التعاون الألماني
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Local Governance Reform Programme II

Mapping Knowledge, Innovation, and Tools

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

APLA	Association of Palestinian Local Authorities
ACIP	Annual Capital Investment Plan
Area C	Designated areas in the West Bank declared as administrative units under Israeli civil and security administration in the 1993 Oslo II Interim Agreement
GIS	Geographic Information System
GRM	Grievance Redressal Mechanism
LGU	Local Government Unit
LNOB	"Leave No One Behind" (principle of Agenda 2030)
LGRP	Local Governance Reform Programme
MDLF	Municipal Development and Lending Funds
MDP	Municipal Development Programme
MFAT	Municipal Finance Assessment Tool
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MoF	Ministry of Finance
PA	Palestinian Authority
PACC	Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PLA	Palestinian Land Authority
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDI	Spatial Data Infrastructure
SDIP	Strategic development and investment plan
STCAT	Service Total Cost Analysis Tool
VC	Village Council
WG	Working Group

Introduction

Dear Reader,

We are glad you find your way to our knowledge map!
Do you happen to be an expert in a local government or the governance sector? Based in Palestine or elsewhere? An expert working in development cooperation? Or just curious to find out what this is all about? Then, this knowledge map is the right place for you!

We, the GIZ team of the Local Governance Reform Programme II (LGRP II), have compiled what we believe to be the programme's most relevant and interesting results, innovations and tools that have been developed between April 2019 and March 2023. We offer impressions, insights, facts and figures around the project as well as informative material which holds our learnings and showcases our work. We show the relevance and effects of the German contribution to the Palestinian local governance sector along our main intervention areas Spatial and Urban Planning, Constructive Citizen-State Relations, Local Financial Management as well as further cross-cutting principles such as partner orientation, inter-institutional cooperation, gender sensitivity, the sustainable development goals of the Agenda 2030, including environment, climate and leaving no one behind. We offer insights into good practices, the "dos" but also the "don'ts". We trace back methods and strategies that are the foundation of our work. And lastly, we want to offer concrete examples of success stories, and highlight how our often so technical work has a long-lasting and positive impact on the ground.

All these contributions to core processes in the local governance sector in Palestine have a long history and are embedded in the broader context of German-Palestinian development cooperation. GIZ is a service provider in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development dedicated to shaping a future worth living around the world. On behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, we implement several programmes in the focus areas of Sustainable Economic Development, Education and Employment as well as Peace and Social Cohesion, including Governance in Palestine. The overarching objective of the Palestinian-German development cooperation in the focus area of governance is to contribute to effective, transparent, accountable and responsive public institutions and, thus, to increased legitimacy and acceptance of state action. In this, local governments play a central role – and this is where LGRP II comes in. GIZ actively supports the different stakeholders in the local governance sector in various modes and foci since around the year 2000, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. For the first three years, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation co-financed the project with a special focus on the support of marginalised groups and Village Councils (VCs).

LGRP II has supported municipalities and Village Councils in improving their performance with regard to accountability and responsiveness to citizens, coherent and integrated development and spatial planning, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, as well as access to finance and revenue generation. Improved participatory planning and social accountability mechanisms contribute to better service delivery and improved living conditions for all Palestinians, including marginalised groups such as women, youth and persons with disabilities.

In all intervention areas, we implement our interventions in close cooperation and collaboration with our political partner, the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), as well as other

Young Gaza citizen participates in a training on local governance and community leadership

important national stakeholders and authorities such as the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF), the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA), the Palestinian Land Authority (PLA), and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). Furthermore, several selected local governments and civil society organisations are actively involved in the activities.

With this knowledge map, we focus on the achievements and learnings from LGRP II, yet always keep in mind that they are built upon previous programme phases and represent the joint results of our cooperation with our wide range of partners. And they will be further utilised and, on their part, build upon in our follow-up phase LGRP III which is planned to commence by April 2023.

The central piece of this publication is our "LGRP II Knowledge Map". A range of available material and several different knowledge formats are interlinked here, organised along our key thematic areas:

1. Inclusive and Integrated Local Development and Spatial Planning,
2. Constructive Relations between Citizens and Local Governments,
3. Fiscal Abilities of Local Government Units (LGUs),
4. Cross-Cutting Principles

Each thematic area opens with an insight into selected illustrated impact figures, followed by an integrated thematic factsheet. In each of the knowledge map's sections, you can click on the respective titles of the documents. You will then be directed to
- the full text integrated into the PDF at hand, or
- information on the respective document in a nutshell, including the link to the external website where you can access the full text or video.

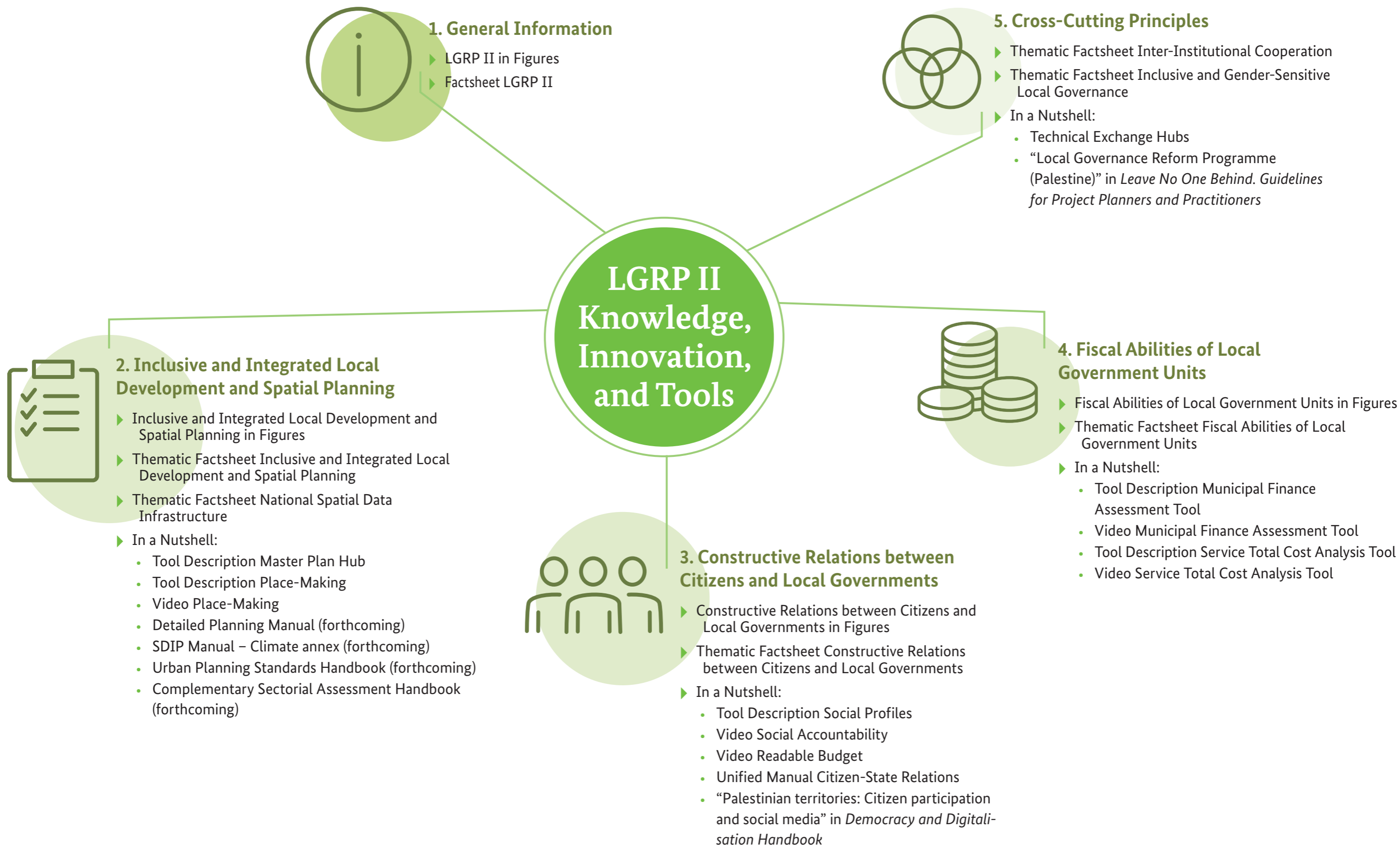We invite you to delve into the diverse thematic areas we have had the pleasure to work in and find relevance in the compiled knowledge. Should you get curious and would like to learn more details about any of our intervention areas, please don't hesitate to contact us at our website or even more directly at LGRP_Palestine@giz.de!

