

INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN:

Encompassing Gender, Youth and Persons with Disability
2017 - 2021



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ACRONYMS

CEC	Central Elections Commission
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CESR	Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSC	Citizen Service Centre
CSNGS	Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ET	Education Tax
FDGs	Focus Group Discussions
CTP	Communities Thrive Project
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDS	Inclusive Development Strategy
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GUPW	General Union of Palestinian Women
GUPWD	General Union of Persons with Disabilities
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LED	Local Economic Development
LGU	Local Government Unit
MAP	Municipal Action Plan
MDLF	Municipal Development and Lending Fund
MoEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoLG	Ministry of Local Government
MNE	Ministry of National Economy
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NPA	National Policy Agenda 2017 - 2022
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PFM	Public Financial Management
PT	Property Tax
PwD	Person with Disabilities
SDIP	Strategic Development and Investment Planning
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TTARD	TetraTech ARD
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YLC	Youth Local Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this document is to present an inclusive development strategy (IDS) and action plan for the lifetime of USAID Communities Thrive Project (CTP) that enables the integration of inclusive development in its different assistance packages. CTP is committed to integrating considerations for social issues such as gender, youth, and persons with disabilities (PwD) into its design, implementation, and oversight of technical activities, as well as into its operational systems and internal practices.

Analysis of pertinent literature, focus groups discussions individual interviews¹ found the following main key issues that hinder inclusive development for women, youth and PwDs: heavy reliance of local elections 2017 on acclamation underlining further the vulnerability of women, youth, and PwD to pre-existing tribal, familial and factional power dynamic; the continued marginalization of the three groups and PwDs in particular; programs and projects that target women with the exclusion of men and in the process, undermine their desired results for the integration of women in municipal work; significant gender imbalance in municipal staffing; young people continue to be marginalized in decision-making processes leading to youth apathy; Youth Local Councils (YLC) are donor dependent and sustainability is a real challenge; PwDs are a highly vulnerable community and face significant obstacles to participation; and exclusion of PwDs is perpetuated by policy and legislative gaps, despite national commitments to PwD inclusion. Inclusion of women, youth and PwDs at the local level, in governance structures and decision-making processes, remains a challenge.

Therefore, this strategy will align with national and USAID priorities on inclusive development - within CTP's mandate and with its resources over the project's lifetime and through engaging local governance sector stakeholders. Specifically, this strategy will focus on fostering gender equity in local government, sustainable engagement of youth in municipal decision-making, and formal expansion of access for PwD in local government. This strategy outlines several recommendations, which focus on increasing civic participation and enhanced service delivery, to include greater involvement by women and men, youth and PwDs, which if implemented, would result in more responsive municipalities that take into account the needs of all members of their communities. This strategy links the recommendations to CTP's Menu of Options and provides two-year action plan to operationalize these recommendations. CTP is only one of many key stakeholders who are committed to inclusive development, therefore, in addition to providing specific recommendations for CTP, this strategy also provides recommendations for other sector stakeholders into tangible/doable activities.

I. INTRODUCTION

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded CTP to Tetra Tech ARD (TTARD). The period of performance for the project is five years (2016-2021). In cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) and other Palestinian institutions, this project will focus on 55 municipalities located in the West Bank. The overall purpose of the CTP is to help establish improved municipal fiscal sustainability, accountability, and service delivery. Specifically, CTP aims to (1) improve municipal revenue streams and fiscal management of municipalities, (2) increase their accountability and

¹Annex 3: List of Interviewees

transparency, (3) enhance delivery and management of the municipal services and the effectiveness of municipal operations, and (4) improve the regulatory and policy framework for municipal governance.

CTP's IDS is aligned with USAID's commitment to ensuring the inclusion of women, youth and PwDs across its programs and its Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) Framework². CTP's IDS is also consistent with the Palestinian Authority's National Policy Agenda (NPA) 2017 – 2022, and human rights treaties ratified by the Palestinian Authority in 2014³. The principles of equal rights and opportunities are also based on Article 9 of the 2003 Amended Palestinian Basic Law which states "Palestinians shall be equal before the law and the judiciary without distinction based upon race, sex, color, religion, political views or disability"⁴.

Moreover, CTP is committed to integrating considerations for social issues such as youth, gender, and people with disabilities into its design, implementation, and oversight of technical activities, as well as into its operational systems and internal practices⁵. For CTP's IDS, gender equality, female empowerment, female integration, youth and PwDs are defined as:

Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. It is not a matter of different biological and physical characteristics. Gender attributes and characteristics vary widely among societies and change over time - the fact that gender attributes are socially constructed means that they are also amenable to change in ways that can make a society more just and equitable.

Gender equality concerns both women and men, and it is achieved with men and boys, women and girls work together to bring about changes in attitudes, behaviors, roles and responsibilities at home, in the workplace, and in the community. Genuine equality means more than parity in numbers or laws on the books; it means expanding freedoms and improving overall quality of life so that equality is achieved without sacrificing gains for males or females.⁶

USAID understand that ⁷female empowerment is achieved when women and girls acquire the power to act freely, exercise their rights, and fulfill their potential as full and equal members of society. While empowerment often comes from within, and individuals empower themselves, cultures, societies, and institutions create conditions that facilitate or undermine the possibilities for empowerment. CTP is guided by this shared vision.

² <https://usaidlearninglab.org/faq/collaborating-learning-and-adapting-cla>

³ These are: Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Moreover, this strategy is aligned with the Palestinian Authority's National Policy Agenda (NPA) 2017 – 2022, the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy (2014 – 2016) and the National Strategic Framework for Disability 2012, CTP Annual Work Plan Year 1 for 2016, and USAID documents referenced in the Methodology section.

⁴ Palestinian Basic Law: 2003 Amended Law, Title Two – Public Rights and Liberties, Article 9. See: <http://www.palestinianbasiclaw.org/basic-law/2003-amended-basic-law>

⁵ Annex 1: List of References and SoW

⁶ USAID (2012). USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy. March 2012. Washington, DC. p. 3: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GenderEqualityPolicy_0.pdf

⁷ Ibid.

Gender integration⁸ will be realized by identifying, and then addressing, gender inequalities during strategy and project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Since the roles and power relations between men and women affect how an activity is implemented, it is essential that project managers address these issues on an ongoing basis and in every stage of project implementation.

Youth refers to individuals between the ages of 13 – 29, in accordance to the definition applied by the Palestinian Authority. USAID’s Policy on Youth in Development⁹, defines youth as “a life stage, one that is neither finite nor linear.” The policy states that while youth development projects often focus on individuals between the ages of 15-24, USAID projects should engage a broader cohort of individuals between the ages of 10 and 29, with the critical understanding that the transition from childhood to adulthood is neither finite nor linear and varies across and within countries¹⁰.

