

Case Study Bethlehem Municipality

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Bethlehem Municipality is among the oldest municipalities in West Bank. Its first election was held in 1879. Bethlehem's council consists of 15 members (three females, and 12 males), and employs around 170 staff. It is the only municipality in the West Bank with a female mayor.

In 2013, Global Communities and the Bethlehem Municipality began a new partnership under the Local Government and Infrastructure Program (LGI). 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. During FY13 and under the LGI program, Bethlehem municipality developed its Municipal Strategic Corporate Plan (MSCP), the human resources and procurement procedures. The remaining interventions include the finalization of the SDIP, the establishment and automation of a Citizen Service Center (CSC), the installation of human resources management system, and physical and metropolitan planning.

Under leadership and management area, Bethlehem municipality engaged its community in shaping the LGU's vision and objectives for sustainable development. Community members along with LGU staff enriched the SDIP process by identifying key developmental issues related to health, education and youth, in addition to infrastructure projects that will reinforce the attractiveness of the city's tourism and overall economic situation. This enabled the LGU to start setting priorities based on solicited vision in partnership with the local community especially that over than 12 developmental themes and 67 projects must be addressed to meet the LGU's vision. In their continuous effort to engage the public in the strategic planning process beyond the open community meetings, Bethlehem municipality gathers public feedback concerning proposed priority projects through the Municipality's Facebook page. Furthermore, the regular open community meetings opened the horizon for strong partnership with individuals from local community, who offered the municipality using their own lands to establish and run some of the proposed small budget projects, like public parks and parking lots. Such initiatives would save the financial burden for buying lands, and also save the time in searching for donors, which is a milestone for the implementation of many proposed projects as a result of insufficient financial resources.



Photo Caption: Public poll posted on Bethlehem Municipality Facebook page asking if residents would like to have a CSC in Bethlehem

As a result of the municipality's participatory approach, community members attained better understanding of the municipality's organizational structure and became more conscious of its difficult

"The role of the YSLC has been recognized by Al-Quds University which has more than 13,000 students. The University has agreed to provide all the support needed to ensure proper and fruitful implementation of YSLC initiatives. – Mohammad Qrai, YSLC council member.

financial situation as well as shortage in staff. As a result, technical experts from private sector and local organizations became fully committed towards dedicating their time and experience in project design and implementation, which was a key success to overcoming staff shortage. It is noteworthy to highlight that elected YSLC members were also engaged from the beginning in the SDIP planning process by presenting their needs and vision. They have succeeded in getting approval from the SDIP committee to establish a new youth club that includes Bethlehem YSLC main office.



“The SDIP process made us realize the LGU’s strengths and weaknesses. We look forward to overcome those challenges by building strong partnership with our community.” Ra’eda Hananiya, Head of Quality Department

Under the management of service delivery, the newly endorsed procurement procedures will standardize the process and improve its efficiency and accountability. It will save time and effort by providing clear guidelines regarding procurement processes. Furthermore, the HR procedures will enable better management of human resources, reduce operation costs, and reinforce transparency in recruitment with clear organizational structure and jobs description. The HR and procurement procedures will also facilitate effective internal audit.

“I believe that the development of HR and procurement procedures will help us in achieving ISO9001 requirements. – Baher Marzoqah, Head of Procurement Department



“The preparation phase of the procurement procedures enables us to identify our internal capacity. Employees’ feedback and active participation contributed to the development of a procedure tailored to Bethlehem municipality.” – Baher Marzoqah, Head of Procurement Department.

Under the community participation competency, Bethlehem elected YSLC members have been establishing strong bonds with youth in their community, encouraging them to participate in YSLC initiatives including cleaning city streets, and environmental protection awareness campaigns. The YSLC is also supporting the municipality’s vision by spreading awareness regarding special needs and

organizing a workshop tackling the issue of “Special Needs Accessibility in Public Places”. The YSLC has been working towards building alliance with local organizations such as “Palestinian Heritage Center”, private sector and communication networks like local radios and TVs, helping them to organize and implement their activities. Such alliances strengthen and sustain the YSLC’s impact in their local community.



Overall, being a YSLC President is an enriching experience. It empowered me to raise the voices of the youth before decision makers. It also armed me with knowledge and experience in the process of strategic development. Furthermore, it enhanced my self-confidence which will help me achieve my ambition to occupy a leadership role in the future.” - Betty Babash, 22-year old Bethlehem YSLC President.