTO). A third meeting was held with the RA FEED program implemented by ARD Inc. in the presence of the CTOs for each program. LDR agreed to share all emergency needs identified in target LGUs with RA FEED, in the hopes that the program would assist the LGUs or CSOs respond to emergencies. LDR is currently leveraging the support of the UN World Food Program in Arrabeh, Bani Zeid, Al-Thariyyeh, Al-Zahra, Al-Musader, Abbasan Al-Jadideh, Fukhari, and Qarara. LDR is further working with RUWWAD in Azzoun, Sabastia, and Al-Thariyyeh; and with EWAS in Bani Zeid, Beit Fajjar, and Al Musader.

## 5. DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED AND SECURITY ISSUES

During this quarter the closures and checkpoints, governmental cash flow problems, and political changes resulted in increasing social problems, particularly in Gaza. The most serious security concern during this period was the escalation in internal violence between rival Palestinian parties and the resulting overtake of the Gaza Strip by Hamas. The LDR senior management team postponed visits to additional sites in Gaza due to the security situation and the Gaza Office was closed on a couple of occasions to ensure staff safety. The new government in the West Bank under the leadership of President Abbas is offering potential new opportunities for reengagement and economic investment. It is hope that through these new mechanisms the LDR program can scale up its support to LGUs.

ANNEX A  
LDR STATUS SHEET

# ANNEX B

## LDR PROFILE NEWSLETTER

# ANNEX C

## LDR PRESS RELEASES