According to the Palestinian Authority, PwDs refers to Any individual suffering from a permanent partial or total disability whether congenital or not in his/her senses or in his/her physical, psychological, or mental capabilities to the extent that it restricts the fulfillment of his/her normal living requirements in a manner not usually faced by those without disabilities.¹¹ According to the Americans with Disabilities Act¹² (ADA), an individual with a disability is defined as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; a person who has a history or record of such an impairment; or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. These definitions are the basis for CTP’s PwD approach.

To promote national ownership, a participatory approach was applied in the development of this strategy. This included conducting key informant interviews and holding focus groups with relevant stakeholders in addition to data gathering and literature review, to triangulate information and ensure validity.

In implementing IDS for internal and external growth while at the same time ensuring all aspects of it are people-centered, CTP will apply a process and results-oriented approach to change over the coming four years. CTP will employ practical and systematic steps in implementation and seize existing opportunities while collaborating, learning and adapting with and through its partners. In the implementation of the IDS, CTP will work with existing and new institutional regulations which will in turn strengthen CTP’s overall approach towards equality and inclusiveness and further expand and institutionalize citizen engagement at the municipal level and reinforce the social contract between communities and their government.

II. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Municipalities matter in promoting inclusiveness for several reasons. Municipalities have in-depth knowledge of their community needs, are the first line of governance and service delivery, play a key

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ USAID/ West Bank and Gaza (WBG) mission youth development strategy in May 2013 adopted the same definition of youth.

¹¹ Palestinian Liberation Organization and Palestinian National Authority. Law Number 4 for the Year 1999 Concerning Rights of the Disabled. p. 2:<https://siteresources.worldbank.org/DISABILITY/Resources/Regions/MENA/PalestinianDisLaw.pdf>

¹² Americans with Disabilities Act 1990, amended in 2008 and effective in 2009, Sec. 12102: Definition of disability.

role in socio-economic development, and as such are best placed to respond to gender, youth and PwDs inequalities. Social norms, culture, beliefs and perception, institutional systems, laws and policies, and restricting environment all contribute to weakening equal gender, youth and PwD participation and access to services and resources at the local level¹³.

While municipalities are meeting the mandatory quota for elected women's representation (20%)¹⁴, women elected members continue to be excluded from decision-making positions. It is crucial to assess the success of a solely quantitative approach to reach qualitative results. For example, upon meeting the quota and following elections, how many women are in decision-making positions within the municipal councils? What is their contribution to planning and budgeting processes? Are they merely present or present and engaged? How? What challenges do they face following elections? How are these addressed and overcome?

The MoLG Gender Unit monitors the role of municipal councils in gender integration. However, designating the responsibility for gender mainstreaming to one unit within MoLG is inadequate as it leads to further isolation and want of institutionalization in the overall framework. According to the Director of the Gender Unit at the MoLG some of the main impediments include the fragmentation of initiatives towards gender equality; the lack of staff to follow-up on strategies, policies and programs/projects ;accountability measures are not included in the overall framework of municipal work; and municipalities are responsible for resolving issues that arise¹⁵.Additional impediments to gender mainstreaming include a traditional and misperception of gender responsive planning, capacity building, budgeting, etc. This is reflected in 'gender' programs and projects which target women with the exclusion of men and thus the desired results for the integration of women in municipal work are not achieved¹⁶.

In terms of women in general, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KII) found that limited knowledge about municipal services makes it even harder for women to access services. Among the challenges faced, the Beituniya FGD participants noted: "the lack of awareness of the citizen towards the municipality and participation in its work, activities and evaluation, etc...", the case for women, youth and PwDs is even more challenging some of the FGD participants noted. Concurrently, all FGD participants (women, men, youth and PwDs) that have access to Citizen Service Centers (CSCs) noted their high level of satisfaction with services provided as reflected in the sections below.

The FGDs and KII found that young people continue to be marginalized in decision-making processes. A member of Salfit YLC said "YLC members and municipal council members have different definitions for YLC. Council members believe it to be under the umbrella of the municipality, which means that we

¹³ USAID's Communities Thrive Gender Analysis, 2016.

¹⁴ According to in-depth interviews with representatives from the GUPW and the Gender Forum, women's organization are advocating to increase the quota to 30%

¹⁵ In-depth interview with Director of the Gender Unit at the MoLG.

¹⁶ In-depth interview with the Director the Gender Unit at the MoLG and in-depth interview with a representative of the Gender Forum who stated that they are working with men and boys to sensitize them on gender. The Gender Forum was established in 2013 to address gender issues in LGUs. The Forum is a membership body consisting of nine-member organizations and its approach is based on human right and justice to achieve gender quality within the LGUs.

aren't involved in important ideas and plans." A representative of Sharek Youth Forum attested to it "It is very hard for youth to challenge the traditional mindset that resists their involvement in the municipality".

In addition, youth seem to be excluding themselves from the democratic decision-making process in their own communities, which requires further assessment as to the causes. Some youth have noted the need to restructure YLC's, ensuring their independence from municipal councils, as well as holding elections¹⁷. Moreover, the FDGs and KII noted that the success (or failure) of existing youth engagement mechanisms is often dependent on external factors, while the mandate of the mechanisms are also not always clear, consistent, or welcome¹⁸. While there are differences in the activity level YLC's, they are highly dependent on external funding and thus face a sustainability issues¹⁹. It is therefore critical to reassess the role of YLC's in youth mobilization and to introduce new approaches for participation including the revival of volunteerism in partnership with universities. Financial difficulties may provide the undertone for lack of activation; however, YLC's remain relevant to youth as noted in all in-depth interviews and KII's and therefore YLC's are a critical entry-point for inclusion and participation.

As with challenges faced by women, men and youth, PwDs remain among the most excluded of groups targeted through the CTP. The FDGs and KII's found that PwDs are a highly vulnerable community and face significant obstacles to participation. In an in-depth interview with a representative from the General Union of Persons with Disabilities (GUPWD), it was noted that "...as a PwD, I do not feel that I can participate in elections..."²⁰ due to the accessibility issues. While infrastructure projects are in place for PwDs, these are limited to wheelchair ramps; yet the needs of PwDs with other challenges such as visual, are not met. During the 2017 local elections the CEC piloted a national initiative to increase participation of PwDs in local elections²¹. CEC equipped 11 polling stations with Braille voting facilities for visually impaired voters; transferred the names of voters with motor disabilities to polling stations located on the ground floor; and regulated the accompaniment of relatives to polling booths with PwDs if they require further support. It is critical to scale-up this initiative on a national level and widen its scope to other parts of local governance while ensuring feedback of lessons learnt from the pilot project and modifying as required to be inclusive of all PwDs' needs.