Your LGRP II Team

Gaza citizens jointly planning a community space

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1. General Information

LGRP II in Figures

Municipalities directly reached

Village Councils directly reached

Indirectly reached LGUs

Gaza Strip:
25 LGUs reached / 100 %

West Bank:
175 LGUs reached / 43 %

73 Village Councils / 25 %

47 Village Councils in Area C / 25 %

The geographical map used in this publication is for informational purposes only and does not constitute recognition of international boundaries or regions; GIZ makes no claims concerning the validity, accuracy, or completeness of the maps nor assumes any liability resulting from the use of the information therein.
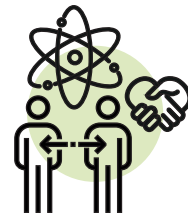
LGRP II in Figures

71 % of all Palestinians were reached, that is 3.5 m. people

49 %
Female

68 %
Youth

1000 local representatives, 20 % of them female, were trained on roles & responsibilities

2 Palestinian-German academic cooperations provide knowledge and innovation in spatial planning

9 manuals consider accountability, participation, gender and environment

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 numerous effects of Israeli occupation, territorial and social fragmentation, the difficult financial situation, and lack of clarity of LGUs' roles and responsibilities are key impediments to 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, other na-tional bodies are involved, such as the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), as well as selected LGUs and civil society organizations. The programme was 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 (September 2019 – April 2022)
Project region	Palestinian Territories
Partners	Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)
Duration	April 2019 – March 2023

Approach

The Programme works in four main interventions areas:

(1) Strengthening participatory local & spatial planning: Improved participation of citizens in local planning contrib-utes to more inclusive and responsive development plans, focussing on priority needs of the local population. Includ-ing considerations of climate change and environment as well as available budget for proposed projects fosters the implementation of adopted plans. This allows LGUs to uti-lise their limited financial resources more effectively and to manage expectations of the public. Enhanced availability and access to data of various LGU departments and other relevant institutions and use of digital technologies increases the efficiency of processes and improves quality and transparency of development decisions.

(2) Improving local financial management & access to fi-nance: Efficient and transparent management of financial resources is a key element towards improved local service provision. Enhanced tools and procedures for the financial management of LGUs and more accurate calculation and monitoring of costs of essential services contribute to more effective use of revenue potentials. Other measures aim at enhancing local government proce-dures to maximise their potential for their source of revenue generation.

Right: Youth training on local governance and community initiatives

Left: Public Relations Technical Hub, Ramallah, 2019

(3) Strengthening constructive state-society relations: The institutionalisation of social accountability tools such as public hearings, social audits, or expenditure tracking, promotes a constructive interaction of citizens and local governments on their performance. Additionally, enhanced audits as well as standardised Grievance Redressal Mechanisms, enable LGUs to act more transparently and accountable. This is complemented by the promotion of solution-based citizen journalism and other measures fostering a constructive dialogue between citizens and local governments.

(4) Improving vertical and horizontal relations between differ-ent administrative levels: Clear roles and responsibilities of LGUs towards their citizens and vis-à-vis the national level are a prerequisite for effective local governments. Structured exchange and learning between LGUs strengthen the coordination of local governments amongst each other. Through partnerships with German LGUs and regional exchange, Pales-tinian LGUs benefit from international expertise. A capacitated APLA performs as an important stakeholder for the promotion of local govern-ment interests and issues at the national policy level.

All LGRP II interventions are implemented with a special focus on active involvement and participation of women and marginalised groups to effectively bring in their voices, needs and priorities. The developed tools and approaches consider the different levels of capacities and resources of municipalities and Village Councils.

Achievements

Selected achievements of the programme include:

- Reformed methodology for local development planning has made public participation of citizens, especially marginalized groups obligatory. Also, climate change resilience aspects are more coherently included in the planning process.
- A technical support unit (Master Plan Hub) for northern governorates is established to enhance urban planning capacities and the process of master planning.
- Higher Planning Council processes are digitalised, making decisions more efficient and coherent.
- The community-driven recreation of public spaces ("Place-Making") was finalised in seven locations in the West Bank and five locations in Gaza.
- A coordination structure for establishing a Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) involving all relevant stakeholders is active and advises on policies and standards for data exchange.
- Minimum standards for Grievance Redressal Mechanisms of LGUs developed.
- A tool to calculate and analyse the costs of providing local services is developed and tested in several LGUs.
- A comprehensive tool to assess financial management capacities and suggest an action plan to improve the fiscal abilities of LGUs is developed and tested in several LGUs.
- A tool for a citizen-friendly format of LGU budgets was implemented in LGUs and integrated into the central financial portal of the LGUs.
- Social accountability tools and manuals were mainstreamed for LGUs and citizens.
- Virtual and interactive formats of solution oriented citizen journalism were implemented.
- Technical knowledge exchange platforms for LGU staff on different topics are institutionalised via APLA.

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

Right: Young citizen presents design idea during participatory planning

2. Inclusive and Integrated Local Development and Spatial Planning

Inclusive and Integrated Local Development and Spatial Planning in Figures

14 public spaces were co-created with communities in Gaza and the West Bank, a total of 11,825 m²

All 431 Municipalities and Village Councils publish local plans for accessibility, transparency and archiving

113 urban plans were finalised, 45 in Area C, a total of 195,000 dunums

21 Master Plans in Area C were updated, a total of 18,000 dunums

40 institutions establish a national Spatial Data Infrastructure

300 geospatial datasets of 30 institutions were described for clarity and discovery

Thematic Factsheet Inclusive and Integrated Local Development and Spatial Planning

Background

Local development planning is a core process that defines local authorities' development policies, priorities and proposals which guide and shape day-to-day decisions over essential public services. Spatial and local development plans provide the layout for future growth and development and are the mandatory basis for projects to enhance the public service delivery and the living conditions of the Palestinian population. Considering the limited space available as well as the huge regional disparities, a coherent and integrated planning approach is essential for the sustainable, inclusive, and socio-economic local development of Palestine.

Core challenges of effective local development planning in Palestine include:

- The involvement of residents and other relevant stakeholders is stipulated by the planning methodology, both in the development as well as in the annual monitoring and updating of local plans. However, participation is still weak, in particular of women and marginalized groups such as youth or people with disabilities.
- Awareness and knowledge on an effective balancing of socio-economic needs with environmental and climate-change-related aspects are still weak.
- The human and technical capacities of the planning authorities to process spatial plans are limited, leading to significant backlogs in the finalisation of plans.
- Only a small percentage of the planned projects are implemented, undermining the trust of the citizens in their local authorities.

