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

تواصل - TAWASOL

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

Sixteenth Quarterly Report



Cover Picture: Youth Mayors from LDR's Youth Shadow Local Councils evaluate the pilot YSLC activity.

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

IP	Implementation Plan
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CDP	Community Development Project
CE	Civic Engagement
CEP	Center for Engineering and Planning
CEP	Civic Engagement Project (of ARD Inc.)
CHF	CHF International
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
D&G	Democracy and Governance
DOS	Department of State
Geo-MIS	Geographical Management Information System
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
LAC	Local Action Committee
LDR	Local Democratic Reform program
LG	Local Governance
LGUs	Local Government Units
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDLF	Municipal Development & Lending Fund
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
PA	Palestinian Authority
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
PPM	Participatory Performance Monitoring
PPW	Participatory Planning Workshop
STTA	Short-term Technical Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	West Bank
WBG	West Bank and Gaza
YSLC	Youth Shadow Local Council

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Executive Summary

This 16th Quarterly report for the Local Democratic Reform program (LDR) covers the progress and achievements of the program during the period of 1 July – 30 September 2009 under Cooperative Agreement (CA) number 294-A-00-05-00242-00. The report follows activities laid out in the Implementation Plan approved by USAID on 25 June 2008, which covers the period between 1 April, 2008-29 September, 2009. The complementary PMP was later approved by USAID in August 2008.

On 30 September 2009, USAID approved a new program extension for a two year extension (years 5 & 6) and expansion of the LDR program. Modification ten to the CA was instituted extended the program duration by two years from 30 September 2009 until 30 September 2011 and provided additional \$16 million in funding to bring the total award amount to US\$36,999,952. Modification #10 also increased the obligation to \$27,999,952.

At the national level, several significant events took place during this reporting period which will have a significant impact on LDR over the coming two years. During August, the Fatah 6th General Conference party held its political Conference in Bethlehem. The Conference helped to re-new focus around certain issues facing the central government. In August 2009, the PA announced “The Thirteenth Government Plan” which addressed several critical development areas, including in the Governance Sector (see Annex C for excerpts from the document). Both of these significant political developments, a long time in coming, serve to help focus the development of governance structures and initiatives which will ultimately help garner the necessary political will around several of LDR’s activities. In fact, the goals of the Thirteenth Program for the Local Governance sector directly address several of the key interventions which LDR has planned to support at the national level.

While LDR’s national counterparts were focused on these important events, LDR worked diligently with its national level partner, the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG). The Minister of Local Government selected and approved a new vision for the Ministry, as formulated by CHF’s advisory group. A comparative study of three governance systems was completed, presented to the Ministry and discussed as part of the process of building a vision for the MoLG and the wider local governance sector. An additional survey and study on the relationship between LGUs and the Ministry was also completed and open discussions were held between the Ministry and the LGUs as a step towards articulating and enhancing the relationship between the Ministry and the local governments they oversee. LDR also launched a series of strategic planning training for the Ministry in preparation for it to develop its own 3-5 Strategic Plan as articulated as a goal in the PA’s Thirteenth Government Plan.

At the local level, LDR launched its multi-step Strategic Development Framework process with 10 West Bank LGUs. The process will ultimately result in 15 Strategic planning documents that will comprehensively engage all local stakeholders in addressing the community needs in all planning sectors. The Hebron Business Re-engineering Process came to its conclusion with the Mayor and Council’s approval of the Municipal Corporate Plan and Business Model. Significant work was also completed on the piloted records management and archiving automation activity in three municipalities.

During this reporting period, LDR completed 5 Community Development Projects (CDPs), bringing the total number of CDPs completed under LDR to 38. LDR also completed the tendering of two of LDR’s biggest CDPs to date, the Hebron Public Peace Park and the Salfet emissions center. Initial construction activities began on these two highly visible projects, which will have positive benefits for these LGUs and their communities.

It was a busy quarter for LDR’s Civic Engagement Component, supporting over 3,000 children and youth in governance-themed summer camps in both Gaza and West Bank partner municipalities. The

camps provided a structured, but relaxed environment in community settings in which the children could explore and practice through play themes around children's rights, stewardship of the environment, and civic participation. The children explored these themes through art – drawing the environment they imagined is possible, creating songs, and writing plays which allowed them to practice negotiating and conflict resolution skills.

In Gaza, LDR's rehabilitation works began implementation and neared completion, including minor repairs to sewage networks and the clearing and widening of agricultural roads. During this period, USAID approved the addition of 3 new partner municipalities in Gaza: Wadi Gaza, Wadi Salqa and al Maghazi.

The following summarizes the program achievements to date:

1856 participants have been involved local government officials and their staff are being trained in subjects including financial management systems, budgeting, physical and strategic planning, performance monitoring and evaluation (M&E), project management, maintenance and operation, vocational training, project design and efficient tendering & procurement procedures, community outreach and engagement, and LGUs administration.

- **38 CDPs have been completed to date. All other projects which will ultimately benefit more than 1,000,000 citizens are currently under construction.**
- **Over 3,000 children participated in Governance-Themed activities in the West Bank and Gaza from June 1-September 30 2009.**



Children in Gaza illustrate a clean and healthy community

1.1 COORDINATION WITH USAID

A large, public inauguration took place on July 30th for the newly completed Public Library in Beit Jala in the presence of the Prime Minister, the US Consul General and the USAID.

In July, LDR staff attended a USAID hosted democracy and governance meeting to discuss program linkages among the D&G portfolio and opportunities for greater collaboration.

During this reporting quarter, LDR maintained close communication with USAID in regards to the preparation and planning for the program expansion plan.

1.2 PROGRAM STAFFING

During this reporting period, there were no major staff changes within LDR, as the program is now fully staffed.

LDR examined its staffing plan in light of the 2 year expansion plan. Several positions will be added to cover technical areas in which LDR will concentrate its work during the next phase of programming, including policy reform, civic engagement and capacity building interventions.

1.3 PROCUREMENT

During this reporting period, no significant procurement orders or activities were undertaken by LDR. Vetting for on-going work was completed efficiently through USAID during the quarter, and no major delays were experienced in terms of contracting out work to be done. LDR completed the external beautification works of several projects on which construction had been completed as cost savings had been realized in the initial construction works due to favorable changes in the exchange rate.

From L to R: The Mayor of Beit Jala, the Prime Minister, the USAID Mission Director, CHF WBG Country Director and the US Consul General inaugurate the new Public Library in Beit Jala on July 30,2009.



OBJECTIVE 1: To Enhance the Capacity of MoLG to effectively assume a leading role towards the development and implementation of a vision, policies, regulations, and institutional frameworks for a democratic local governance system in WBG.

1.1 OBJ1-ACT1: Ministry of Local Government Institutional Assessment and Stake Holder Analysis

The institutional assessment and development framework prepared under LDR for the MoLG was finalized in late 2008. The results of the assessment provide the background and reference for work to be completed under objectives 1.2 and 1.3 as discussed below.

As a result of the work on the assessment, MoLG requested LDR's support in helping to develop organizational models for Local Government Units. Last reporting period, the LDR-developed models for LGU organizational structures were approved by the Ministry of Local Government.

During this reporting period the instructions for implementing the new organizational structure and staff deployment guide were printed by LDR and disseminated by the MoLG to its LGU partners.