In terms of service provision, the FDGs and KII found that several municipalities have initiatives for PwDs inclusion; however, these initiatives are limited to the availability of external funding. The municipalities of Beituniya, Yatta, and Dura noted that they have developed strategic plans and services

¹⁷ In-depth interview with YLC representative in Illar: "Projects and the work of the municipal council and concern with the strategic plan of the municipality can also be taken away from the support of youth projects "and "...in order to obtain funding and support for their ideas and initiatives as well as work on the restructuring of local councils and the renewal of youth activity in each local body through the re-election of a new YLC's..."

¹⁸ In-depth interview with Head of Sharek Youth Forum, "Currently YCLs are not active because there is no funding. "In-depth interview with representative of Illar YLC, "Obstacles include limited by donor support and funding as well as conditionality to receiving funds." In-depth interview with representative of Salfit YLC, "The only difference between YLC's and municipal councils is that they provide services and infrastructure projects."

¹⁹In-depth interviews with representatives of YLC's in Illar and Salfit; in-depth interview with representative of Sharek Youth Forum; FDGs in Beituniya, etc.

²⁰ In-depth interview with representative from the GUPWD.

²¹ Palestinian Central Elections Commission (CEC). The CEC takes measures to enable and facilitate elections participation of persons with disabilities. May 10, 2017.<http://www.elections.ps/tabid/40/language/en-US/Default.aspx?IDL=668>

specifically for PwDs. Beituniya Municipality has gone beyond service provision (recipients) and provides a positive model for duplication among other municipalities. This includes the employment of PwDs²² as required by the Disability Law²³. While these are positive steps that aim at the inclusion of PwDs, further advocacy is required to ensure that these strategies are included in government national frameworks with specific indicators to measure compliance. Despite national commitments for PwD inclusion such as the National Framework for PwDs 2012, the Disability Law and the recent Palestinian NPA, implementation of policies and legislations remains sluggish. Two critical measures will contribute to changing commitments to practice: 1. Modeling Beituniya Municipality approach (recruitment of PwDs) – this is also critical to apply to CSC's; and 2. As suggested by a representative of the GUPWD²⁴, amending election laws to include the participation and election of PwDs. Also, possibly the experience of the newly elected Mayor of Al Bireh, who is a PwD will be worth following up on for CTP to further inform this strategy.

As strategies and policies, specifically in the areas of gender, youth and PwD inclusiveness, continue to be developed, stagnation in implementation and to some degree community apathy remain prevalent. The considerable deviations between plans and implemented policies, require ongoing engagement with targeted communities, monitoring and modification of projects/programs as needed, and accountability mechanisms. It is in this context that the CTP has developed this strategy and action plan with a considerable input from women, men, youth and PwDs.

III. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was applied in the development of CTP's IDS and action plan, specifically:

1. Literature/Desk Review of pertinent documents
2. Participatory approach:
 - a. Key Informant Interviews (KII) were held with municipality staff, government agencies, USAID staff and civil society organizations.
 - b. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were held within the West Bank regions and included local council members and municipal staff whereby the representation of women and men, youth and PwDs were included.
3. Analysis of data and information. Data and information was collected from primary (KIIs and FGD) and secondary (literature review and research) sources in order to ensure context and identify key issues. At times information may seem contradictory which is reflective of the varying perceptions and experiences in KII and FGDs. These are reflected in the section on Key Issues with a recommendation for CTP to ensure divergence in implementation as a 'one fit' approach is not always conducive.
4. Development of the four-year strategy.
5. Development of a two-year action plan.

²² In-depth interview with mayor of Beituniya, "A number of people with disabilities work as municipal employees."

²³ The Palestinian Disability Law stipulates that it mandatory that all organizations and institutions recruit a minimum of 6% of PwDs among their staff. This is not monitored for application.

²⁴ In-depth interview with representative of the GUPWD, "I recommend that the law of LGU can be amended to include the right of PWD to participate in election and be elected to LGU."

IV. ANALYSIS: MAIN FINDINGS AND KEY ISSUES

The below section takes forward the main findings of the contextual analysis and highlights specific areas and opportunities for CTP's interventions and divided into the following sections: access, inclusion and participation, representation and structural issues, cultural norms and legal and policy. While main findings and key issues are divided into these categories, they are all interlinked and at times difficult to separate into one specific category.

Access

In addition to the social and traditional impediments for women to access services at the LGUs, the 2013 Gender and Local Governance survey²⁵ revealed that another common obstacle that face men and women in accessing municipal services is a limited knowledge of LGUs services²⁶; this problem is more prevalent among women than men. Women have a limited understanding of LGU services in part because it has not been socially accepted for women to interact with municipal agencies. Further contributing to women's lack of access to municipal services are that many women report that they find municipal procedures to be complicated and intimidating; opening hours for municipal services that are not convenient; long distances to the LGU which make it inconvenient for women with small children to access; and finally, road conditions and poor transportation.²⁷

The above was further substantiated by Beituniya Municipality focus group participants who noted the lack of awareness of citizens about the work of the municipality as well as the challenges for greater inclusion and participation by all of the community.²⁸ Similar issues were revealed in an interview with a YLC member in Salfit.²⁹ Addressing these issues requires the inclusion of women and men in the development of SDIPs and budget allocations as well as systematic awareness raising activities by municipalities through meetings, CSCs, use of website and social media to share information. In fact, municipalities prefer recruitment of females in the CSCs, because they became aware that female citizens are more likely to access and use CSCs' services if they are dealing with female staff rather than male staff³⁰.

Upon election, women face challenges in terms of access and active participation that their male counterparts do not. As suggested, this project should advocate for the amendment or revision of the quota system to include qualitative indicators for success. In an in-depth interview with the Director of the Gender Unit at MoLG, on participant said "there needs to be access for women to use municipal property such as cars, and telephones as well as coverage for transportation. Also, scheduled meeting

²⁵ Community Thrive Gender Analysis

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Communities Thrive Gender Analysis

²⁸ Focus Group Discussion held on June 18, 2017 with 13 participants including municipal council members, student parliamentarians, school principals, representatives of youth, cultural center staff and municipal staff.

²⁹ During interview, he noted that the only difference between YLCs and municipalities is that municipalities provide services and infrastructure projects. This statement implies that there is a clear lack of awareness as to the mandate and scope of work undertaken by municipalities. What is meant by this statement? The statement by itself does not provide additional information. Please add context

³⁰ As per finding for CSCs STTA

times can impact women’s attendance.” A representative from the Gender Forum explained that “council meetings are held at times that might not be convenient for women councillors and discussions in the council meetings are usually dominated by male members.” Women who won their seats by acclamation face even more challenges as they often owe their seats to pre-arranged agreement made by families and tribes who do not feel that they are accountable to citizens.