Approach

Cooperating with a broad range of partners, the Local Governance Reform Programme II (LGRP II) contributes to the establishment of an inclusive and sustainable urban develop-ment practice that better responds to citizens' needs through interventions at the national as well as local levels. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) and selected Local Government Units (LGUs), tools and approaches are being newly developed or further enhanced, aiming, e.g., to provide for more effective participation of marginalised groups, to enhance the adaptation to climate change, to strengthen the strategic orientation of local plans, and to increase the transparency on adopted plans and the status of their implementation. Potentials to integrate digital technologies to enhance the efficiency and transparency of planning processes are identified, tested, and standardised. Cooperations of Palestinian and international universities facilitate the inclusion of state-of-the-art knowledge and provide for the next generation of planners. By including new standards, tools, and approaches in the national planning methodologies and guidelines, LGRP II contributes to a more coherent and conducive regulatory framework for spatial and development planning. This is being complemented by capacity building and training for local urban planners and by providing platforms for knowledge exchange and peer learning amongst LGUs.

Inclusion of women and marginalised groups in local development planning

To include the needs and priorities of women and marginalised groups more effectively in local planning, LGRP II developed a tool based on social surveys. The "Social Profiles" tool helps to understand the social context of the specific LGU and the needs of marginalised groups in the community. Focus group discussions complement statistical data and raise awareness of the importance of community participation in the urban planning process. LGUs get a better overview of relevant social groups. Women and marginalised groups are being encouraged to actively contribute to the local planning process, raise their voices and partake in the decisions on development priorities and investments.

Left: A group of women jointly planning a public space

Right: Community-based design of a public space

Linking local development plans with Agenda 2030 principles and goals

To facilitate an integrated approach towards local development planning that considers economic, social, and ecological aspects alike, a methodology to localise the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda was adapted to the Palestinian context. The tool enables municipalities to integrate relevant SDGs into their Strategic Development Investment Plans (SDIPs).

Training seminars to capacitate local planners to apply the guidelines and enhance the planning practices towards more sustainable urban development are developed and implemented.

Easy access to Local Development Plans

Special software enables municipalities and Village Councils to digitalise their annual development plans and publish them on the internet platform baladiyat.ps. By this, the public has easy access to the up-to-date development plan of a particular location, facilitating the engagement of the public in planning and monitoring as well as the accountability of the LGUs.

Community-driven creation of public spaces: "Place-Making"

Using the creativity and resources of the local communities, LGUs and citizens are jointly developing and implementing a design for the recreation of public spaces. This participatory, bottom-up approach enables the residents to take the lead in shaping a livable urban space according to their needs and priorities. The community-centred approach with specific emphasis on including women, children, and youth as well as people with disabilities, builds on guidelines issued by MoLG and supported by UN-Habitat. It mobilises local ownership and resources for the recreation of the selected public space, fostering a partnership relationship between the LGU and the local community. The important function of public spaces is brought into the consciousness of the LGUs and the citizens – as well as their joint responsibility for it. It also aims to demonstrate that the recreation of public space can be achieved with relatively small financial means. Joint ownership of both the local community and the LGU is an important precondition for sustained maintenance of the space.

Spatial and Master Planning

LGRP II supports the establishment of one out of three regional planning centres, i.e., Master Planning Hubs. The Hub, under the coordination of MoLG, provides additional planning capacities to both the LGUs and the MoLG directorates for the finalisation of pending master plans. Additionally, in close cooperation with An-Najah University, the hub acts as a laboratory to pilot-test an enhanced detailed urban design methodology with emphasis on a collaborative and multi-disciplinary process of shaping the physical setting for life in cities, towns, and villages.

Achievements

- The amended planning methodology makes development planning more inclusive and more responsive to climate change. The Social Profile tool is integrated into the SDIP methodology. The process guidelines on the integration of the Agenda 2030 and climate change adaptation measures form an official annexe to the manual.
- SDIPs developed in a participatory manner are eligibility criteria for municipalities to access funds of the multi-donor Municipal Development Programme (MDP) implemented through the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF).
- The Social Profile tool was piloted in 95 municipalities in Gaza and West Bank, as well as in 40 Village Councils.
- All municipalities and Village Councils publish their digitalised SDIPs & ACIPs at baladiyat.ps.
- 68 urban plans for areas A and B and 45 updated plans for Area C (covering more than 150,000 dunums and
- 37,000 dunums respectively) are reviewed and finalised.
- The detailed planning manual, the urban design manual and the urban planning standards booklet were developed.
- Applying the Place-Making tool, 14 public spaces with a total area of 12,000 m2 have been co-created with the communities in two municipalities and five Village Councils in the West Bank as well as seven municipalities in the Gaza Strip.

Promoting Geoinformation Quality with a National Spatial Data Infrastructure

Background

Geoinformation is inherent in planning and decision-making in national and local governments. Streamlined service provision to citizens is conditioned on the availability and efficient management of geoinformation which is a challenge at the level of a single organisation, let alone across multiple ones. Yet, a great deal of planning processes is cross-organisational, thus requiring geoinformation from multiple entities. Geospatial data sharing and integrated management across governmental organisations are, therefore, imperative for informed decision-making, as well as effective planning and service provision. Nationally and globally, the importance of geospatial data as a viable data source for the Sustainable Development Goals' indicator framework is increasingly recognised, calling for measures to ensure data availability and quality.

Palestinian governmental organisations often face unavailability of quality geoinformation, a hindrance from evidence-based planning and streamlined service provision. This is mainly due to inadequate data management within individual organisations, as well as the absence of policies and standards for data sharing across the organisations. The result is a compromised quality of geospatial data, manifested in the inaccurateness, incorrectness, incompleteness, and/or incompatibility of data. Timeliness and efficient flow of geospatial data among organisations are also hampered.

Against this background, the Palestinian Authority has taken the initiative to establish a national Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) to promote good governance. The national SDI aims to enhance government services and processes by establishing a framework for the integrated management of geospatial data in which roles and responsibilities in data management are defined and the quality of exchanged data is controlled.

Approach

LGRP II provides technical and financial support to the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) and the SDI National Committee and technical Working Groups (WGs) to establish a national SDI in Palestine. A national SDI facilitates interoperability and harmonisation of geospatial data across national institutions. It aims to achieve organisational interoperability with policies that define the roles and responsibilities of the various actors in geospatial data governance. It also aims to achieve semantic interoperability through common data models that define structures and contents of geospatial data.

The guiding principles of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (UN-IGIF) are observed in the Palestinian SDI. Working on governance and technology and, importantly, with people, the LGRP II advocates an approach that is (a) inclusive in which stakeholders jointly define policies, standards, roles, and responsibilities and understand their entailments, (b) agile, i.e., working incrementally and iteratively based on a realistic, adaptive action plan, and (c) parallel, i.e., building capacity of the organizations for geoinformation management in addition to policy development at the national level.

Collaborative initiatives like the SDI require the active engagement of all actors. An agreement on the objectives and a mutual understanding of the benefits and entailments is essential to establish the actors' ownership and ensure their commitment. Thus, LGRP II conducts various interventions to prepare the involved actors to take an active part in the discussions on geospatial data governance. This includes continual technical exchange as well as a study visit and multiple interactive workshops. MoLG is supported in holding discussions to create agreement on the objectives and implications of the national SDI among the actors.

Stakeholders discuss the national SDI
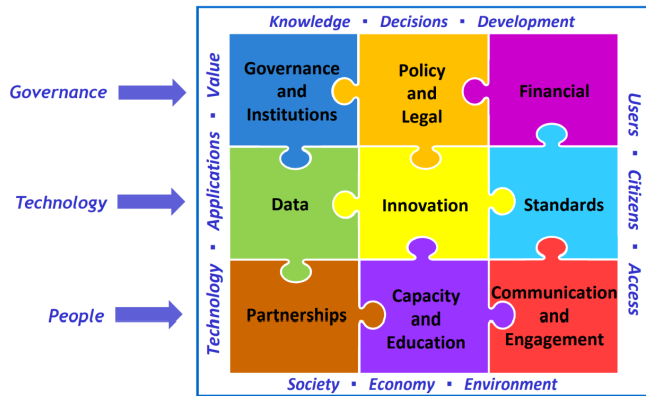
Achieving interoperability of geospatial data across national institutions is a complex task that requires a realistic, agile action plan to utilise opportunities and showcase tangible results. LGRP II supports the SDI technical WGs in reviewing the current legal environment concerning geoinformation management and in analysing possible institutional arrangements for the national SDI. The WGs are supported to adopt a standards-based metadata profile, inventory and describe geospatial resources in national institutions, and develop a data clearinghouse to enable discovery of and access to geospatial resources through standard-based data and catalogue services.