1.2 OBJ1-ACT2: Development of 3-5 Years Strategic Development Plan for the MoLG

As a result of the announcement of the Thirteenth Government Plan which calls for the MoLG to develop a 3 Year Strategic Plan for the Ministry, the MoLG appointed two internal committees to lead the process of formulating the Plan. With LDR support, the MoLG held a workshop on September 28, 2009 with 25 staff from the Ministry to finalize the mission and vision for the Ministry as the first step toward developing the over-arching principles of the plan.

Capacity Building activities were also completed as it relates to this exercise, described in greater detail in section 1.3 (1).

During the next reporting period, the Strategic Plan for the MoLG will be finalized and approved, and

LDR will assist with the dissemination of the plan.

1.3 OBJ1-ACT3: Implementation of MoLG Development Activities

LDR's Capacity Building and Development activities fall into 5 areas. Progress on each of these areas is detailed below:

1) Supporting the MoLG in *developing a 3-5 year strategic plan.*

LDR's aim in this area is to both assist the MoLG in developing its internal strategic planning process, as well as to help it be a model and leader for its municipal partners in strategic planning.

In July 2009, LDR conducted a comprehensive needs assessment of 60 MoLG staff to gauge their level, familiarity and work with strategic planning to date. From July 25-August 3rd, 4 consecutive trainings were held with MoLG staff on the strategic planning process. Eighty (80) staff were trained in total both from the central Ministry as well as staff from its directorate offices. In September, LDR then hosted a training of trainers workshop for 21 MoLG staff chosen from the 80 trained, as well as 11 other staff from the Ministry-appointed committees who are responsible for developing the Plan. The aim of this ToT workshop was to provide participants with the skills, tools and abilities to train their peers in strategic planning.

2) Articulating and building consensus around the *vision of the Palestinian local governance sector*

During this reporting period, LDR completed a comparative study of three local governance systems around the work. The three case studies developed looked at the contexts and systems of: South Africa, Lebanon and Switzerland. Each of those cases brings a unique context and local government structure which decision makers in Palestine can take into consideration when developing

their own vision.

Switzerland was one case study selected due to its highly decentralized governance system covering a small, relatively homogenous ethnic group. The second case study selected was that of South Africa, chosen because of its historically fractured society which has put together a federal system and has developed recently many new governance tools working to balance central and decentralized powers. The third case utilized is that of Lebanon, which entails several layers of decentralized systems, but similar to Palestine, lacks strong central policy and oversight. Each of these systems entails different levels and types of participation on the part of citizens and how and where they interact with their governance systems.

On July 22nd, LDR brought together 50 senior staff from the MoLG to discuss the study. The workshop sparked a discussion on the pros and cons of Palestine's current systems and ways which it may be adapted in coming years to make it more efficient and responsive to its citizens.

3) Supporting the **Guidance and Monitoring function, including policy functions** of the MoLG by establishing operational guidelines, building staff capacity, preparing manuals, and training of LGUs.

Following the work during the last reporting period which developed an agreed upon work plan for the MoLG's Guidance and Monitoring unit, LDR worked with the Ministry to further refine the roll of this unit and to develop the details of the implementation plan which will enable the MoLG to further enhance the function of this unit. As such, LDR has agreed with the MoLG to support it over the next two years in helping to develop the necessary policies and by-laws that will guide the sector as a whole, while simultaneously building the capacity of MoLG and directorate staff to undertake their monitoring rolls in an effective fashion.

4) Supporting the **coordination function of the MoLG** by institutionalizing the role and functions of the newly established coordination unit



LDR Staff and advisory board meet with the Minister in July to discuss program planning



LGU presents challenges to the MoLG, August 2009



The Minister of Local Government presents a training certificate to one of his staff members for completing the Strategic Planning

Last quarter, LDR established the terms of reference for establishing a new unit within the Ministry to improve its ability to coordinate assistance in the local governance sector. During this reporting period, LDR provided equipment and office furniture to establish the coordination office and in August 2009, seconded a Project Coordinator to the Unit and by the end of August, the key functions of the unit were agreed upon and the Unit became functional.

5) Supporting the *relationship between MoLG and LGUs*

Historically, the weak capacity on both the municipal side of Palestine's local governance system and the national side at the MoLG have contributed to the strain in relations between the two bodies. In order to fully consolidate the developmental and strategic processes that is now being undertaken in the local governance system, it is important to ensure the relationship is well functioning.

During this reporting period, work continued on examining the key issues of this relationship and questionnaires were distributed to MoLG and LGU staff on this relationship. Based on this, the study was finalized and during August and September 2009, LDR supported the MoLG in bringing together its LGU partners to discuss the report and the future vision and plans for the Local Governance sector. Ideas which resulted from this conversation was the need for an interactive website as well as a joint magazine/newsletter for the sector.

Other Activities:

Local Governance Sector Working Group:

During this reporting period, the LG Sector Working Group agreed to form 4 Synergy Groups to coordinate assistance in the sector. LDR is a working

member of each group to provide its input and experience working with the LGUs and MoLG to the discussions. The 4 Groups consist of: The Amalgamation Synergy Group, The Legal Framework Synergy Group, The MoLG Institutional Development Synergy Group, and the MoLG Capacity Building Synergy Group.

IT Support:

The MoLG has requested LDR's assistance in updating its Website, as well as conducting IT Assessment Study for the MoLG. During this reporting period LDR began the development of an MoLG website. Two staff have also been trained in maintaining that website and it is expected to be launched in early November 2009. Additionally, LDR conducted a Ministry-wide needs assessment to determine the IT needs of each internal department and to map out working systems between those departments. Based on that assessment, LDR will continue to provide support in building internal IT systems for the Ministry.

Financial Budgeting and Analysis Software:

The MoLG requested LDR's assistance in developing a software to assist in the preparation and analysis of the budgets prepared by LGU partners. In August, LDR presented a sample of the software it developed to 17 MoLG and directorate staff and the software was finalized during this reporting period. The purpose of the software is to give detailed financial analysis for LGUs budgets in accordance with international budgeting standards, and to provide essential reports to decision makers within the Ministry.

OBJECTIVE 2: To Strengthen Local Government Institutions and Leadership to more Effectively and in a Transparent, Democratic and Accountable Manner: Assess and prioritize needs; implement integrated strategic planning and performance monitoring processes; deliver and manage infrastructure and basic services.

Activities under Objective Two are classified into three components:

Component A: Needs Assessment, Participatory Planning and Performance Monitoring Processes.

Component B: Delivering and Managing Infrastructure and Basic Services.

Component C: Civic Engagement and Good Governance Promotion.

When interlinked jointly, the three components contribute to strengthening the overall capacity of each targeted LGU towards meeting the set objective. Progress made in each of these areas is highlighted in the respective sections below.

COMPONENT A: NEEDS ASSESSMENT, PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING PROCESSES

2.1 OBJ2-CA-ACT1: Community Mapping Exercise

LDR has completed the Community Mapping Exercise in 13 communities under the first phase of the LDR program. The LDR team has re-examined the scope of this exercise to bring it in line with the activities and outputs of the new Implementation Plan, as well as the new Program M&E Plan.

The mapping of socio-economic data was completed during this reporting quarter in 14 additional communities under the Strategic Development Framework process (see Objective 2.4). Going forward, this activity will be maintained as part of the Participatory Planning Workshops and the Strategic Development frameworks.

2.2 OBJ2-CA-ACT2: Identify and Prioritize Community Needs Utilizing Participatory Process

This activity was completed during previous reporting periods. With the additional two years of funding now approved, LDR will be re-initiating this process in new partner LGUs.