There are examples of municipal initiatives to include PwDs, but these initiatives are vulnerable to funding shortage. In preparing for this strategy, meetings and FGDs were held in towns with a high prevalence of PwDs, specifically Yatta and Dura, towns in the Hebron Governorate. Participants noted that there are over 7,000 PwDs in Yatta and 3,700 in Dura. Both towns provide services for PwDs, Dura has developed a strategic plan (2017 – 2019) for the inclusion of PwDs. In Yatta, several projects have been implemented and one is in process. However, lack of funding and relevant skillsets directly impacts long term programs³¹. According to Municipality members in Dura, there are no individuals with qualifications in community-based rehabilitation in Dura. As with the Yatta Municipality, funding is one of the main challenges for sustainable services, updated records and inclusion of PwDs, including access to day cares and schools for children³². Attempts to improve access to services for PwDs has been mainly focused on providing infrastructure solutions for those using wheelchairs, however, those with other disabilities including visual and motor challenges as well as those with psychological disorders also face challenges accessing services. In terms of representation, a representative of the General Union of Palestinians with Disabilities stated that PwDs are ‘not seen’ – meaning that they are left out of election processes and therefore their needs and priorities remain underrepresented in planning processes.

According to the Dura FGD, while the citizens of Dura were involved in the preparation of the municipal strategic plans including participation of PwDs, the participants of the FGD also noted that lack of transportation prevents PwDs from participating in the various activities held by the municipality and to solve this issue requires greater coordination between PwDs and the municipality.

Inequalities also impact PwDs on the local, community and national levels. While disability impacts a relatively small number of citizens in terms of percentage, age³³, and type³⁴; PwD frequently face disproportionate challenges: over one-third of PwDs have never been to school; 87% are unemployed; approximately 33% were never married; and 22% leave school due to environmental barriers³⁵. The prevalence rate of disability in the West Bank and Gaza ranges from 2.7% (113,000 persons) to 7% (300,000 persons), according to a national survey carried out by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) in 2011 and updated data and information by the Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). Although inconsistent, the PCBS findings indicate that of the reported 2.7% - 7% PwDs, 2.5% of PwDs are female while 2.9% are male. According to the Palestinian Youth Survey 2015, the percentage of PwDs among youth (aged 15 – 29 years) is 3.6% - 3.7% in the West Bank and 3.6% in the Gaza Strip. Sex disaggregated data indicates that female PwDs comprise 2.3% and males 4.9%. Type and prevalence

³¹ This section is based on a FGD with Yatta Municipality members; in-depth interview with the mayor of Yatta; and a FGD in Dura.

³² FDG with 10 members of the Dura Municipality held on June 17, 2017.

³³ Palestinian Youth Survey 2015

³⁴ Central Bureau of Statistics, 2014. See: <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=1271>

³⁵ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2011). People with Disabilities Survey 2011.

of disability are as follows: vision, 21.7%; hearing, 14.2%; mobility, 48.4%; remembering and concentration, 22%; communication 21.3%; learning difficulty, 24.7%; and mental health, 14.7%. Therefore, PwDs are a highly vulnerable community and face significant obstacles to participation³⁶. To plan and respond to the needs of PwDs, municipalities should assess the prevalence and type of PwDs among their citizens, include PwDs in planning processes and ensure that CSCs are PwDs responsive including not only infrastructure, but also services, plus other soft interventions.

While election results were aggregated by region and disaggregated by age and sex, this data requires further disaggregation to reflect the number of PwDs elected, also by age and sex. The provision of further information will allow the potential for officially embedding PwDs (women and men) as liaisons or ombudspersons (advocates) for PwDs in municipalities to ensure expanded outreach and inclusion and participation in municipal decision-making processes.

Inclusion and Participation

Many programs and projects aiming at gender equality have been implemented, a critical impediment remains that the programs and projects target women with the exclusion of men and thus the desired results for the integration of women in municipal work are not achieved. This is attributed to a misperception between gender integration and women's empowerment. In addition, while training materials utilized by MoLG may be gender-sensitive, the type of capacity building programs targeting elected women are weak in terms of content, goals and follow-up, this was reinforced in recent workshop referred to above³⁷ whereby women presented their success stories in addition to the challenges they faced as voters and members of local councils. They raised a number of issues, notably the demand for equality, the change of the present quota system in the coming years to 50% of women elected members and the importance of MoLG's role in the Palestinian Authority's Cabinet, through activating the role of law enforcement oversight in local government, in addition to supporting the participation of youth in local councils, organizing awareness workshops for men on women's rights, conducting additional training for women in leadership, developing gender sensitive budgets and as well as increasing knowledge in the area of local government laws.

In this context, it is important to differentiate between initiatives for the empowerment of women and those geared towards gender-equality. The empowerment of women focuses on their agency – working with them on life skills such as communications and interpersonal skills (debating, negotiations, teamwork, gender and gender relations); critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making (responsibilities for one's decision and positively affecting those around us, alternative solutions to problems, mitigation, analysis of information in order to make informed decisions and also to utilize this information to advocate for change for women's rights across all spheres); stress-relief and self-management (perception towards oneself and others, dealing with stress through individual affirmation and group support, managing feelings and stressors – for example through expressive arts, etc.). Gender equity means that women and men are treated fairly. For example, it has been noted that there is a

³⁶ According to the Dura FGD: The residents of Dura were involved in the preparation of the municipal strategic plans including participation of PwDs, however, the participants of the FGD also noted transportation prevents PwDs from participating in the various activities held by the municipality and this requires coordination between PwDs and the municipality.

³⁷ See: <http://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=919004>

negative deviation between men and women in decision-making positions in municipal councils. The question that should be addressed in terms of equity is: were women and men afforded the same opportunities in the election or recruitment processes? Women's empowerment and gender equity – the first should contribute to the second yet will not happen without paralleling this work with advocating for structural/institutional changes in perceptions towards gender equality. Women's empowerment, if applied properly and not utilized as a checklist without impact, should contribute to gender equity and gender equity should lead to gender equality. The MoLG Gender Unit is a tool that should be utilized to reinforce women's empowerment and gender equity in governance structures as detailed in the above paragraph. However, the Gender Unit at MoLG is not sufficiently active due to the lack of staffing and ability to enforce change as stipulated in strategies and policies³⁸. Therefore, while MoLG is responsible for supervising the role of local councils, there is a lack of clear mechanisms for enforcement and monitoring beyond the mandatory quota requirement to ensure that following election women are not excluded from meetings and are given opportunities to play leading roles in decision-making processes. This also requires that women have access to municipal property as well as ensuring meetings are held at convenient times and locations for all members. As a result, it is important to ensure that the needs, priorities and challenges faced by elected women are documented and an action-plan for addressing these issues is developed and followed-up.