Establishing a functional SDI requires, in addition to the frameworks and standards developed at the national level, a parallel effort to build the capacity of national institutions for geoinformation management. MoLG, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the Palestinian Land Authority (PLA), and several municipalities are collaborating to enhance the geospatial data management in these organisations. The LGRP II emphasises the importance of an organisation's enterprise Geographic Information System (GIS) that streamlines business processes, enforces data governance, and enables integration with other systems within the organisation.

Achievements

- A national dialogue on geoinformation sharing and data governance is facilitated and attended by more than 60 practitioners and stakeholders.
- 40 national institutions from the public and private sector, academia, and civil society are involved in establishing the national SDI to promote geoinformation quality and availability.
- The legal environment relevant to geoinformation management and sharing has been reviewed and alternatives for the institutional arrangement of the national SDI have been analysed.
- Standard-compliant geospatial metadata records and feature catalogues were compiled for over 300 geospatial datasets in more than 30 organisations and are published in a web data catalogue for improved data discovery and understandability.
- Practitioners from over 20 national institutions have received training in geospatial metadata management.
- Support for enterprise GIS in MoLG, PCBS, PLA, and several municipalities was provided. Peer mentoring and knowledge sharing on municipal and open-source GIS were facilitated through Technical Exchange Hubs.

In a Nutshell

Tool Description Master Plan Hub	
Date of publication	February 2023
Organisation	GIZ/LGRP II team
Length	4 pages
Keywords	Master plan, urban planning, spatial planning, Ministry of Local Government, engineers, graduates, lab, digital innovations
Link to full text	https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2023-en-tool-description-design-master-plan-hub.pdf

What you can learn from this text:

- In this document, you get basic information on the Master Plan Hub tool, its functions, application, and relevance, and how it was developed by LGRP II.
- You get to know Enas, a young graduate engineer who explains her experience working in the Master Plan Hub, and how she developed her skills there.
- The text gives you an idea of how you could use the Master Plan Hub tool in other contexts.

Tool Description Place-Making	
Date of publication	February 2023
Organisation	GIZ/LGRP II team
Length	4 pages
Keywords	Community-based, spatial planning, design, public space, village council, citizen, marginalised groups, women, inclusion, rehabilitation, infrastructure, green
Link to full text	https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2023-en-tool-description-design-place-making.pdf

What you can learn from this text:

- In this document, you get basic information on the Place-Making tool, its functions, application, and relevance, and how it was developed by LGRP II.
- You learn why it was a success for Taqua and Zainab from Iraq Burin (northern West Bank) to take part in the tool's application and how Place-Making helped them to overcome challenges that existed in the village.
- The text gives you an idea of how you could use the Place-Making tool in other contexts.

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Video Place-Making

|	
Date of publication	November 29, 2022
Speakers	Derrar Ghanam (Consultant, Build Palestine), Taqwa Qadous (volunteer), Zeinab Qa'dan (volunteer), Rema' Qadous (volunteer), Ikhlas Al Ratrot (Consultant, Bayt Al Handaseh), Maher Qa'dan (Head of Village Council)
Organisation	GIZ
Length	3:48 minutes
Keywords	Community-based project, local authority, local planning, urban planning, spatial planning, architecture, rehabilitation, construction, marginalised groups, gender, inclusion
Link to full video	https://fb.watch/iQkw_LWdTs/

What you can learn from this video:

- In this video, you get to know how the Place-Making tool was applied in two Village Councils in Palestine and how this shows the relevance of the tool for urban planning with the participation of different social groups.
- Citizens and local authorities share their experience and give feedback on their participation in the process of community-based design and construction of public spaces in their communities.
- You get impressions from the community workshops conducted and from the rehabilitated and constructed spaces themselves.
- Finally, you learn about the respective contributions made by the citizens, the local authorities and GIZ.

Detailed Planning Manual

Date of publication	September 2022
Organisation	MoLG, an update was supported by GIZ
Length	70 pages
Keywords	Strategic development, local planning, investment planning, urban design, sustainability, master plan, detailed plan, guidelines, regulations, public Spaces, local authorities
Link to full text	forthcoming

COMING SOON
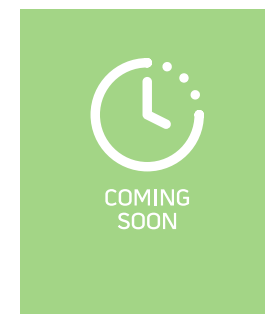
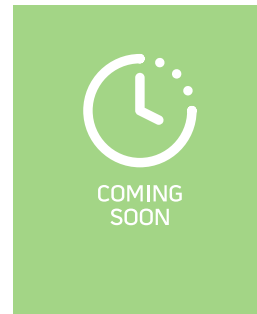## What you can learn from this text:

- This manual summarises the methodology and technical instructions to prepare detailed plans: detailed organisation plans, structural plans, and urban design plans.
- The manual illustrates the detailed planning of land use in Palestine and how the manual is being used by local and urban planners of Palestinian LGUs.

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SDIP Manual – Climate annex

|	
Date of publication	Forthcoming
Organisation	MoLG, MDLF, supported by GIZ
Length	21 pages
Keywords	Climate adaptation, local development planning, National Climate Adaptation Plan, local authorities, spatial development plan, investment plan
Link to full text	forthcoming

COMING
SOON

What you can learn from this text:

- This annex links, analyses and identifies the needs determined in the local development planning manual to climate adaptation.
- The annex was developed to incorporate climate sensitivity in spatial and development planning processes and is used by spatial and local planners of LGUs.

Urban Planning Standards Handbook

Date of publication	November 2021
Organisation	MoLG, supported by GIZ
Length	87 pages
Keywords	Marginalised localities, strategic development, investment planning, urban planning, joint planning, infrastructure, public spaces, residential density, detailed plan, master plan, public facilities, administrative centres, service centre, land use, budget, planning unit, Local Government Unit
Link to full text	forthcoming

COMING
SOON
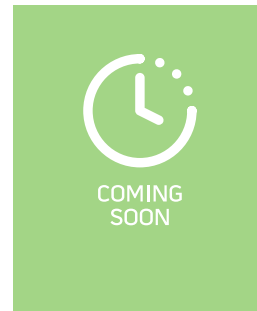
What you can learn from this text:

The handbook supports planners in:
- building and developing effective local planning standards that are compatible with the Palestinian context.
- developing the capacities and capabilities of the various regulatory authorities responsible for preparing and following up on structural planning at the local level.
- determining required area standards and guidelines for rural and urban expansion schemes, with regard to density and space per person.