2.3 OBJ2-CA-ACT3: Build LGUs and Citizens Capacity in the Design and Implementation of Participatory Planning Processes

As of the last reporting period the targets under this objective were reached, activities here consisted of consolidating the knowledge gained from the trainings delivered. The Participatory Planning process will remain an integral activity in the next two years of programming.

2.4 OBJ2-CA-ACT4: Strategic Development Frameworks

The goal of this assignment is to assist 15 targeted partners in WB LGUs prepare a 3-5 year strategic framework and will build on the previous training delivered to these LGUs on Strategic Planning. The first phase of the assignment was launched during this reporting period for 10 of the partner LGUs: Illar, Arrabeh, Azzoun, Tubas, East Salfeet Cluster (5 communities), Bir Zeit, Alram, Altharriyeh, Beit Fajjar and Yatta.

During July, LDR developed the Community Profile and Strategic Framework Toolkit. In each of the participating LGUs, LDR formed a Key Stakeholders Committee, as well as a Project Manager responsible for leading the process.

Over the next two months, LDR held training and working sessions in each participating LGU to present the SDF methodology. Once that was completed, during August LDR then held 3 centralized workshops with the stakeholder groups to develop the community status/community profile reports. Over 170 participants from the LGUs, CBOs and

private sector participated in these workshops. The workshops included training on how to use the SDF toolkit. The community profile reports were completed then by each LGU in September 2009.

Based on these profiles, the second step of the development framework will be undertaken during the next quarter which consists of developing the integrated strategic development plan.

2.5 OBJ2-CA-ACT5: Participatory Performance Measurement Training

All activities under this activity were completed during previous reporting periods.

In order to institutionalize the self-assessment tool which LDR rolled out in prior quarters, LDR will incorporate the outcomes of this exercise into the strategic planning methodology process as part of the Strategic Development Frameworks.

During the next phase of LDR, LGUs will implement a PPM evaluation which introduces and uses 9 core competencies to evaluate the leadership within each LGU against a set of self-developed benchmarks. The benchmarks were developed during PPM training workshops which took place in 2008 with the participation of more than 120 LGU staff, mayors, and civil society representatives. LDR will then develop a Toolkit out of this methodology for use by the LGUs.

2.6 OBJ2-CA-ACT6: Enhance LGUs Understanding of Physical Planning Processes, Regulatory Framework, Methodology and Tools

All activities under this activity were completed during previous reporting periods.

COMPONENT B – DELIVERING AND MANAGING INFRASTRUCTURE AND BASIC SERVICES

2.7 OBJ2-CB-ACT1: Implement Identified Priority Community Development Projects

During this reporting period, 5 projects were completed, while another 8 projects are under implementation, including 2 in Gaza. It should be noted that several of the ongoing projects under implementation are some of the largest and most complicated in terms of scale, resources and design.

Additionally, during this quarter, LDR re-started CDPs in Gaza and made significant progress towards completion.

During this reporting period, several of the schools constructed, rehabilitated or expanded through LDR opened for the new school year, enabling hundreds of students across the West Bank to access education in welcoming and roomy facilities.

Community Development Projects

Arrabeh, Jenin Governorate. Construction of a Multipurpose Hall, \$152,000 (USAID), \$15,015 (Community) – 100% complete. The 350 sq m hall was inaugurated on 10 July 2008. It should be noted that prior to the official inauguration the hall was rented out by the municipality for several social, cultural and educational events, providing a much needed service to the community and generating good income for the municipality. Many surrounding villages are also using the facility which is located in a beautiful public park. The municipality is using the local media to publicize the availability of the hall for rent for various activities taking place in the Jenin area.

Azzoun Project 1, Qalqilia Governorate. Construction and Equipping of a Public Library, \$52,500 (USAID), \$7,200 (Community) - 100% complete. The library was officially inaugurated in August 2008 with the presence of USAID representatives. The municipality hired a librarian and several educational activities are already taking

place at the library including a writing competition organized by LDR, the municipality and the LAC.

Azzoun Project 2, Qalqilia Governorate. School Construction and External Works. \$330,000 (USAID), \$154,145 (Community) - 100% Complete including External Works.

While the construction of the school was completed in previous reporting periods, during this reporting period, LDR completed external works of the school, including the asphaltting of the central school courtyard. The construction of 4 extra classrooms will relieve over-crowding and allow for space for over 150 additional students. The construction of the Azzoun Boys' school is comprised of a ground floor equalling 630m² (5 classrooms and administration rooms), sanitary units, surrounding walls, asphalted yards and other external works. Construction began in June 2008 and was completed in March 2009. The preliminary hand over took place on March 16, 2009. The community contribution towards this project is valued at \$154,145.

Sabastia Project 1, Nablus Governorate. Provision of Waste Containers and an Educational Program, \$15,000 (USAID), \$2,100 (Community) - 100% Complete. 60 solid waste containers procured and delivered in previous quarters are still in use by the municipality of Sabastia.

Sabastia Project 2, Nablus Governorate. Retaining Walls, \$ 90,000 (USAID), \$ 12,150 (Community)– 100% Complete. The construction of a critical retaining wall, 100 linear meters in length, sidewalk and cladding of stonewall was completed in August 2008 and handed over to the LGU. The retaining wall provides protection to a main road in the town allowing for road expansion and construction of sidewalks, and will prevent traffic deaths that have occurred in the past on this section of road.

East Salfit Cluster, Salfit Governorate. Expansion and Development of an Existing Youth Community Recreation Center, \$222,300 (USAID), \$63,000 (Community) - 100% Complete. Construction of this recreation center began in August 2007 and was completed in June 2008. The project hand over was carried out in the end of June 2008 and an official inauguration

occurred on August 28th 2008 with official USAID and PA representatives present. The community contribution towards this project was valued at \$63,403. The project generated 2,578 days of employment. The center serves the LGUs of Hares, Kifr Hares, Deir Istia, Marda and Qireh. In March 2009, a Mother's Day event was held at the center during which 700 people from surrounding villages attended. The festivities included education and awareness raising events.

Bani Zeid Project 1, Ramallah Governorate. Completion of a Public Community Center (Construction and Finishing), \$138,500 (USAID), \$ 74,300 (Community) - 100% complete. The finishing of the 800 m² skeleton was completed and handed over to the municipality in October 2007 for use by local community groups and NGOs. The construction of the project generated 1,326 days of employment.

Bani Zeid Project 2, Ramallah Governorate. Rehabilitation of Football Field, \$317,000 (USAID) -100% Complete. The construction started in May 2008 and was completed in February 2009. The project is the construction of a regional facility which will serve all communities west of Ramallah. The project was to be handed over by on March 26, 2009 after the Contractor fixed issues noted in the December 2008 preliminary handover. The project generated 882 days of employment. The matching contribution by the community is \$396,504.

Abu Dies Project 1, Jerusalem Governorate. Support for Master Planning and Support to Selected Local NGOs through the Rehabilitation and Upgrading of their Facilities, \$30,000 (USAID), \$5,000 (Community) - 100% Complete. All activities on this project have been completed, including the completion of aerial photos for planning purposes, and the construction of the social society hall for local NGOs. The list of surveying equipment that required a USAID waiver for the Source, Origin and Nationality will not be done, as the equipment falls under the ineligible category for commodities.

Abu Dies Project 2, Jerusalem Governorate. Half Olympic Swimming Pool - ON HOLD.