For PwDs, exclusion was highlighted in the form of access. During an interview with a representative of the General Union of Persons with Disabilities, it was shared that “the election booths are not PwD-friendly – there is a ramp that PwDs can access, however, there is no one to assist blind people to participate in the election and ballots are not designed for us to use - so we do not participate.”

There are pre-existing national initiatives to increase participation of PwD in local governance. In preparation for the 2017 local elections and in order to ensure participation of PwDs, the Central Elections Commission (CEC) piloted several critical activities for inclusion. These include equipping 11 polling stations with voting PwD responsive facilities such as using the Braille system, the transfer of names of PwDs with motor disabilities to polling stations located on the ground floor and regulated the accompaniment of relatives to polling booths for PwDs who require further support³⁹. These are positive steps towards inclusion and participation of PwDs in local elections and should be taken forward on a national level.

While it was found during various focus groups and interviews that youth participate in the development of municipal strategic plans, it was also found that inclusion and participation are limited. For example, in an interview with representative of Salfit YLC it was apparent that the role of the municipalities and that of YLCs is not clear. “The only difference between YLC's and municipal councils is that they provide services and infrastructure projects.” At the same time the limited involvement of youth in the municipal strategic planning process whereby their priorities and concerns should be included, it was shared that “Youth should be involved in the planning processes from the beginning [planning] and not just in implementation.” Thus, while some youth may participate in the planning process, an overarching

³⁸ In-depth interview with Hanan Imseeh, Director of the Gender Unit at the MoLG on May 23, 2017.

³⁹ Al-Quds News, May 13, 2017. <http://www.alquds.com/articles/1494653280138623300/>

concern of youth is that this process is not systematic and youth priorities and their budgetary allocations may be shifted to prioritize other municipal services.

Representation and Structural

The heavy reliance of recent municipal elections⁴⁰ on acclamation underlines the vulnerability of women, youth, and PwD to pre-existing tribal, familial and factional power dynamics. In recent municipal elections, over 55% of municipal councils were formed by acclamation⁴¹. This puts into question whether nominal government actions (such as the female council member quota and PwD recruitment quota) can make change in isolation from political will, interventions and measures. There is a need to implement and monitor strategies and policies and put in place accountability mechanisms to bring about change in attitudes and behaviors to deal with women's rights based on equality.

Results show that local councils are meeting the mandatory quota system, as they have to must by law⁴². The 2017 local election results are in symmetry to the 2012 local elections results whereby women held 21% of the seats and men 79%. However, there has not been a concurrent effort to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions as advocated by the Palestinian women's movement.

There is a significant gender imbalance in municipal staffing. This is also highlighted by the Palestinian Authority's NPA 2017 – 2022, which states: "Although the overall representation of women in the Palestinian civil service is encouraging (45 percent), the insufficient presence of women in senior ranks (12 percent) needs to be improved. The NPA recommends that "barriers to recruitment, promotion and retention must be eliminated. This requires further analysis to assess if these decisions are based on opportunities afforded equally to women and men in the recruitment process or limitation in capacities required for these positions. As stated in the Planning and implementation of gender equality reforms will only succeed if there are sound planning, monitoring and implementation processes for the public sector at large⁴³.

While youth comprise 30%⁴⁴ of the Palestinian population, young people continue to be marginalized in decision-making processes. In addition, youth seem to be excluding themselves from the democratic decision-making process in their own communities. According to the Palestinian Youth Survey 2015,

⁴⁰ Local municipal elections were recently held in the West Bank, the first phase on May 13, 2017 and a second phase on July 29, 2017. According to the Central Elections Commission (CEC), the first phase of elections was held in 145 localities and 181 localities won by acclamation. 66 localities participated in the second phase of elections.

⁴¹ In an open forum session entitled 'Women in Local Government demand change'⁴¹, it was reported that in the 2017 local elections, 55% of local councils were selected through acclamation (199 out of 350). <http://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=919004>

⁴² Sex-disaggregated data indicates that women received 21.1% of seats (19.8% through election and 22.4% by acclamation) and men 78.9% (80.2% through election and 77.6% by acclamation).

⁴³ OEDC/CAWTAR (2014). Report on Women in Public Life: Gender, Law and Policy in the Middle East and North Africa, OECD Publishing. See:

⁴⁴ According to PCBS, of the total population of the oPt (4.82 million), youth between the ages of 15 – 19⁴⁴ comprise 37% of the total youth population while those aged 20 – 29 years comprise 63%⁴⁴. Of youth aged 15 – 29 years, the sex ratio is 104.1 males to 100 females⁴⁴. According to the Palestinian Youth Survey 2015, the percentage of PwDs among youth (aged 15 – 29 years) is 3.6% - 3.7% in the West Bank and 3.6% in the Gaza Strip⁴⁴, 2016. See: <http://www.pcbs.gov.ps/post.aspx?lang=en&ItemID=1721>

29% of youth in the West Bank were interested in participating in elections⁴⁵. In the 2017 local elections, the lowest number of seats (20.8%⁴⁶) were amongst individuals aged 25 – 35 years, with only one young woman, aged 25 winning and becoming mayor⁴⁷.

The success (or failure) of existing youth engagement mechanisms is often dependent on external factors, while the mandate of the mechanisms are also not always clear, consistent, or welcome. Youth Local Councils (YLCs) were established in 2009 in various municipalities with the aim of ensuring mechanisms for increased youth involvement in community service. The YLC provide some initiatives, focusing mainly on building the capacity and skills of young people through workshops and training as well as outreach for elections, voluntary work and some small projects. YLC members have received training in strategic planning, resource management, budgeting, monitoring, proposal writing as well as workshops on community mobilization and advocacy. In Salfit, the YLC works in parallel with the municipality. Some of the initiatives of the projects implemented by the YLC in Salfit are based on the Salfit Municipality SDIP which directly targets youth and the community. The number of elected members is the same as the number of elected members to the local council and the 20% mandatory quota for representation women is adhered to. In an interview with a member of the Salfit YLC it was noted that the main difference between the two bodies is the service provision and infrastructure projects implemented by the municipality⁴⁸. This requires further engagement by the municipality of YLC's and youth in general to provide clarity regarding the mandate and role of the municipality and the supporting role of the YLCs. The municipality plays an important role in the success or failure of the YLCs, mainly through the provision of space for activities and workshops, yet the relationship between the two bodies is not always positive.