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| Complementary Sectorial Assessment Handbook	
Date of publication	September 2022
Organisation	MoLG, supported by GIZ
Length	103 pages
Keywords	Sectoral supplementary plans, General Administration of Urban Planning, structural planning
Link to full text	forthcoming

COMING SOON

What you can learn from this text:

- The handbook supports planners in developing the methodology and technical guidance for sectoral supplementary plans.
- Sectoral plans clarify and detail the planning of the different sectors in the land use plans according to the Urban Planning Manual.
- The handbook exemplifies procedures and tools for preparing master plans in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Back to Knowledge Map
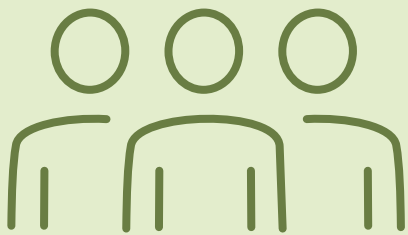
3. Constructive Relations between Citizens and Local Governments

Constructive Relations between Citizens and Local Governments in Figures

All municipalities publish their budgets in an easy-to-read format

3 digitalised social accountability tools were each applied in 20 locations

9,000 participants from civil society and local government were trained on citizen engagement

300 elected officials and municipal staff were trained on corruption prevention

95 municipalities in West Bank and Gaza and 40 Village Councils created inclusive local plans with participation of marginalised groups and women

Thematic Factsheet Constructive Relations between Citizens and Local Governments

Background

State and local government actors can only steer and govern the development sustainably if they are in a constructive exchange with civil society and the private sector. Effective public participation strengthens the legitimacy of local governments and public institutions, the accountability of decision-makers, and the transparency of government actions, and it prevents misuse of power and corruption. Solid democratic institutions responsive to the needs of the people are the basis for sustained economic growth and poverty eradication.

Core challenges regarding participation, transparency, and accountability in the local government sector in Palestine are:

- Citizen participation in the preparation and implementation of municipal budgets and plans is stipulated in the legal and regulatory framework. However, the quality of participation is still weak, specifically regarding women, youth and other marginalised groups.
- Transparency about how and on what basis decisions are being made in the administration is still low, for instance regarding the allocation of budget or public investments.
- Assertiveness and self-determination of the population in local decision-making processes, particularly of women, youth, and other marginalised groups, is still weak.
- Quality standards and tools for effective public participation, accountability and response are not yet available or institutionalised.

Approach

The development of constructive state-society relations is promoted in three dimensions, which are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

- Further enhancing the legal anchoring of participation rights and the establishment of appropriate procedures or spaces for interaction, especially at the local level.
- Measures to enhance the acceptance and promotion of citizen participation in decision-making processes and the establishment of respective institutional structures and processes amongst local governments, and their obligation to account for their actions.
- Measures to enhance the awareness and knowledge of citizens, civil society, and media on their right to hold the government accountable and to inform the citizens on the mechanisms and processes established for this purpose. Communities and civil society actors are being empowered to voice their interests and needs and effectively promote them in local decision-making processes.

In those dimensions, the Local Governance Reform Programme II (LGRP II) focuses specifically on mechanisms aligned to existing processes within local governments, such as local development and investment planning as well as budgeting and financial management in local service provision.

Social Accountability

Social accountability is about affirming and operationalising direct accountability relationships between citizens and government actors. Based on the National Toolkit for Social Accountability developed in 2016 by the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF), selected municipalities and LGRP II support the further institutionalisation of a range of actions and mechanisms that citizens can use to make local governments account for their decisions and actions.

Furthermore, selected social accountability tools are enhanced to use the potential of digital technologies and new tools are

Gaza youth during a training on local governance

being pilot tested in selected Local Government Units (LGUs). With that, LGUs and civil society shall be equipped with a wider range of tools and approaches for more effective out-reach to youth and other social groups, for instance, people with disabilities.

On the national level, existing manuals and methodologies regarding social accountability and citizen participation are unified.

Readable Budget

A "Readable Budget" is an important tool for social accountability and transparency in matters of LGU finances. In form of infographics, it summarises and explains basic budget information in an easy-to-understand manner. Aiming at enhancing the dialogue between citizens and LGU decision-makers on the allocation of financial resources, the Readable Budget provides citizens – even people without an accounting or financial background – with the necessary information on what the budget has been allocated for and how it was spent. In the scope of LGRP II further institutionalisation and upscaling of the tool are being supported, including its integration into the financial portal for LGUs, Bawwabe.

Citizen Journalism

With Dooz, the local volunteer internet and media platform in Palestine's North, LGRP II supports citizens in playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing, and disseminating news and information in citizen journalism, a special form of citizen media and user-generated content. With its specific formats, such as multi-stakeholder dialogues or interviews with local officials on issues of special interest and concern to the local population, citizen journalism provides additional channels for the political participation of citizens.

Grievance Redress Mechanisms

Current practices of handling complaints vary widely among Palestinian LGUs. To promote the establishment of effective complaint mechanisms at the local level, LGRP II supports the definition of minimum standards for LGU Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRMs) that take into account the different levels of capacities of different types of LGUs. This provides the basis for targeted further capacity development end enhancing the responsiveness of LGUs to citizens' needs.

Social Profiles

To facilitate the effective inclusion of the needs of women and marginalised groups into local development and spatial planning, LGRP II developed a tool based on social surveys. This "Social Profiles" tool helps to understand the social context of a specific LGU and the needs of marginalised groups in the community. The tool provides local planners and LGUs with a better overview of relevant social groups. Women and marginalised groups are being encouraged and mobilised to actively contribute to the local planning process.

Achievements

- 9,000 citizens, LGU staff, and members of community committees were trained on citizen engagement and participation, including women, youth, and people with disabilities.
- The Readable Budget tool was integrated into the Bawwabe financial portal and now is mandatory for the annual budget of LGUs to obtain approval by MoLG.
- Protocols on minimum standards for Grievance Redress Mechanisms for three types of LGUs were developed.
- Participatory development of local plans, Readable Budget, and compliance with minimum standards of GRMs are eligibility criteria and key performance indicators respectively for municipalities to access funds of the multi-donor Municipal Development Programme (MDP).
- 15 LGUs in the Gaza Strip adopted local policies on
- public disclosure.
- 300 elected officials and municipal staff were trained on corruption prevention and integrity.

In a Nutshell

Tool Description Social Profiles	
Date of publication	February 2023
Organisation	GIZ/LGRP II team
Length	4 pages
Keywords	Inclusion, participation, community, marginalised groups, gender, local planning, SDIPs, ACIPs, development planning, municipalities, Village Councils, local authorities
Link to full text	https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2023-en-tool-description-design-social-profiles.pdf

What you can learn from this text:

- In this document, you get basic information on the Social Profile tool, its functions, application, and relevance, and how it was developed by LGRP II.
- You learn why the Social Profiling process for Taghreed from Surif (Hebron) and Mohammad (Dora) was a success and how it helped to overcome the challenges they faced.
- The text gives you an idea of how you could use the Social Profile tool in other contexts.

Video Social Accountability	
Date of publication	2023
Speakers	Nancy Al Masri (MDLF), Doha Al Barghouti (MoLG), Anton Salman (Mayor of Bethlehem), Nour Lahlouh, Helmi Suleiman, Najia Baradi'ya, Deeya Al Faqeeh, Nida Hreish (Social Accountability Committee), Ahmad Al Aarda (Mayor of Araba), Akram Taqtaqa (Mayor of Beit Fajjar), Mohammad Adwan (Mayor of Sourif), Marwan Abdel Rahman (Mayor of Bruqeen), Yousef Al Faqeeh (Mayor of Qattana), Ribhi Doleh (Mayor of Beitunia), Ahmad Abu Al Heija (Executive Director of the Palestinian Consultative for Staff)
Organisation	GIZ
Length	8:23 minutes
Keywords	Social accountability, capacity development, municipalities, community participation, institutionalisation, roll-out, local governance, youth involvement, women, marginalised groups, people with disabilities
Link to full video	https://fb.watch/j2089jw-4x/

What you can learn from this video:

- In this video, you learn how important social accountability and its institutionalisation are in the Palestinian Local Governance Sector.
- You get to know the perspectives and experiences of MoLG, MDLF, mayors and social accountability committee members.
- Impressions of exchange sessions between municipalities and communities show you how social accountability tools are put into practice.
- You learn about the benefits of the inclusion of women, youth and persons with disabilities at the local level and the basic principles of promoting community participation in local authorities.
- You get an overview of LGRP II's contribution to the field of social accountability.