The project scope was finalized between the Municipality, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and neighbouring communities to ensure an appropriate facility for the entire region. It was decided that the best use of resources was to construct a half Olympic sized swimming pool, due to the close proximity of another Football field in a neighbouring community. Draft engineering designs were completed. However no significant progress has been made yet as there are potential issues related to the possibility that of parts of this park are located in Area C which would require Israeli approvals. During this quarter, LDR provided designs to Israeli authorities and had several conversations with them, but no approval has yet been given. This project will now be considered "ON HOLD" pending any change in status as it relates to Area C permissions

Beit Fajjar, Bethlehem Governorate. Community Social Center, \$123,000 (USAID), \$38,000 (Community) - 100% complete. LDR contribution was completed and the facility was officially inaugurated in March 2008. The LDR team provided all needed information to the ARD's Civic Engagement Project (CEP) to provide a grant to the Center for the procurement of equipment and furniture. The project generated 2,053 days of employment.

Al-Thahrieh Project 1, Hebron Governorate. Construction of a Public Parking Facility, \$166,000 (USAID), \$ 168,600 (Community)-100% complete. The construction of a new parking facility for public taxis and buses began in Al Thahrieh in July 2007 and was completed in December 2007. Despite some initial problems with utilization, LDR worked with the municipality and users to improve the use of the facility and it is now working near capacity. The project generated 1,531 days of employment. The community contribution towards this project was \$168,592.

Al-Thahrieh Project 2, Hebron Governorate. School Construction, \$ 158,000 (USAID) - 100% complete. The school which includes 7 classrooms, a teachers' room, two basement rooms, external works and sanitary unit was handed over as planned in mid May 2008. The construction of the school generated 3,074 days of employment. The community contribution towards this project is

estimated at \$125,466.

Illar, Tulkarem Governorate. Construction of a Football Stadium. \$147,000 (USAID). \$84,000 (Community) - 100% complete. The football field was officially inaugurated on 22 April 2008 by the USAID Mission Director and the Minister of Youth and Sports. Usage of the facility is reported to be at capacity. The construction of the facility generated 1,307 days of employment.

Tubas Project 1, Tubas Governorate. Aerial Photograph, Mapping Plotter and Training on Usage and Equipment, \$11,500 (USAID), \$4,200 (Community) - 100% Progress. The aerial photographs have been completed and were delivered to the Governorate at the end of 2008.

Tubas Project 2, Tubas Governorate. Youth Activities Center, \$220,000 (USAID) -24% Progress. LDR will build three additional floors to an existing municipal building adjacent to the municipality, adding an area of approximately 265 m2. The floors will be used as follows: The first floor - A multipurpose meeting room, the second floor - A sports hall with offices for the Sports Club, and the third floor: A communication and technology center, offices for the women's association and offices for the Tubas Children Council. During this reporting quarter, working began on the second floor including building and casting concrete for stone walls, installing the formwork and steel reinforcement and casting concrete for window jambs and lintels and building blocks for facades. Work has generated 400 days of employment thus far. The project is expected to be completed at the end of December 2009 and will benefit over 14,000 residents.

Aqqaba, Tubas Governorate. Construction and External Works of a New Boys' Primary School, \$350,000 (USAID) -100% Complete. The school consists of a ground floor of 620m2 area, sanitary unit, surrounding walls, and asphalted yards. Construction work completed on April 8, 2009 and opened in September for the 2009-2010 school year. The project generated 1,020 employment days. The community contribution generated is \$77,821. During this reporting period, LDR completed additional external works including the installation of a shading shield over drinking

point and installing seating areas around the playground.

Kufur Thulth, Qalqilia Governorate. Construction/Rehabilitation of Internal Roads, \$ 146,000 (USAID), \$36,992 (Community)- 100% Complete. The work included laying 6,000 m² of asphalt, 8,000 m² of base course, pipe culvert of 800mm diameter and a retaining wall of 40 linear meters. The project was completed the 16th of October 2008 . The project generated 198 employment days. The community contribution towards the project is \$36,992.

Ithna, Hebron Governorate. Rehabilitation of Internal Roads, \$ 315,000 (USAID), \$ 27,800 (Community)- 100% Complete. This project included rehabilitation of internal roads through ground displacement, spreading a base course layer of 5m wide, an asphalt layer of 3m wide for 4.3 km of internal roads in addition to construction of pipe culverts and retaining walls. The project generated 1, 143 days of employment. The community is reporting a major ease in transportation within and between areas around Ithna, particularly those who use the roads for the transport of their agricultural goods.

Kober, Ramallah Governorate. Construction/Rehabilitation of Internal Roads, \$288,000- 100% Complete. All work on 9km of internal roads in Kober was completed during the previous reporting period.

Baqa Al-Sharqiyeh, Jenin Governorate. Asphaltting of Internal Roads, \$ 162,600 (USAID), \$ 16,906 (Community)- 100% Complete. The work on this project was completed 13th October 2008, and included the laying of an asphalt layer of 7,000 m², 9,000 m² of base course, a small rubble retaining wall in addition to protection of the road shoulders. 472 days of employment were generated.

Kufur Ni'meh, Ramallah Governorate. Construction of a Primary Girls' School, \$296,000 (USAID), \$30,000 (Community)- 100% Complete. The project is comprised of the rehabilitation of an existing ground floor of 450 m² and construction of two additional floors for a total area reaching 900 m² (additional 10 classrooms).

All construction work was completed in March 2009. The project generated 1,745 days of employment.

Huwwara, Nablus Governorate. Rehabilitation of Internal Roads, \$ 147,000 (USAID)- 100% Complete. The project rehabilitated 4 internal roads that serve the town population. The project was completed on 12th of November 2008. The project generated 625 days of employment. The community contributed \$16, 962 towards this project. During this reporting period, the Mayor informed LDR that the Municipality and the Ministry of Health have decided to upgrade a private clinic into a government-sponsored emergency care center, as the construction of the new road now eases and improves access to the hospital.

Hebron, Hebron Governorate. Construction of a Public Park, \$700,000 (USAID) – 8% Progress. Construction was contracted and began on this public park on June 8, 2009. During this reporting period, the formwork and reinforcement for basement floor slab and stairs was laid. In the administrative building for the Park, the walls were waterproofed. The foundations and walls for the amphitheatre were constructed. The municipality is removing the debris from a demolished building to open a new location for the contractor to start working. 1,277 days of employment have been generated thus far in construction works.

Tulkarem, Tulkarem Governorate. Construction of a Sports Hall, \$ 400,000 (USAID) – 50% Progress. During this reporting period, the formwork and steel reinforcement and casting of the northern and southern tie beams and columns at 3rd level were completed. Internal and externally plastering and tiling works for the building facade, and its bathrooms were completed. Sub-frames for steel and wooden doors were installed, and the formwork and steel reinforcement and casting concrete for window jambs and lintels was also done. The painting of the steel trusses of the ceiling is on-going to ready them for installation during the next reporting period.

Ya'bad, Jenin Governorate. Construction of a Second Floor of the Boys' School, \$ 227,000 (USAID), \$26,000 (Community)- 100% Complete. The project consists of construc-

Beit Jala—Public Library



tion of a second floor of area 650m² (8 classrooms) and external work (boundary walls, re-asphalting of yards and furnishing of playgrounds). Work was completed on the 12th of October 2008. The project generated 1,605 days of employment.

Doha, Bethlehem Governorate. Construct/Rehabilitate the Hurieh Main Road and Connecting Segment, \$295,000 (USAID), \$26,762 (Community)- 100% Complete. The work included road rehabilitation equalling a length of 900m and a width of 8m. Implementation started in June and was completed on 20th October 2008. The project generated 1,682 days of employment.

