

## Governance

# Local Governance Reform Programme II (LGRP II)

## Background

Palestinian local government units (LGUs) have a storied history which predates the establishment of the Palestinian Authority. They are the key institutions for delivering services to citizens. Yet, only a small number of LGUs can fulfil all the functions mandated by law.

The multifold effects of Israeli occupation, territorial and social fragmentation, the difficult economic situation and lack of clarity of LGUs roles and responsibilities are key impediments to an effective service delivery of Palestinian LGUs. As Palestinians have advanced their state building process, the interplay of different government levels is being redefined and the local governance sector is undergoing important reforms to build bridges between the state and its citizens.

## Objective

In its second commissioning period, the Local Governance Reform Programme (LGRP II) supports municipalities and Village Councils in improving their performance in service delivery.

LGRP II is implemented by GIZ in close partnership with the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF), and the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA), in addition to other national bodies such as The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), as well as selected municipalities and civil society organizations. The programme is co-financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and coordinates closely with other donors active in the sector to achieve maximum sustainable effects.

Project name	Local Governance Reform Programme II
Commissioned by	The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Co-Financed by	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Project region	West Bank and Gaza
Partners	Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)
Duration	April 2019 – March 2023

### The programme works in four main intervention areas:

- (1) Strengthening participatory local & spatial planning:** Improved participation of citizens in local planning contributes to more inclusive and responsive development plans, focussing on priority needs of the local population. Including considerations of costs of proposed projects and available budget into the planning process fosters the implementation of adopted plans. This allows LGUs to utilize their limited financial resources more effectively and to manage expectations of the public. Standardized digital platforms enhance availability and access to spatial and socio-economic data of various institutions. This increases the efficiency of local governance processes and improves quality and transparency of decision making.
- (2) Improve local financial management & access to finance:** Efficient and transparent management of financial resources is a key element towards improved local service provision. Enhanced tools and procedures of financial management of LGUs and more accurate calculation and monitoring of costs of essential services contribute to a more effective use of revenue potentials. Other measures aim at enhancing local government procedures to maximize their potentials for own source revenue generation.



Left: Workshop for community-driven rehabilitation of a public place in Kufr Roman, Anabta Municipality, 2020

Right: Photo from the Public Relations Technical Hub, Ramallah, 2019

### (3) Strengthening constructive state-society-relations:

Institutionalization of Social Accountability tools such as public hearings, social audits or expenditure tracking promotes constructive interaction of citizens and local governments on their performance. Additionally, enhanced audits as well as standardized Grievance Redressal Mechanisms enable LGUs acting more transparent and accountable. This is complemented by promotion of solution-based citizen journalism and other measures fostering a constructive dialogue between citizens and local governments.

### (4) Improve vertical and horizontal relations between different administrative levels:

Clear roles and responsibilities of LGUs towards their citizens and vis-à-vis the national level is a prerequisite for effective local government structures and processes. Platforms for exchange and learning between LGUs are strengthening coordination of local governments amongst each other and contribute to mobilizing and using existing know-how. Through partnerships with German LGUs and international exchange, Palestinian LGUs benefit from international expertise. A capacitated Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) performs as an important stakeholder for the promotion of local government interests and issues at the national policy level. All LGRP interventions are implemented with a special focus on active involvement and participation of women and marginalized groups to effectively bring in their voices, needs and priorities. Tools and approaches developed consider the different levels of capacities and resources of municipalities and Village Councils.

## Achievements

- Reformed methodology for local development planning has made public participation obligatory and enhances spatial dimension;
- All Palestinian LGUs publish their annual SDIP's and ACIP's on the platform [www.baladiyat.ps](http://www.baladiyat.ps);

- Participatory Strategic Development Investment Plans (SDIP) and Annual Capacity Development Plans (ACIPs) are eligibility criteria for access of LGUs to funds of the Municipal Development Programme (MDP);
- Establishment of regional hubs to facilitate the finalization of Master Plans ongoing;
- Municipal bylaws on mayors, councilors and LGU employees, on LGU finances as well as different own source revenues adopted;
- Increasing number of LGUs publishing their budgets in a citizen-friendly format;
- Social accountability tools mainstreamed through capacity development measures of the MDLF;
- Pilots for the community-driven recreation of public spaces (placemaking) commenced in 7 locations;
- Public hearings as direct feedback mechanisms of citizens towards local officials established in Nablus area;
- Knowledge exchange platforms for LGU staff on financial management, local planning, PR/ communication, innovation as well as for Village Councils established;
- Upgraded websites of the MoLG ([www.Molg.pna.ps](http://www.Molg.pna.ps)) and the APLA ([www.APLA.ps](http://www.APLA.ps)) provide userfriendly information on the institutions.

## Covid 19 Response

On behalf of the governments of Germany and Switzerland, LGRP II and the Strengthening Youth for the Stabilization of Palestine Programme (SYSP) have supported the Palestinian LGUs in their fight against the Corona Virus Pandemic, through MoLG and APLA. The LGUs have been supplied with preventive gear and material to protect the frontline workers while performing their duties. This aims at maintaining basic public services such as waste collection and hygiene safeguarding during the crisis.

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Registered offices Bonn and Eschborn, Germany  
Yvonne Mueller | Head of Programme  
Programme House (2) for Development Cooperation  
Al Bireh/Palestine  
T +972 02 2408541  
[Yvonne.Mueller@giz.de](mailto:Yvonne.Mueller@giz.de)  
[www.giz.de/en/worldwide](http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide)

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