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Video Readable Budget	
Date of publication	2023
Speakers	Ibstisam Mara'aba, Lina Jildeh (MoLG), Nicola Khamis, Walid Khateeb (Beit Jala Municipality), Mowafaq Al Tmeizi, Khalil Al Tmeizi (Ithna Municipality), Mohammad Tazazza'a (Jaba'a Municipality), Arafat Al Al Fakouri (Jaba'a citizen), Ibrahim Asi (Qarawet Bani Zeid Municipality)
Organisation	GIZ
Length	08:03 minutes
Keywords	Readable Budget, transparency, social accountability, community participation
Link to full video	https://www.facebook.com/GIZ.Palestine/videos/743863300722882

What you can learn from this video:

- In this video, you get to know the objectives and the relevance of readable budgets and their institutionalisation in the Palestinian local governance sector.
- The video shows you the perspectives and experiences of municipalities and citizens on the impact that readable budgets have on their communities.
- You learn about LGRP II's contribution to the development of the Readable Budget tool.

| **Unified Manual Citizen-State Relations**	
Date of publication	2021
Organisation	MoLG, MDLF, supported by GIZ
Length	80 pages
Keywords	Social accountability, tools, guidelines, citizen-state relations, transparency, community participation, integrity, inclusion, gender
Link to full text	English: forthcoming Arabic: Final Version of Guide - July 13,2022 (mdlf.org.ps)

What you can learn from this text:

- The manual harmonises numerous existing guides in the field of social accountability.
- It fosters the institutionalisation and standardisation of social accountability tools at the local level.

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"Palestinian territories: Citizen participation and social media" in *Democracy and Digitalisation Handbook*

Chapter of	*Democracy and Digitalisation Handbook.* pages 20-22
Date of publication	2022
Authors	Ben Wagner, Carolina Ferro, Rita Gsenger
Organisation	European Commission - Directorate-General for International Partnerships
Length	2 pages
Keywords	Democracy, digitalisation, e-governance, digital participation, social media, citizen participation, local governance, Dooz, journalism, solution-oriented citizen journalism, public hearing, municipal official, online, Nablus
Link to full text	Democracy and digitalisation - Publications Office of the EU (europa.eu)
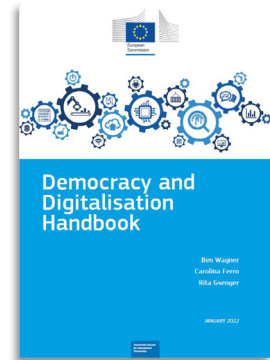
What you can learn from this text:

- In this text, you get to know how LGRP together with the local media platform "Dooz" enables citizen participation in governance with social media.
- Dooz journalist Jalaa tells you how she promotes democracy and dialogue between citizens and the local government.
- You learn about how the Dooz team came up with the idea of online public hearings for the citizens of Nablus, which became a huge success and went viral.

Further information:

The Democracy and Digitalisation Handbook provides an overview of opportunities, challenges and threats related to digital technologies. Made for practitioners, it looks at the impact of digital technology on democratic institutions while implementing international cooperation and development projects.

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4. Fiscal Abilities of Local Government Units

Fiscal Abilities of Local Government Units in Figures

78 Municipalities and Village Councils improve their fiscal abilities through action plans

60 Municipalities benefit from cost analysis for water, sewage and solid waste collection

30 municipalities participate in technical exchange on local finances

Improving the Fiscal Abilities of Local Government Units

Background

Local finances are the backbone of Local Government Units (LGUs). Local services to citizens such as piped water, sewage and waste management can only be adequately provided based on a functioning system of local finances. The fiscal ability of LGUs to provide qualitative services, however, is hampered by the tight fiscal situation of the Palestinian Authority, insufficient and unpredictable financial transfers, limited authority of the LGUs to levy and adjust taxes as well as unclear or ineffective administrative arrangements.

Collaborative Approach

Working in close cooperation with the relevant national stakeholders, namely the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF), and the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA), the Local Governance Reform Programme II (LGRP II) contributes to improving the fiscal abilities of LGUs through enhancing the normative dimension of LGU finances, the technical dimension of local finance management as well as structures and incentives for enhanced financial performance.

This includes support to reform efforts of various national and local stakeholders by creating and implementing advancement solutions and knowledge resources that contribute to improving the revenues of LGUs, optimising their expenditures, and advancing their financial management. A more sustainable fiscal position and fair, effective, and efficient public spending are promoted, as well as prioritising support to the most vulnerable. This is being complemented by supporting capacity building and training for relevant staff, in particular employees in the finance departments of LGUs, and by providing platforms for knowledge exchange and peer learning amongst LGUs.

Acting based on a comprehensive analysis of LGU's fiscal ability

To bridge the local fiscal abilities gaps and contribute to solving the weaknesses, a digital, web-based tool is developed and tested. The Municipal Finance Assessment Tool (MFAT) provides assessment and guidance to the LGU by calculating a set of relevant financial ratios, and management aspects and providing analysis to better understand their financial situation. Based on the findings, the MFAT creates an action plan advising the LGU on measures to improve their fiscal ability.

MFAT being applied at the municipal level

Optimising costs of selected services

LGRP II supported the development of a tool to better understand the behaviour of costs and facilitate evidence-based decisions to optimise costs without compromising the quality of the service. The Service Total Cost Analysis Tool (STCAT) helps to analyse the cost of services and to calculate certain operational data and performance indicators. Furthermore, it allows for cost benchmarking with other LGUs and applying fair and affordable charges that ensure cost recovery.

Training on participatory budgeting

Compliant collection of local revenues

LGUs are entitled to collect different kinds of taxes and fees as their source of revenue. The collection of revenues, however, is governed by multiple interrelated regulations that are complex to apply and adhere to. LGRP II contributes to creating a

revenue manual for LGUs that guides adequate collection of all entitled revenues and offers a clear logical structure to ensure compliance with the regulations and sufficient management of the revenue. The manual offers advice for LGUs on the adoption of local regulations standardising and optimising certain fees within their authority.

Enhancing the management of LGU's service recipient database

Significant aspects for advancing the process of revenue management and collection of LGUs are the establishment of database management formats and the provision of settings for data interoperability between the different internal and external IT systems. As a priority, LGRP II has developed the manual to create, manage, maintain, and update the subscribers' database. The manual provides detailed methodological steps to establish a transformational and standardised database. Moreover, it assists the technical units in the LGUs in performing the required management functions in the highest possible way of accuracy, consistency, and efficiency.

Support reform measures to improve the intergovernmental fiscal relations

LGRP II fosters reform measures by providing technical support to the Central Net Lending and Collection Unit. The unit has been created by the Council of Ministers to work on policy reforms related to vertical and horizontal transfer mechanisms, to create a reconciliation mechanism of mutual indebtedness, and to provide recommendations to improve the LGUs' sources of revenue. Additionally, LGRP II is facilitating the dialogue among different key national institutions to advance interinstitutional relations.

Achievements

- 76 LGUs have applied the MFAT and started to implement actions to improve fiscal abilities.
- Three LGUs, three Joint Service Councils, and one Water Utility representing a total of 90 LGs are applying the STCAT and take decisions to optimise their costs.
- More than 100 LGU employees benefitted from training on various topics that aim to enhance their fiscal abilities.
- Over 70 LGU financial managers participated in knowledge exchange platforms.
- The regulatory compliance and revenues manual was drafted and is under revision by MoLG.
- A manual to create, manage, maintain, and update the LGUs subscribers' database was created.
- A debt reconciliation mechanism was developed and is under revision by national stakeholders.