Birzeit, Ramallah Governorate. Aerial Photo for Master Planning, Old City Preservation, Water Network Rehabilitation, \$132,000 (USAID) - 70% Progress. The aerial photos were taken on March 2, 2009. The water network rehabilitation was completed on the 11th of November 2008, generating 357 days of employment. In regards to the Old City Preservation, the rehabilitation of one house in the Old City which could be transformed into a hostel is at 18% completion. During this reporting period the cladding of stone-walls took place, as well as excavation for the septic tank was completed and construction works on the building started. During the next reporting period, the electrical networks will be installed and internal plastering will be completed.

Yatta, Hebron Governorate. Construction of the West Wing of Yatta Stadium, \$ 565,000 (USAID) - 100% Complete. This project was completed on June 18, 2009 and aims to serve the youth sector in Yatta and the surrounding area which lacks such facilities and is composed of the construction of 20 concrete spectators' rows at the western wing of Yatta sport stadium and building facilities like changing rooms, a first-aid unit, and sanitary units. During this quarter, all work was completed and handed over to the municipality. 2,565 days of employment were generated by the construction of the stadium. The community contribution mobilized is \$133, 709.

Beit Jala, Bethlehem Governorate. Construction of a Public Library, \$438,000 (USAID) -

100% Complete. During this reporting period, the public library in Beit Jala was completed and inaugurated. The construction of a new library will not only include a large book collection for use by students, but also a computer room and other public space to be used by the community. The project generated 2,043 days of employment.

Al-Ram, Jerusalem Governorate, Multipurpose Building, \$413,000 (USAID) - 100% Complete. The MP building will have a public library, a children's library, a games library for older children and teenagers, a multipurpose hall, and a computer center. All work on the building was completed on June 4, 2009. The work generated 2,228 days of employment. The Municipality and community contributed \$111,562 toward the construction of this facility.

Al-Jeeb, Jerusalem Governorate, Building Community Center, \$ 166,000 (USAID), 100% Complete. The project is to construct a two floor building with two separate entrances/ exits. The project was completed during this reporting period. 360 days of employment were generated by the construction of the center.

Rafat, Jerusalem Governorate, Rehabilitation of Internal Roads, \$134,000 (USAID) 100% Complete. The project includes asphaltting/ rehabilitation of a number of internal roads of 3.0 km in length. The project was completed on 12 November 2008 and generated 434 days of employment. The community contributed \$6,388 towards the project.

Bir Nabala, Jerusalem Governorate, Service Center, \$ 325,000 - 55% Progress. LDR is constructing for Bir Nabala a municipal building that will house a Service Center, Municipality Facilities and a Post Office. The tender documents were completed during this quarter with significant technical support from LDR engineers. During this reporting period, construction of internal hollow block partitions and stonewalls pointing continued and will be completed during the next reporting period. Formwork for staircase roof slab and front parapet started. The project is expected to be completed in November or December 2009. 361 day of employment have been generated thus far.

Students at Aqqaba School



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Zababdeh, Jenin Governorate. Construction and External Works of a Multipurpose Hall, \$208,000 (USAID) - 100% Complete. A multipurpose hall to serve as a venue for cultural and youth activities was completed during this reporting period on April 26, 2009. 1,493 days of employment were generated by this project. The community contribution towards this project is valued at \$105,250. During this reporting period, LDR completed external works on this facility in order to improve the landscaping around the facility to ensure the safety of the public.

Kufer Al-Deek, Salfeet Governorate, Construction of primary girls school, \$305,000 (USAID) - 100% Complete. During this reporting period, all works were completed on this facility, enabling it to be ready for the new school year in August. The works generated 963 days of employment. The community contribution towards this project is valued at \$95,554.

Salfeet, Salfeet Governorate, Construction and Equipping of an Emissions Testing Station, \$350,000— 50% progress. As there is no emissions' testing center in Salfeet, drivers must travel long distances to test their vehicles for registration. The construction and equipping of such a station will elevate this problem and provide the Municipality with income. This is one of LDR's largest projects and during this reporting period, activities for construction continued in slow mode despite due to delays on the part of the contractor. Bills of lading and source of origin certificates were provided to LDR in September and the extensive equipment will be delivered to the project site during the next reporting period. This is one of the CDPs being considered for a public-private partnership initiative.

Aqraba, Construction of a Health/Women Center facility and External Works, \$269,000— 100% Progress. LDR completed the construction of a facility which will house a medical center and a women's center on a total area of about 400 m2. During this quarter additional external works to enhance the appearance of the building and the landscaping outside the building were completed. The community contribution towards this project is valued at \$68,604 and 1,571 days of employment were generated.

Gaza Repair Works

During this reporting quarter, LDR made significant progress on works that were put on hold during the conflict in December and January. The following work was completed during this reporting period:

Rehabilitation of Sewage Network: Al Mosader. During this reporting period, work was completed on this project including the excavating of roads, and the laying of sewage pipes and installation of manholes. The network will serve a residential area of about 30 homes, as well as an industrial zone consisting of several large businesses and warehouses.

Rehabilitation of Agricultural Roads: Abasan Al Kabira, Abasan Al Jadida, Al Mosader and Al Fukhary Municipalities. During this reporting period, the work on the segment in Al Mosader was completed and progress in the three remaining areas reached 80%. The work on these roads consists of widening of dirt tracks, the levelling of the road surface, the laying and compacting of a crushed rubble material, and the fencing of the roads. The roads serve essential agricultural land to these communities which border the eastern boundaries of Gaza.

2.8 OBJ2-CB-ACT2: Develop Sound Project Construction Management Practices in all LGUs

During this quarter, there were no activities under this intervention. In the coming phase of the program, LDR plans to complete construction management manuals to be distributed to the partner LGUs.

2.9 OBJ2-CB-ACT3: Environmental Impact Measurement and Project Design Considerations

An Environmental Assessment report was prepared and submitted to the Environmental Officer at USAID for all approved activities. Mitigation and monitoring plans are kept with contractors and municipal engineers for reference and utilization during the implementation of projects.

2.10 OBJ2-CB-ACT4: Vocational Training

In order to ensure efficient and effective maintenance and delivery of municipal services, LDR provides vocational training in a diverse range of technical areas covering maintenance of electrical and water and waste water networks, in addition to welding and steel works. All vocational training interventions were completed during previous quarters.

2.11 OBJ2-CB-ACT5: Internal Municipal Functions: Development of Public Procurement and Tendering Procedural Manual

A Public Procurement and Tendering Procedural Manual, which addresses procurements of varied sizes utilized by many smaller LGUs throughout Palestine was finalized in the previous quarter. LDR worked with the MoLG to determine the best way to roll out the use of the manual to a broader number of LGUs. The manual is now awaiting MoLG approval.

2.12 OBJ2-CB-ACT6: Internal Municipal Functions: Develop and Install a Computerized Financial Accounting System in 11 LGUs

During this reporting period, LDR developed websites for 10 partner LGUs (Beit Jala, Al-Doha, Al-Tharieh, Al-Ram, Abu-Dies, East Salfeet Joint Services Council, Baqa Al-Sharqieh, Tubas, Arrabeh, Ya'abad). LDR visited the targeted LGUs to develop the implementation methodology, information requirements, and selection of LGUs' teams who will work on the task. Once finalized, this task will provide technical assistance to targeted LGUs in the development of their websites, including to LGUs' teams to enable them to maintain the website. The websites can be considered tools interaction with internal and external stakeholders, as well as tools for enhancing transparency of the LGUs' work.