YLCs face a sustainability issue. The councils have mainly relied on external donor funding for support and report that short-term funding and competing with other youth organizations for funding remains a main challenge⁴⁹. One solution is volunteerism, which has historically been considered one of the main pillars within the Palestinian community culture and heritage – 'El Oneh'⁵⁰ and also a requirement for university students prior to graduation. Volunteerism could be promoted and revived through the YLCs, utilizing university volunteer requirements/prerequisites for graduation among others, diminishing the need for external donor funding from the current overriding support for youth involvement and participation.

Unemployment is widespread among youth. The Palestinian Youth Survey 2015 indicates a high unemployment rate among Youth University graduates, 51% with the overall unemployment rate reaching 39% as follows according to age bracket: youth aged 25 – 29, 39% unemployment; 20 – 24

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Central Elections Commission. See: <http://www.elections.ps/tabid/40/language/en-US/Default.aspx?IDL=681>

⁴⁷ AbouJala, Rasha (2017). Meet Palestine's youngest mayor. Al-Monitor. <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/ru/contents/articles/originals/2017/06/palestine-youngest-female-mayor-local-elections.html>

⁴⁸ Interview with a member of the Salfit Youth Local Council on July 10, 2017.

⁴⁹ Interview with a member of the Salfit Youth Local Council on July 10, 2017.

⁵⁰ El-Oneh is a historically principle and value within the Palestinian society where the community comes together in solidarity with one another to assist and volunteer in various initiatives such as olive picking.

years, 43% and 15 – 19 years, 35% unemployment⁵¹. Voluntary activities should also be used to build the capacity of youth in preparation for the workforce and entrepreneurship opportunities and should be funded through LED.

While youth councils are not wide spread, they remain relevant to youth and active. Only 35% of municipalities reported having youth local councils prior to the 2017 elections⁵². When councils do exist, most (66%) were democratically elected, while municipality or civil society actors were behind the formation of most of the non-elected ones⁵³. Over two thirds of the Youth Councils are active, with 51% holding activities at least once a month and 17% holding them several times a month⁵⁴.

Cultural Norms

This assessment found substantive issues about women’s contributions to decision-making processes including that the local government system is socially driven by traditional roles, patriarchal relations and power exercised by the family, primarily men, with minimal consideration for women’s needs and leadership roles⁵⁵ as highlighted in the above section. According to the Director of the Gender Unit at the MoLG, the role of women local council members is limited by the cultural and societal expectations in that men are breadwinners and at the forefront of engaging with governance structures, while women play a reproductive role and are home-makers and social care providers. For example, upon the election of the first woman mayor in Azzoun, Yusra Mohammad Badwan, in the 2017 local council elections, bigoted statements were made by male residents⁵⁶ which reinforce the fact that gender attributes are culturally and socially constructed. On the one hand, a female mayor was elected by the majority of the population, yet on the other, the objections by male residents were made public through the use of social media⁵⁷.

The familial and societal expectations of roles and responsibilities of men and women are further exacerbated upon inclusion and participation in local council meetings. Similarly, while youth local councils (a common youth engagement mechanism) also adhere to the 20% quota, the role of young women remained limited to dealing with ‘women’s issues’. This reinforces the fact that while the mandatory quota of 20% for women by law has been met, an initiative to combat the social resistance to their role and their exclusion following elections is imperative. This is further substantiated by interviews whereby a representative from the GUPW noted that “Women generally face many obstacles to participate in any elections including LGU. Basically, we are a traditional society that view

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Preliminary study, The Performance of Palestinian Local Governments: An Assessment of Service Delivery Outcomes and Performance Drivers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, June 2016. See: <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/B12B0133123AEE998525814E006E037B>

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Communities Thrive Project’s Gender Analysis (2016?), p. 2.

⁵⁶ As per Azzoun Municipality’s Facebook page: “Are there no men left in Azzoun? Why did you accept a woman? The great town of Azzoun has become a joke.” Meanwhile, another user commented, “A people that has allowed a woman to rule will never succeed.” <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/ru/contents/articles/originals/2017/06/palestine-youngest-female-mayor-local-elections.html>

⁵⁷ Ibid.

women's place is in the home and that women are not qualified to have leader positions". In an in-depth interview with a representative from UN Women, it was noted that "One of the difficulties facing women in political participation is the traditional values system prevailing in our society which views women as second-class citizens and preventing women for assuming leadership roles and viewing their participation as limited to maybe participate in the election as long as they elect in accordance to the wishes of their male relatives". In an interview with a representative from the Gender Forum, it was shared that "The traditional view of women as second-class citizens and family pressure on women elected council members to ensure that when they vote, they vote according the interest of their male relative, rendering their participation ineffective."

Youth, females and males, also face predicaments due to cultural norms. In an in-depth interview with the Head of Sharek Youth Forum noted, "One of the main challenges is the traditional view that resists youth involvement in councils". This is indicative of society's perception that youth do not have a place in the election process and as noted in the previous sections, the lowest numbers of seats in the 2017 local elections were held by individuals aged 25 – 30 years.

The same applies to PwDs. In an in-depth interview with a representative of GUPWD, it was shared that "As a person with disability, I do not feel that I can participate in elections. Firstly, the traditional view towards PwDs and secondly, because the Central Elections Commission (CEC) does not target PwDs in terms of accessibility.

Legal and Policy

The issue of access, participation, inclusion and cultural norms cannot be separated and are intrinsically connected to legal and policy issues. The mandatory quota for women's representation in elections is 20%; however, and as discussed in the previous sections, while the quota has been met, the participation of women in local and municipal meetings remains limited. Given that the Palestinian Legislative Council is dysfunctional, prioritizing policy level work including implementation and accountability mechanisms, is critical to changing the reality of challenges facing women elected members of councils and municipalities. Engaging men in this process is also critical for sustainable success.

Exclusion of PwDs is perpetuated by policy and legislative gaps, despite national commitments to PwD inclusion. The Palestinian Authority has committed to protecting and promoting the inclusion and participation of PwDs including through NPA⁵⁸, the ratification⁵⁹ of the CRPD in 2014, the National Strategic Framework for Disability 2012, etc. However, legislative and policy gaps remain due to the lack of translation of these frameworks into tangible and measurable action plans. This includes meeting the mandatory quota, 5%⁶⁰ for recruitment, of PwDs, the lack of budgeting for PwD service beyond infrastructure (need for Braille, sign-language specialists, etc.) and the exclusion of PwDs in decision-

⁵⁸ <http://www.ps.undp.org/content/dam/papp/docs/Publications/UNDP-papp-research-NPA2017-2022.pdf>

⁵⁹ <https://unispal.un.org/DPA/DPR/unispal.nsf/0/262AC5B8C25B364585257CCF006C010D>

⁶⁰ Palestinian Labor Law, Article 13, "The employer shall adhere to employ a number of qualified disabled workers to perform work, which fit their disabilities. The percentage of such workers shall not be less than 5% of the total labor force in the installation." See: [http://legal.pipa.ps/files/server/ENG%20Labour%20Law%20No_%20\(7\)%20of%202000.pdf](http://legal.pipa.ps/files/server/ENG%20Labour%20Law%20No_%20(7)%20of%202000.pdf)

making processes. The lack of planning, budgeting and inclusion will continue to further isolate PwDs as productive members in their communities.

V. INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (IDS)

Inclusion, as a strategy, must go beyond service provision and must be paralleled with policy and regulatory frameworks that are not only developed but monitored for transparency and accountability purposes and measures. Political will is essential for creating lasting change and as noted and discussed in the above sections, the development of strategies; policies and regulatory frameworks alone will not lead to change. Accountability mechanisms should be institutionalized, monitored and advocated for.

Interaction with the community as well as the review of literature further strengthens the importance and validity in expanding and institutionalizing citizen engagement at the municipal level to reinforce the social contract between communities and their government. Based on data collection and analysis, CTP will ensure that citizens are better informed on the workings of their government, while municipalities will be better situated to take community input into consideration in planning, budgeting and service delivery. Increasing civic participation to include greater involvement by women and men, youth and PwDs will result in a more responsive local government that considers the needs of all constituents.

Guiding Principles

As part of its inclusive development strategy, CTP should consider the following guiding principles:

- I. Human rights-based approach in all aspects of the CTP.
- II. Engagement of all citizens without discrimination based on sex, age and/or disability.
- III. Equal employment opportunities, for all positions, without discrimination based on sex, age and/or disability.
- IV. Accessibility to resources and services for all citizens without discrimination based on sex, age and/or disability.
- V. Strong and rich partnerships for ownership, coherence, and sustainability.
- VI. Inclusivity is greater than increasing gender's, youth's, and (PwD)'s presence; it is about the presence, participation, empowerment, promotion of them and their issues, activities, policies, and processes to reach meaningful changes.

Strategy

The following strategy is proposed for CTP. This strategy aligns with national and USAID priorities on inclusive development - within CTP mandate and resources over its lifetime and through engaging local governance sector stakeholders.

Specifically, the CTP strategy is to focus on fostering gender equity in local government, sustainable engagement of youth in municipal decision-making, and formal expansion of access for PwD in local government.

This strategy should be revisited on an annual basis in order to examine best practices and lessons learnt as well as challenges. In the learning process, adaptation of annual plans/action plans based on implementation experiences is encouraged.

Alignment with USAID policies and the Palestinian Authority's National Development

Agenda:

USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy⁶¹: The Inclusive Development Strategy is aligned with the three overarching outcomes: 1. Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities and services economic, social, political, and cultural; 2. Reduce gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities; and 3. Increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities, and societies. In the specific context of the Inclusive Development Strategy and as detailed in the actions below, the CTP aims to reduce gender disparities on three levels: 1. Increase oversight and improvement of initiatives and policies designed to achieve gender equality in local governance including data gathering and analysis of elected men and women's experience in local elections in the 55 municipalities and the utilization of this information (problem identification) to enhance policies designed to achieve gender equality; 2. Increase women's active engagement and participation in decision-making processes – fostering women's leadership; and 3. Ensure access to services and resources (CSCs, LED grants, etc.) – contributing to economic growth and decreasing GBV given that there is a higher probability that women will feel more confident to leave an abusive relationship when they are economically secure.

USAID Disability Policy Paper⁶²: The objectives of the USAID policy on disability are fourfold: (a) to enhance the attainment of United States foreign assistance program goals by promoting the participation and equalization of opportunities of individuals with disabilities in USAID policy, country and sector strategies, activity designs and implementation; (b) to increase awareness of issues of people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries; (c) to engage other U.S. government agencies, host country counterparts, governments, implementing organizations and other donors in fostering a climate of non-discrimination against people with disabilities; and (d) to support international advocacy for people with disabilities. The Inclusive Development Strategy will: (a) advocate to embed disability inclusive practices within MoLG's overall policy and regulatory frameworks; (b) increase oversight and improvement for recruitment and retention of PwDs; and (c) establish inclusive recruitment practices. These recommendations are translated into proposed actions below.

USAID Youth Policy⁶³: USAID's Youth Policy has one overarching goal: Improve the capacities and enable the aspirations of youth so that they can contribute to and benefit from more stable, democratic, and prosperous communities and nations. There are two objectives to support this goal: 1. Strengthen youth programming, participation and partnership in support of Agency development objectives; and 2.

⁶¹ USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (2012), p. 1
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/GenderEqualityPolicy_0.pdf

⁶² USAID Disability Policy Paper (1997), p. 2. See: http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pdabq631.pdf

⁶³ USAID Youth Policy (2012). See: https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/Youth_in_Development_Policy_0.pdf

Mainstream and integrate youth issues and engage young people across Agency initiatives and operations. The Inclusive Development Strategy aims to: 1. Increase youth participation in decision-making processes (political participation and leadership); and 2. Diversify funding base to sustain long-term programs based on youth priorities and agendas.

State of Palestine National Development Agenda 2017 - 2022⁶⁴: The Inclusive Development Strategy on a macro level is aligned to:

Pillar	National Priorities	National Policies
Pillar 2 ⁶⁵ : Government Reform	Citizen-Centered Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsive Local Government - Improving Services to Citizens Effective Government
	Effective Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening Accountability and Transparency - Effective, Efficient Public Financial Management
Pillar 3 ⁶⁶ : Sustainable Development	Economic Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building Palestine’s Future Economy - Creating Job Opportunities
	Social Justice and Rule of Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening Social Protection - Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment - Our Youth; Our Future

Inclusivity Strategic Objectives and Recommendations

To support integration of this strategy into CTP activities and the sector in general, the following strategic objectives have been identified, with recommendations on how to move towards implementing them.

Strategic Objective	Recommendations
Strategic Objective 1	
A more robust application of gender equality in local government.	1.1: Increasing women’s participation in decision-making processes (participation and leadership). 1.2: Increasing oversight and enhancement of initiatives and policies designed to achieve gender equality in local governance.
Strategic Objective 2	
Sustainable mechanisms for engaging youth in local	2.1: Increasing youth participation in decision-making processes (participation and leadership).