In a Nutshell

Tool Description Municipal Finance Assessment Tool (MFAT)	
Date of publication	February 2023
Organisation	GIZ/LGRP II team
Length	4 pages
Keywords	Municipal finance, assessment tool, technical analysis, financial analysis, fiscal ability, service delivery, fiscal performance, local authorities, action plans, cost analysis, guidelines, local finance management
Link to full text	https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2023-en-tool-description-design-mfat.pdf

What you can learn from this text:

- In this document, you get basic information on the Municipal Finance Assessment Tool (MFAT), its functions, application, and relevance, and how it was developed by LGRP II.
- You learn why for financial manager Mohammad from Khalet al-Maya (Hebron), using the MFAT was a success and how it helped him overcome the challenges he faced.
- The text gives you an idea of how you could use the MFAT in other contexts.

Video Municipal Finance Assessment Tool (MFAT)	
Date of publication	February 2022
Speakers	Ra'ed Sharabati (MoLG), Rebhi Doulah (Mayor, Beitounia Municipality), Mohammad Yaghi (LGRP II), Fa'ed Awashreh, Adnan Awad (Municipal finance experts), Waleed Al Khateeb (Financial manager, Beit Jala Municipality)
Organisation	GIZ
Length	7:01 minutes
Keywords	Municipal finance, assessment tool, technical analysis, financial analysis, fiscal ability, service delivery, fiscal performance, local authorities, action plans, cost analysis, guidelines, local finance management
Link to full video	https://fb.watch/j1um9RkkIC/
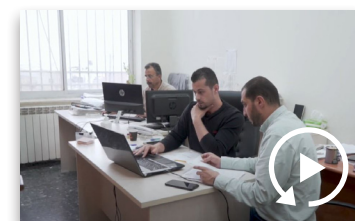
What you can learn from this video:

- In this video, you learn how important fiscal ability is to the quality of the services provided by the Local Government Units in Palestine.
- You get to know the challenges local authorities face when it comes to financial assessment of services and how LGRP II's Municipal Finance Assessment Tool (MFAT) is applied to help authorities overcome these challenges.

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Tool Description Service Total Cost Analysis Tool (STCAT)

Date of publication	February 2023
Organisation	GIZ/LGRP II team
Length	4 pages
Keywords	Service Total Cost Analysis Tool, cost data analysis, activity-based analysis, financial capacities, local finances, local authorities, service delivery, financial managers
Link to full text	https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/giz2023-en-tool-description-stcat.pdf

What you can learn from this text:

- In this document, you get basic information on the Service Total Cost Analysis Tool (STCAT), its functions, application, and relevance, and how it was developed by LGRP II.
- You learn why for financial manager Mohammad from Gaza City, using the STCAT was a success and how it helped him overcome the challenges he faced.
- The text gives you an idea of how you could use the STCAT in other contexts.

## Video Service Total Cost Analysis Tool (STCAT)

Date of publication	September 2022
Organisation	GIZ
Length	6:11 minutes
Keywords	Service Total Cost Analysis Tool, cost data analysis, activity-based analysis, financial capacities, local finances, local authorities, service delivery, financial managers
Link to full video	https://fb.watch/j1ujVl4fp1/

What you can learn from this video:

- In this video, you learn how important fiscal ability is to the quality of the services provided by the Local Government Units in Palestine.
- You learn how LGRP II's Service Total Cost Analysis Tool (STCAT) works, which services and data it analyses, and why its application is relevant for Local Government Units.
- The video shows how STCAT helps decision-makers to make service provisions more efficient and cost-effective.

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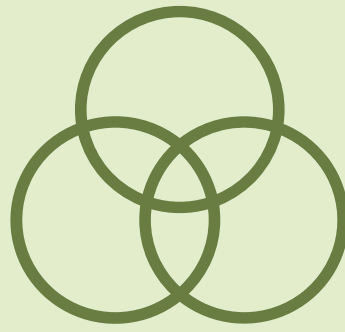
5. Cross-Cutting Principles

Fostering Inter-Institutional Cooperation

Background

Stakeholder collaboration is critical to finding solutions to the complex challenges of sustainable development. Cooperation and collaboration are the cornerstones of development – no actor can manage development and create processes for transformative change on its own. This has been reaffirmed by enshrining partnerships and collaborations as a core principle for sustainable development in the 2030 Agenda.

Decision-making in local government matters and service provision involves complex processes in which a wide range of stakeholders at the local and national levels have diverse roles and mandates, from defining the regulatory framework over providing finances to implementing responsibilities as well as controlling compliance. Thus, inclusive and responsive local governments in Palestine can only be achieved through good and effective coop-eration relationships between the relevant stakeholders.

Building relations, partnerships and collaborations can be challenging as they need all parties to agree on a common goal and have aligned interests. This holds even more in a context like Palestine, characterized by limited authority of the central government, a scattered, partially outdated and insufficiently aligned regulatory framework and a continued financial crisis of the public sector.

Approach

The Local Governance Reform Programme II (LGRP II) provides platforms and advice to various partners and stakeholders at the national as well as local levels to review and further clarify mutual roles and mandates as regards the development of the local government sector and local service provision. Personal competencies and processes to engage in constructive

dialogues and to implement change processes involving all relevant stakeholders are strengthened. Bottlenecks and inconsistencies in the regulatory framework are identified and recommendations for resolving those are provided to the respective decision-makers. The project facilitates policy dialogue and coordination between national institutions and Local Government Units (LGUs) and their representative body as well as platforms for exchange and learning amongst LGUs and other national and local stakeholders. Additionally, LGRP II promotes establishing partnerships and collaboration between institutions to generate innovations and integrate them into local government practices. Main stakeholders include the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the Palestinian Association of Local Authorities (APLA), LGUs, the Municipal Development Lending Fund (MDLF), the Palestinian Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC), the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), and universities.

Strengthened coordination and collaboration at the national level

Under the lead of MoLG, LGRP II supports its national partners in enhancing their mutual coordination and collaboration for the effective implementation of national strategies and priorities aiming at enhancing service delivery capacities, effectiveness, and accountability of LGUs and their responsiveness towards citizen needs. This includes advice on the work of National Working Groups on various topics, on setting up processes to enhance the regulatory frameworks and develop new tools and approaches involving relevant institutions, and on facilitating the use of synergies in capacity building of LGU officials and staff.

Strengthened relations between national institutions and LGUs

To further strengthen trustful and constructive relations between LGUs and relevant national institutions, advisory and change processes implemented under LGRP II consider existing experiences and perspectives of LGUs by involving relevant representatives. They focus on priorities identified by

Technical exchange between Gaza municipalities

the national level and LGUs alike. Newly developed tools and approaches are being tested with selected LGUs, embedded in a review and endorsement process by national-level stakeholders. Efforts of the national stakeholders are supported to unify and standardise regulations and requirements, responding to the different levels of LGU capacities. Collaborative efforts are facilitated regarding capacity building of LGU staff, such as orientation sessions for newly elected council members and mayors to meaningfully uptake their duties.

LGU-to-LGU learning and exchange

The Association of Local Authorities (APLA) is supported in establishing regular platforms for knowledge exchange and learning amongst LGUs. The so-called "Technical Exchange Hubs" provide opportunities to share experiences and solutions, provide spaces for capacity building and contribute to actual policy discourse and enhancement of regulatory documents and working aids. The hubs are organised along different technical topics including public relations, engineering, innovation and digital solutions, and financial management, in addition to cross-sectoral hubs for Village Councils and LGUs in the Gaza Strip. The inclusion of German expertise in the work of the hubs is promoted, in close coordination with the existing Palestinian-German municipal partnerships.

Achievements

- In a collaborative effort, MoLG and APLA oriented 1,000 newly elected Mayors and councillors on their roles and responsibilities, 20 per cent of them female.
- The partnership between MoLG and PACC for the implementation of the National Cross-Sectoral Strategy for Integrity and Anti-Corruption was operationalised. More than 400 staff and council members of LGUs received capacity building on integrity awareness and aspects of corruption prevention.
- Technical Exchange Hubs on six topics were established and institutionalised within APLA's organisational structure, involving a total number of 300 LGU staff members from the West Bank and Gaza strip.