All equipment, software and requisite training has been delivered in previous quarters.

2.13 OBJ2-CB-ACT7: Internal Municipal Functions: Establish a Record Management and Archiving System in 3 LGUs

LDR helped to develop the record and archiving systems for 3 WB LGUs (Salfeet, Tulkarem and Yatta). Currently, the services provided to their constituents generate significant volumes of paper and other types of e-records.

During this reporting period, LDR completed an assessment of records management needs within each municipality. Based on the assessment, a File Plan was developed for each municipality, that details out a proposed computerized systems to track all records in the municipality including applications for services, billing, internal and external correspondence, etc. Eleven (11) staff members from the participating municipalities were trained on the File Plans.

The terms of reference for the software and equipment needed to fulfill this task will be completed during the next reporting period.

2.14 OBJ2-CB-ACT8: Internal Municipal Functions: Implement a Management Restructuring and Business Process Management Project for Hebron Municipality

LDR's assistance was provided to develop a corporate plan for Hebron Municipality's internal structure. The Plan which was approved during this reporting period, refines the roles and processes of the 15 different municipal departments and work to enhance the horizontal and vertical linkages among them.

During July, the Hebron Municipal Task Force drafted and finalized the Strategic Corporate Plan which covers the next 3-5 years of the Municipality's development. The plan was submitted to the Mayor and Council for approval in July and was approved in August.

As the next step in the process, LDR helped the Municipality to Develop a Business Management

Model which details out how the Municipality will achieve the goals set out in the Strategic Corporate Plan. Three different scenarios were presented to the Council and the Mayor in August, and feedback was gathered and incorporated into a final draft.

After the Business Model was approved, LDR began to finalize the mapping of the information systems and procedures which will regulate the inter-departmental work process flow for the entire municipality.

COMPONENT C – CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND GOOD GOVERNANCE PROMOTION

2.15 OBJ2-CC-ACT1: Development of Municipal-Citizen Communication Mechanisms for 20 WBG LGUs

Under the auspices of the Minister of Local Government, a two-day workshop took place on 15th and 16th of July to develop LGU civic engagement mechanisms. The workshop aimed to gather input and feedback from the different stakeholders on the draft communication manuals prepared by LDR. Representatives of thirteen partner LGUs attended. Representatives of the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF) were also present. Their recommendations revealed their interest in the subject and their desire to expand the manuals beyond the assignment to include proposals for national policies and legislations on this matter.

Based on this workshop, the communication manuals were revised. In their current, practical form, LDR has decided to utilize them as a simplified training for the Youth Shadow Local Councils. During the next quarter, youth will be provided with training on each of these manuals, beginning with the budgeting process.

As a related activity, LDR worked this quarter to help develop websites for 11 partner LGUs. The

websites will be launched during the next reporting period and staff will be trained on the regular updating and maintenance of the websites.

2.16 OBJ2-CC-ACT2: Civil Society -Private Sector-LGU Partnership Conference

During this reporting period, LDR engaged three technical experts to help research relevant topics related to Public-Private Sector Partnerships, including:

- 1) The study on “Investment partnership projects for Local Councils” collected detailed financial reports and data on 20 investment projects in 10 municipalities to be shared with the MoLG and other interested LGUs.
- 2) The second study focuses on corporate social responsibility (sustainability), particularly business donations to LGUs and civil society organizations. Data was collected from a sample of 30 firms as well as CSOs and LGUs.
- 3) The third research aims to investigate in depth the PPP’s institutional structure, and the legislative framework regulating these partnerships.

The analysis of these studies have revealed that a legal framework for public institutions to engage with the private sector in investment projects and practices is either non-existent or discouraging of these partnerships. However, the MoLG has expressed a desire to begin to formulate policy in this sector in order to help regulate whatever activities already do exist, as well as encourage development of new projects that will increase the potential of bringing resources to localities in areas that the central government is unable to.

2.17 OBJ2-CC-ACT3: Good Governance and Civic Responsibility Campaign

The goal of the Good Governance and Civic Responsibility Campaign is to develop advocacy and information campaigns around good governance messages in LDR partner LGUs.

LDR focused on two types of campaigns - advocacy and outreach activities. Advocacy campaigns work with the LGUs and their communities around specific problematic areas that they would like to address together to resolve. The outreach activities will target citizens with the aim of building understanding of good governance themes and informing them of vital issues in the local government context.

Advocacy

During this reporting period, LDR completed all preliminary research steps and launched the advocacy campaign with the Birzeit Municipality which aims to encourage local communities to fulfill their service fee obligations by increasing the rate of payments received by LGUs for services provided.

In July 2009, field interviews with the citizens were carried out and five focus groups to gather preliminary perceptions of the public regarding the underlying causes of citizens defaulting from payment for municipal and public services provided by the LGU were also conducted. A citizen survey was conducted (350 households representing 31% of the total number of households in town) as well and the final analysis detailed citizen perceptions regarding non-payment of water service fees.

In August, a two-days training workshop was held for the Birzeit municipality staff and members on advocacy material prepared for the campaign. The workshop clarified to participants basic advocacy concepts, followed by a brief presentation on the findings of the focus group and surveys. The results were met by recognition of the LGU staff on the issues that were found to most dissatisfy citizens. Discussions were then initiated to determine the various themes publicity material could address. Among the themes discussed were messages that demonstrate the LGU achievements, share their challenges, and highlight the importance of service fees for the overall community development through projects.

Also, the results prompted LGU staff and members to consider actions that could resolve some of the recognized-issues including following-up on complaints, technical tests of the newly-placed water meters, and other detrimental issues. Also during the workshop, monitoring indicators were devel-

oped to measure the success of the campaign.

Eight billboards were designed and two posters and brochures were approved by the LGU for their dissemination. A 30-second radio spot will also be aired. All messages point to the importance of citizen fulfillment of their financial obligations towards the LGU, and their significance and role in bringing positive change to the town.

The campaign will be publically launched in October 2009.

Summer Outreach Activities

Activities and summer camps were carried out widely in six target locations in the West Bank and all 4 partner municipalities in Gaza. Remaining activities have been concluded in all targeted locations, with an overall outreach to more than 1,600 youth and children.

The summer camps focused on providing fun, creative extra-curricular activities which also introduced important governance themes such as civic education.

As part of the effort to extend and improve the program next year, the civic engagement team held evaluation workshops in August to assess the areas of strengths, weaknesses, and their recommendations for a potential future program. Participants pointed to their satisfaction of the implementation-approach which relied on the participation of multiple CSOs. Moreover, the CSO expressed their desire to implement the same activities during other seasons including the Ramadan season.

Following is a synopsis of the events undertaken during this reporting period in each locality:

Illar: A summer camp titled “Today’s Generations are Tomorrow’s Leaders” was implemented. Children and youth participants engaged in multidisciplinary activities that contributed to their educational, cultural, and personal development. A closing ceremony was held to present the outputs of the summer camp: a children’s local council, painting and handicraft exhibition, a sports team, and a dabkeh group. Other activities in Illar included tree planting, first-aid training, and a clown performance to children. In total, 392 youth and children

participated, 200 of which were female.

Sabastia: Around 180 children participated in the summer camp in Sabastia. A field trip was conducted for all children as part of the recreational activities of the summer camp and a multitude of specialized trainings were delivered to participants: on folklore dance, dabkeh and theatre.

