

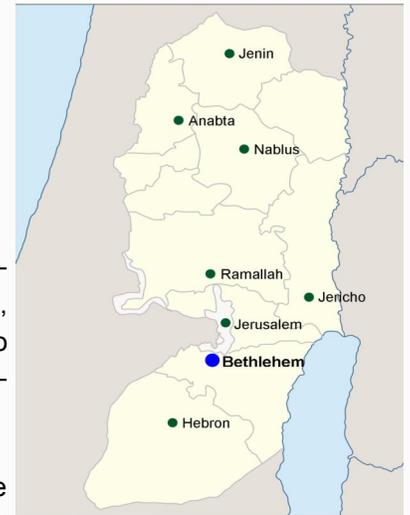
Municipal Profile: BETHLEHEM



About the Community: Bethlehem is a historic city located in the central West Bank, neighboring south Jerusalem, with a population of about 25,000 people. Bethlehem was among the first localities in existence in the West Bank, and its first election was held in 1872. In the most recent elections of October 2012, Vera Baboun was elected as the first female mayor of Bethlehem.

In 2013, CHF International and the Municipality of Bethlehem began a new partnership under the Local Government and Infrastructure Program (LGI) funded by USAID. The goal of this partnership is to further enhance the municipality's ability to meet the needs of its citizens in a transparent and effective manner.

Governance Excellence: In line with the strategy of the Palestinian local governance sector, CHF's partnership with Bethlehem will focus on three key areas, **leadership development, service delivery, and community participation** – to support the municipality's vision of becoming a more responsive, efficient, and effective center for governance excellence.



Specifically, CHF will be supporting the municipality in continuing its leadership role in developing Palestine's first **Metropolitan Plan** for Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Bait Jala, and surrounding villages. In addition, CHF will support the municipality in establishing a state-of-the-art **Citizen Service Center**, where citizens can access a range of municipal services in one fully automated location.

Along every step of the way, CHF will work with the municipality to engage citizens to get their feedback to inform government decision-making and service delivery. One key community participation innovation will be the **Youth Shadow Local Council (YSLC)**, an elected body made up of 15 members aged 15-22 that mirrors the elected local council in its formation and supports its functions and role.

Working in partnership with the municipality, the purpose of the YSLC is to sensitize youth to good governance practices and give them an opportunity to take a leadership role in their community's development. The Bethlehem YSLC was established in May 2013 following the election shown below:



“Youth are not involved in decision-making processes. No one cares about their voices. Therefore, I hope that through the activities of the youth council, youth will be encouraged to express their opinion and bring about new vision in the city.”

- Betty Bathich, elected youth council member from Bethlehem



Photo: Participatory planning workshop in Bethlehem

“Bethlehem has been in recession and is in need of a renaissance. CHF has lit up hope for success and access; they’ve shared their experiences, and we thank them for that. And I believe that our strategic planning is important; to us it means the survival of the city.”
- Vera Baboun, Mayor of Bethlehem

In close partnership with the municipal council, staff, and community members, CHF will support the implementation of a wide range of complementary activities that increase the municipality’s efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness in serving local citizens. The full list of expected interventions is included below:

Key Interventions	Expected Outcomes
Participatory Planning and Strategic Development & Investment Plan (SDIP) - (2013)	Community members have begun meeting to identify priority infrastructure projects needed for Bethlehem residents as of February 2013 and will continue that process until a new Strategic Development and Investment Plan is completed in 2013. This will be the guiding document for Bethlehem’s local economic and social development.
Municipal Strategic Corporate Plan (2013)	Based on a new municipal capacity assessment tool, the municipality will develop a Municipal Strategic Corporate Plan that outlines how the municipality will address its institutional development priorities.
Physical Plan & Metropolitan Plan (2014)	A new physical plan for Bethlehem and Metropolitan Plan with Beit Jala and Beit Sahour will ensure proper planning for local development, transportation, and zoning to ensure enhanced access to public services and recreational spaces and greater environmental protection.
Citizen Service Center (2014)	A Citizen Service Center is a state-of-the-art municipal facility that provides key services in an automated and transparent manner. To complement the Citizen Service Center, processes within the municipality will be overhauled to reduce time spent by citizens and staff to process requests.