- Two academic partnerships have been established between Palestinian and German universities, in close coordination with the MoLG. They promote knowledge transfer with Germany and the integration of innovations in Palestinian urban and spatial planning practices (An-Najah National University – HafenCity University Hamburg; Birzeit University – Technical University Berlin).

Academic cooperation on urban planning between Birzeit University and TU Berlin

Strengthening Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Local Governance in Palestine

Background

Sustainable development is only possible through the effective inclusion of all parts of society. Local government units (LGUs) are key institutions for delivering quality services to all citizens. Yet under the challenging circumstances in Palestine, only a small number of LGUs can fulfil the functions demanded by law. For sustainable development to unfold, the inclusion of all parts of society is a prerequisite. However, effectively integrating the needs of all citizens, including marginalised groups, in local service provision remains weak. There are many and diverse barriers to qualitative inclusive local planning and decision-making, resulting in unequal access to services by youth, the elderly, women, and people with disabilities.

Socio-cultural norms and beliefs, restrictive legislations by the Palestinian Authority (PA), and the Israeli occupation negatively impact civil society's access to the public sphere. Whereas the participation of women and marginalised groups has increased over recent years, the qualitative dimension is often lacking. Also, residence plays a major role: rural areas and Village Councils (VCs) often have fewer resources and are disconnected from urban centres. Residents in the Gaza Strip live under severe conditions caused by the blockade with restricted access to basic services. Palestinians in Area C live under Israeli administrative control and face heavy restrictions in the development of their communities. Against this background, the Palestinian Authority (PA) committed itself to attain Agenda 2030 in its National Policy Agenda (NPA) 2017-2022, with "Leave No One Behind" (LNOB) being a guiding principle to ensure that also the most vulnerable people are taken along on the path of sustainable development.

5 GENDER EQUALITY	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

Approach

Across all intervention areas of the Local Governance Reform Programme II (LGRP II), LNOB and gender equality are cross-cutting principles and inherent dimensions of a human-rights-based approach. With a comprehensive target group definition, mainstreaming approach and sensitive design of interventions, LGRP II ensures that its activities reduce barriers to participation and increase the engagement of marginalised groups and women at the local level. To further mitigate geographical fragmentation, the programme targets marginalised areas such as VCs, the Gaza Strip and communities in Area C.

A young female citizen presents a design for a public space

LGRP II's strategy and approach encompass:

1. Incorporation of gender and inclusion topics into advisory processes to key stakeholders in the sector
2. Development, refinement, and implementation of diverse (virtual) participation tools for wider outreach and accessibility
3. Capacity development and awareness raising for LGU staff and officials, community representatives, and citizens on inclusive approaches and social accountability
4. Improvement of regulatory framework conditions concerning gender sensitivity and LNOB based on practice-oriented research.

In those dimensions, the LGRP II focuses specifically on mechanisms aligned to existing processes within local governments, such as local development and investment planning as well as budgeting and financial management in local service provision.

Achievements

- "Social Profiles" identifying the needs of marginalised groups and women were created in 95 municipalities (25 in Gaza) and 40 VCs. A reformed methodology for local development planning now makes the participation of marginalised groups and women obligatory.
- Community-driven design and construction of public spaces were conducted in seven locations in the West Bank (five VCs) and seven locations in the Gaza Strip under the participation of women, youth, the elderly, and people with disabilities.
- LGU officials and staff were trained on concepts and tools of social accountability and the role of female leadership in preventing corruption at the local level.
- Women and marginalised groups, including youth and social accountability committees, were trained on concepts and tools of social accountability and community initiatives.
- Bedouin communities and youth in the Gaza Strip were trained on local governance issues and empowered to develop and lead community initiatives.
- Easy-to-read municipal budgets were published by LGUs for financial transparency. They have been integrated into the central financial portal as a requirement for budget requests.
- More than 20 formats of social accountability tools were implemented across West Bank and the Gaza Strip, such as "rolling chair sessions" for youth to attend municipal council sessions.
- Awareness-raising campaigns were conducted for the inclusion of people with disabilities in local decision-making processes through radio spots and workshops.
- Training for municipal staff on the inclusion of people with disabilities was conducted.
- Academic research informs policymaking at the local level, e.g., spatial analysis conducted of gendered realities in public spaces.
- More than 100 formats of citizen journalism, such as virtual public hearings and multi-stakeholder dialogues, were digitally enhanced for wider outreach and inclusion and implemented in the West Bank and Gaza as platforms of common exchange.
- The Citizen-State Relations Manual was adopted, promoting constructive citizen-state dialogue and considering the needs of marginalised groups.
- Newly elected mayors and council members were oriented on their duties and responsibilities, including women empowerment and inclusive planning and budgeting.
- National, regional, and international municipal knowledge exchange was fostered, including gender mainstreaming in project management.
- Marginalised VCs were supported with targeted capacity development measures related to topics such as financial management, IT infrastructure, social accountability, as well as spatial and strategic development planning.

Citizen during a training session on community initiatives in the Gaza Strip

In a Nutshell

Technical Exchange Hubs	
Date of publication	2020 (EN), 2022 (AR)
Organisation	APLA, supported by GIZ
Length	12 pages (EN), 15 pages (AR)
Keywords	Municipal exchange, municipal staff, technical hubs, knowledge exchange, digital, COVID-19, urban planning, engineering, Village Councils, geoinformation, public relations, financial management
Link to full text	Technical exchange hubs overview EN (2020): Brochure A4 (apla.ps)
	Technical hub activity report EN (2020): Brochure A4 (apla.ps)
	Technical exchange hubs AR (2022): THFinal (apla.ps)
	Digital technical exchange hubs AR (2022): TH (apla.ps)

م‌ن‌ص‌ات ت‌ب‌ادل ال‌خ‌ب‌رات
Technical Exchange Hubs

What you can learn from this text:

- The documents explain the background of technical hubs as formats that enhance the capacities of Local Government Units to provide better services to citizen and how technical hubs were implemented digitally during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Six already established technical hubs are introduced.
- The texts give an overview and executive summaries of technical exchange meetings held on several topics between staff from a variety of municipalities and Village Councils.

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"Local Governance Reform Programme (Palestine)" in *Leave No One Behind. Guidelines for Project Planners and Practitioners*

Chapter of	*Leave No One Behind. Guidelines for Project Planners and Practitioners.* pages 59-61
Date of publication	2020
Authors	Dr James G. Bennett
Organisation	GIZ
Length	3 pages
Keywords	Leave No One Behind, LNOB, 2030 Agenda, good practices, sustainable development, project cycle, project management, local governance, inclusion
Link to full text	https://www.poverty-inequality.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Bennett-2020-LNOB-in-DC-Guidelines-for-Practitioners-Full.pdf
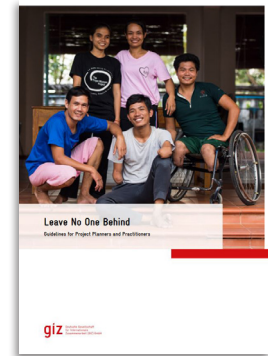
What you can learn from this text:

- The text gives a short description of LGRP II and its LNOB relevance for practitioners in development cooperations.
- It introduces LGRP II's LNOB-relevant tools and methodologies, e.g., in the area of social accountability, municipal partnerships, or accessible IT solutions.
- It summarises the general conclusions LGRP has drawn based on its experience in LNOB implementation.

Further information:

You can find the *Guidelines* on the website Aspects of poverty, inequality and LNOB, which is supported by GIZ. It presents the most important aspects of poverty, inequality and LNOB, and includes the latest reports and most relevant publications. It also provides examples of recent development work using tangible project results to show the interrelations between all three topics.

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