Zababdeh: Two 6-day summer camps were held in Al-Zababdeh with participation of 255 children. Activities included a two-day field trip, a two-day puppet show and performances for kids, and two-days dedicated to the environment (educational workshops, cleaning and tree-planting day). Apart from the summer camps, a town hall meeting was held with the LGU mayor and members with children, youth, and the general public. The partner CSO also organized 4 supplementary academic courses for prospective Tawjihi students on English, physics and mathematics for both academic streams in which 98 students participated including 32 young women.

Yatta: Three summer camps (10 days) reached out over 240 participants in June and July 2009, most of whom were young girls and children with special needs. Three training courses were provided on the following topics: Communication skills, institutional building, and gender and the role of women in labor. Town hall meetings were also conducted between summer camp participants and the LGU.

Ithna: In Ithna, four summer camps benefitting more than 330 children were held in total, including one for 80 orphaned children. All summer camps in Ithna were organized under the slogan “Municipality and Citizens: An Enduring Partnership”. During the other camps, the mayor visited the camp and interacted with the children. A Town Hall meeting was also held in Ithna specifically for children, offering them an opportunity to meet with the LGU members and mayor.

Al-Thahreya: Summer camps for 200 children (120 were females) were held in Al Thahreya in June 2009. Children participated in a theatre show addressing the theme of adequate nutrition and was attended by 150 children, 25 mothers, and staff of participating CSOs. A training courses for another 32 children under the “exceptional children program.” was also undertaken.

Gaza Strip

Eight camps in 4 partner LGUs in Gaza took place in June and July 2009 in which over 800 children participated. As part of the standard governance program, a children were exposed to governance themes, environmental stewardship, and children’s rights. Theatre shows, field visits and trips, visits to municipalities and question sessions with Mayors were all part of the program. Children also enjoyed recreational activities consisting of hand-made kite running and sports competitions.

The Theme of Governance Summer Camps in Gaza was “Let’s Live!”



Beyond Service Delivery: LGUs Respond to Social Needs through CHF's Summer Outreach Activities

CHF-sponsored summer outreach activities were more than recreational outlets for children and youth. Implemented in the West Bank and Gaza, the activities forged a new relationship between LGUs and their communities, extending their role beyond mere service delivery.

The need for such a program was voiced by LGUs and their civil society alike. On the one hand, a number of LGUs approached CHF-LDR with requests to implement outreach activities that respond to the social and recreational needs of various societal segments. On the other hand, several CBOs expressed their desire to carry out activities that demonstrate civic education in the context of local governance. The 2009 Summer Outreach Activities has successfully realized these objectives.

Adopting a participatory approach, the program established steering committees in each of the participating localities, representing the LGU and the partner CBOs. Accordingly, the committee has jointly designed, planned, and shared responsibility in implementation. This method has proved fruitful in determining the most urging societal needs, and in contributing to a positive interaction and participation between LGUs and their civil society.

Children at a Summer Camp in Yatta



2.18 OBJ2-CC-ACT4: Youth Shadow Local Councils

Summer Camps

During this reporting period, YSLC summer camps were held in Al-Ram, Beit Fajjar, Kufur Ni'meh and Salfeet. A range of educational and cultural activities have been carried out including fine arts, drama, and sports. The distinguishing element in these summer camps was its integration of local governance concepts into the activities.

Beit Fajjar YSLC continued its fast-pace progress, demonstrating yet again its capacity to carry out diverse initiatives on its own. During the last day of the summer camps, a field trip was held for the participants to the city of Ramallah. Also during this period, the YSLC members organized two events, a play for the children and a lecture about eye injuries. The YSLC members also engaged in various activities including attending a workshop on strategic planning for the town of Beit Fajjar.

Based on the successful experience with the YSLC-implemented summer camps, LDR also supported YSLC-sponsored Ramadan activities in Beit Fajjar, Salfeet consisting of awareness campaigns and raising citizen attention to the importance of safe driving. Also during Ramadan, Iftar gatherings were organized for youth council members, the general assembly, the elderly and people with special needs in their communities. Cultural nights and educational contests were also implemented during this month by the youth councils. Around 220 people of which 80 are of special needs attended these events.

YSLC Community Projects

The YSLC in Salfeet held a kick-off event for its second community project entitled "Communication between Generations." The project aimed to connect and enhance the relationship between the younger and older generations. Specifically, the project activities exhibited the role of elderly in upholding and promoting heritage and tradition. It included a field trip for 15 of the town's elderly women in the care of the Elderly Society. During the event, the grandmothers sang, danced, cooked and showed the younger generations their traditional methods of making handcrafts. In return the

women hosted an event, attended by over 80 people, to honor the students who passed this year's secondary school exams. Public figures were in attendance including the Salfeet LGU mayor and the Governor of Salfeet.

Safe Driving Campaign: During August and September, the YSLCs designed creative, publicity material for their safe driving campaign. A set of 8 messages were printed as bumper stickers/posters and were distributed for all four YSLCs for their dissemination among the community. Also part of the campaign, banners were hung in each locality and a number of car windshield sunscreens were distributed in the community. The stickers and posters include short, catchy methods warning drivers against using the cell phone while driving, obeying the speed limit, and anti-smoking messages.

YSLC Final Conference and Evaluation

On July 24th 2009, 55 members from LDR's YSLCs held a workshop to discuss the sustainability prospects for the four youth shadow local councils. Some expressed their desire to register the councils formally. Discussions around frequency of elections, forming a central secretariat, and developing a mentoring program for members also took place. The participants also discussed the agenda for the final YSLC conference convened in mid-August.

The final YSLC conference and closing ceremony were held on the 19th and 20th of August 2009, where all YSLCs presented their achievements, personal stories, video clips, pictures and handcraft galleries. 150 Youth attended the event.

On the first day, all 52 members of the youth shadow local councils were recognized and given certificates for their participation. This was followed by the official opening of an exhibition which displayed the work of the youth-run summer camps. Following this, the Mayors from the participating LGUs shared their experience with the YSLC, and they expressed their support and enthusiasm for the anticipated extension for the project. They answered specific questions from the youth about how they would be supported, and other general questions related to how the YSLCs interacted with the actual local councils.

The second day was devoted to future planning, and engaging the youth council and general assembly members in and evaluation and discussion of the pilot activity. Working groups discussed how to move forward with the Youth Local Councils, extending the role of the general assembly, improving their relationship with LGUs and their communities, and exploring innovative ideas for more vital community projects. The event convened with a presentation by the project external evaluator, who assessed the different stages of the project. The evaluator concluded with a recommendation to extend the project in both scope and reach.

3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Cross cutting themes such as Support to Moderate Leaders, Youth Positive Engagement, Gender Mainstreaming and Citizenship Promotion continue to be fundamental principles to the implementation of all of LDR's activities, and as such are integrated into program activities.

Support to Moderate Leaders

LDR continues to support key partner LGUs in which moderate leaders show keen support to developing good governance practices in their communities. LDR partner LGU leaders are showing a strong commitment to the good governance themes by opening their doors to children and youth during the summer camps, engaging actively in change management processes within their institutions, and engaging in serious, problem-solving conversation with the Ministry of Local Governance on how to address issues within the Local Governance Sector.

Youth Engagement

LDR's activities are designed to enable democratic participation among the youth. Starting with children and youth, the program introduces them through the Ramadan activities and the Youth Shadow Local Council, key governance themes, and provides hands on practice around those themes.

Democratic Participation

At the municipal council level, LDR is providing the municipalities with several tools to encourage participation of their citizens in their local government, whether it's at the place where the constituent meets its local government as a customer of a service it provides (such as the Hebron Business Transformation intervention), or by encouraging citizens to pay for the services that it does provide to citizens (Bir Zeit water fee payment campaign).

Transparency, Accountability and Anti Corruption

The Interventions focused on automating LGU functions is one which aims to address the needs to make municipal functions more transparent to the average citizen, while also holding their leaders accountable for the services they provide.

Civic Awareness

The Ramadan and extra-curricular activities that LDR has been implementing in Gaza over the past few weeks seek to build citizens' awareness around key themes which link with how they relate to their governments, including child rights. The activities simultaneously provide a safe place for youth and children to gather and explore these themes.

Local Governance Dialogue

Creating dialogue around local governance themes is a goal LDR aims at through both national and local levels.

It is important that LDR facilitates a constructive dialogue on the future of the local governance system, and is attempting to do this at the national level through several means. One is through the ongoing work on the relationship between LGUs and the MoLG. A survey will be conducted which will gather the exact perceptions of what each side considers the problems with the relationship. From there, a strategy focused on improving this relationship around the most contentious issues will be developed. The second area that LDR is creating a dialogue is the comparison of local governance systems. By comparing the pros and cons of different governance systems in different contexts around the work, Palestinian stakeholders will be able to come to a consensus on which type of system best suits

Al Ram—Where LDR Interventions Meet



One kilometer north of Jerusalem and backed up against the Separation Wall is Al Ram with a population of 65,000 Palestinians. Not all of them are originally from Al Ram but many moved there due to the political situation and the town's proximity to Jerusalem. Beginning in 2007, the Israeli forces started construction of the separation wall around Al Ram, leaving hundreds of workers with no access to their working place in Jerusalem and inside Israel.

The USAID-funded Local Democratic Reform Program established its contact with Al Ram local council in 2007, first holding a Participatory Planning Workshop which resulted in the recommendation of three priority infrastructure projects; one of which included the construction of a multipurpose center for the town. LDR responded in November 2008, beginning the construction of the center, with a budget of just US\$ 380,400 and a community contribution of US\$ 131,626. Seven months after the construction began, the two storey building was completed, generating 2,291 working days for unemployed workers during this period.

That was the infrastructure. Simultaneously, LDR's civic engagement component was supporting Al Ram in forming a 15 member Youth Shadow Local Council, involving students from 8 schools (public and private s) in the election process. Mr. Muhanad Shaheen the LGU director was proud stating that, "The youth shadow council is mature enough to a level that made the local council offer these youth the chance to act as an actual council in the town for one day, utilizing the local council offices and facilities during that day." The Al Ram youth shadow local council quickly became an active, well-known, popular and visible force in the community, due to its voluntary activities and social interaction with the community.



cont....

In addition to youth and infrastructure, LDR also invested in building the local council staff capacity in several fields. LDR conducted 15 training courses and workshops for Al Ram and one fifth of the local council staff (10 persons) took advantage of these training opportunities over the last two years. The impact of these trainings was not limited to the individual staff members but reaches the local council administrative system.

According to the local council director it was a major change when the finance department staff began insisting on having 3 price quotations for any kind of purchases, a significant change in practice which they were exposed to during the financial training provided by LDR. This practice is now an official procedure. The Director states, “We know it is normal and should have it, but our staff didn’t use it before the training.”



Al Ram staff during a PPM workshop

Staff also received training in the delivery of services for which the LGU is responsible. In the case of Al Ram, this is electricity. Mr. Marwan Bsaio an electric technician with Al Ram observes, “Despite the long experience I have, there were things that was new for me during the LDR electricity training I took.”

Al Ram is just one of several model partner LGUs which are benefitting by the interface of the multi-faced activities that have been implemented by LDR to improve the entire service delivery to the community.



YLSC voluntary activity

the current operating and contextual environment of the West Bank and Gaza.

Having now initiated face-to-face meeting between the MoLG and the LGUs, LDR is now beginning a critical phase of the program which will impact a large number of other LDR interventions. First, it will be able to guide practically and realistically what has been until now mostly theoretical work on the vision of the entire Palestinian local governance sector. Second, it will bring to the forefront the major areas of contention between the oversight body (MoLG) and the actual implementers of local governance (LGUs) and will clearly highlight particular policy and action areas that can be concretely addressed by those in the governance sector through high impact interventions. Lastly, and in the longer term, this dialogue will both strengthen the role of the MoLG through the clarification of their role in meeting the needs in the local governance sector, and will simultaneously strengthen the LGUs by providing them a national platform on which they can express and advocate for their needs.

4. VISITS & VISIBILITY

During the reporting period, the inauguration of the Beit Jala Public Library was a highlight event that took place on July 30th, 2009. The event was attended by the out-going US Consul General, Jake Walles, as well as the USAID Mission Director, Dr. Howard Sumka, the Palestinian Prime Minister, Dr. Salam Fayyad and the CHF Country Director Ms. Lana Abu-Hijleh.

Mr. Jacob Walles, who had attended the cornerstone laying for this project in October 2008, congratulated the Mayor and the residents of Beit Jala, for “this remarkable building and accomplishment. The municipality of Beit Jala and CHF have been great partners for us and USAID In helping implement this project.” Remarking on CHF’s participatory implementation methods, Mr. Walles added, “The other thing that impresses me is that the idea for this library came from the people here in Beit Jala and was developed by the municipality. It’s a very good model of how to do development projects across the West Bank and Gaza.”

LDR’s summer camps and Ramadan activities on the West Bank and Gaza also gained much media attention as highlighted in Annex B.

5. COORDINATION & LEVERAGING

The most significant need for coordination and leveraging at this point in the LDR project is presenting itself at the national level.

LDR has joined the LG Sector Working Group Synergy groups as an active member to ensure that its activities are in line with other donor interventions, and more importantly, to help inform the sector in general as one of the largest partners working directly with capacity building of the LGUs.

LDR is also continuing to coordinate and leverage other USAID-funded programs, including those in the D&G sector.

6. DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

This past quarter was filled with critical developments in the governance sector, which have generally been beneficial in creating an enabling environment for reform in the local governance sector.

However, the moves of all government actors, whether local or national, are under the spot light by citizens now due to many internal and external developments. Palestinians are looking carefully at the PA’s actions as it relates to possible Peace negotiations with Israel, the response to the Goldstone report, and its response to events in Gaza. The expected announcement of national elections is also a factor which plays into general trends in the governance sector.

LDR partner LGUs in Gaza also feel a lot of pressure both from their citizens to deliver on essential services and from the de facto government who is closely monitoring events in the communities.

7. MONITORING & EVALUATION

During this quarter, LDR launched its Interim Program evaluation on the West Bank. The exercise has two main goals; the first is to inform LDR and its stakeholders on how the practices, interventions, and methodologies that LDR has implemented over the past 4 years have helped or hindered LDR in meeting its program objectives and to suggest ways to improve the impact and sustainability of the program interventions moving forward. The second aim of the evaluation is to conduct a survey of citizens and LGUs on their perceptions of the main challenges facing the local governance sector, including the participatory practices and level of communication at the local level. The results of the evaluation are expected to be concluded in December 2009 and will help inform LDR on methodologies and interventions that can be modified over the next two years of programming to achieve greater program impact.

In preparation for the approval of the new Annual Implementation Plan, the PMEPP was updated to capture data on any new interventions which will be undertaken by LDR in the upcoming two years.

The existing PMEPP chart with actual deliverables to date is attached in Annex A.