⁶⁴ State of Palestine (2016). National Development Agenda 2017 – 2022: Putting Citizens First. See: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/npa_english_final_approved_20_2_2017_printed.pdf

⁶⁵ Ibid (p. 26)

⁶⁶ Ibid (pp. 34 – 35)

Strategic Objective	Recommendations
	2.2: Diversification of funding including through volunteer initiatives and innovative resource mobilization with national/local organizations, academic institutions, private sector foundations and philanthropists.
Strategic Objective 3 Develop and implement a policy framework for engagement of PwDs in local government decision-making.	3.1: Embed disability inclusive practices within MoLG’s overall policy and regulatory frameworks. 3.2: Increasing oversight and improvement for recruitment and retention of PwDs.
Strategic Objective 4 Sustainable mechanisms for citizen’s engagement in local governance (cross-cutting).	4.1: Develop participatory strategies for citizen’s engagement (not a ‘one fit’ approach). 4.2. Inclusive budgeting in policy and project/interventions design (planning and implementation).
Strategic Objective 5 Promote collaboration, partnerships, learning and professional development on equality and inclusiveness.	5.1. Establishing inclusive recruitment practices. 5.2. Forge and leverage partnerships and collaboration to promote this Inclusive Development Strategy.

Proposed Actions to Achieve Strategic Objectives

The actions below are proposed to operationalize the recommendations (and eventually achieve the strategic objectives). In acknowledgement that CTP is one of many key stakeholders in the local government sector, this strategy proposes actions for other actors, as well as CTP itself.

Strategic Objective I. A more robust application of gender equality in local government.

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
I.1 Increasing women's participation in decision-making processes (participation and leadership).	Women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership in decision-making in political and public life (an enabling environment).	Document (data gathering and analysis) of elected ⁶⁷ men and women's experience in local governance in the 55 municipalities. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion, and Participation.</i>	CTP Regional Advisors and MLSs	NGOs	Y2-Y5
		Develop a long-term capacity building program for elected officials in the 55 municipalities (men and women) in gender equality (concepts and definitions, planning, budgeting, monitoring, etc.). <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Participation.</i>	CTP	NGOs	Y2-Y4
		Advocate for the revision/amendment of the mandatory quota to include guidelines for women's participation as decision-makers in municipalities. <i>This proposed action will address Legal and Policy</i>	CTP C4	MoLG, Municipalities, NGOs	Y5
		Assess the needs of women elected representatives and staff empowerment and develop relevant program for implementation (e.g. leadership, communications, presentation skills, advocacy, etc.). <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion, and Participation.</i>	CTP C2	MoLG, Municipalities, NGOs,	Y2-Y4
		Consider and address any travel and logistical issues that can limit women's participation in different CTP's events, trainings, and/or activities.	CTP Regional Advisors and MLSs		Y2-Y5

⁶⁷ It is important to document the experiences of men and women through elections and by acclamation. What was the impact of these processes on men and women? What tools are required to advocate for change? Recommendation 1, Action 1 is then taken forward by actions in Recommendation 2 (baseline data for monitoring).

1.2. Increasing oversight and improvement of initiatives and policies designed to achieve gender equality in local governance (both through elections and employment).	Improved and systematized data collection and analysis disaggregated by sex and age for reporting on progress and impact of policy-making and national plans.	<i>This proposed action will address Access and Inclusion.</i> Support MoLG to identify and apply key performance indicators (KPI) of gender equality in local governance that can be collected and published on a yearly basis.	CTP	MoLG, Development Partners	Y2-Y5
		<i>This proposed action is cross-cutting</i> Support municipalities in translating the Cross-Sectoral National Gender Strategy Gender Strategy, the Gender Code of Conduct, etc. into their strategic ,action plans, , and annual budget development process, with clear indicators for measurement of results.	CTP C1, C3 and C4	MoLG, Municipalities, NGOs and/or consultant	Y2-Y4
		<i>This proposed action is cross-cutting</i> Establish/expand on a gender equality national database on laws, policies and regulatory frameworks.	CTP C4	MoLG Gender Unit	Y3
		<i>This proposed action will address Legal and Policy</i> Ensure gender responsive SDIPs through the development of gender and PwD (men and women) criteria (checklist) ⁶⁸ . <i>This proposed action will address Participation and Representation</i>	CTP C3 and Regional Advisors	Municipalities and MoLG Gender Unit GUPWD	Y2-Y3

Strategic Objective 2. Sustainable mechanisms for engaging youth in local government

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
2.1. Increasing youth participation in decision-making processes (political participation and leadership).	Youth are mobilized as influential advocates for driving the social and policy reform agendas.	Holding elections for YLCs. <i>This proposed action will address Participation.</i>	CTP C2 Grantees	YLCs and Youth focused NGOs	Y2-Y3
		Capacity development, awareness building, and advocacy aimed at youth to nurture positive social and cultural norms, practices, and attitudes	CTP C2 Grantees	YLC's, youth and women led and managed NGOs, GUPWD	Y2-Y3

⁶⁸ For example, UN Women utilizes a gender score card in assessing gender responsiveness in UN plans and implementation.

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
		that promote equality and inclusion. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Participation.</i>			
		Building the capacity for YLC's in accountability, transparency, sharing of information, decision-making, etc. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Participation.</i>	CTP C2 Grantees	YLCs, AMAN and NGOs	Y2-Y3
		Supporting youth communities of practice to exchange knowledge between YLCs, using on-line platforms. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Participation.</i>	CTP C2 Grantees	YLCs	Y2-Y3
		Provision and support for internship programs at municipalities. <i>This proposed action will address Structural and Cultural Norms.</i>	CTP C2 Grantees	Municipalities	Y2-Y3
		MoLG and municipalities utilize existing working papers and manuals to measure accountability and transparency for youth and community participation. <i>This proposed action will address Legal and Policy</i>	CTP C4	Municipalities,	Y2-Y5
		Contribute to raising awareness on inclusion in municipalities through SMS messages and other social media platforms prepared by youth. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Participation.</i>	CTP C2 Grantees	Municipalities, YLCs	Y2-Y5
2.2. Diversification of funding including through volunteer initiatives and	Sustainability of YLC's and long-term programs based on youth priorities and agendas.	Provide mentoring, training, volunteerism and entrepreneurial opportunities for youth (girls/boys and	CTP C2 Grantees	Municipalities, YLCs	Y2-Y3

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
innovative resource mobilization with national/local organizations, academic institutions, private sector foundations and philanthropists.		men/women and PwDs) in NGOs and private sector companies. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Access.</i>			
		Support YLCs in developing long-term plans for volunteerism including coordination with universities, NGOs, CBOs and the private sector and ensure that these plans are conducive to the geographic area. <i>This proposed action will address Cultural Norms.</i>	CTP C2 Grantees	Municipalities, YLCs	Y2-Y3
		Support YLC's in developing resource mobilization plans including developing and initiating crowd-funding campaigns for local, regional and global support. <i>This proposed action is cross-cutting</i>	CTP C2 Grantees	Municipalities, YLCs	Y2-Y3

Strategic Objective 3. Develop and implement a policy framework for engagement of PwDs in local government decision-making.

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
3.1. Embed disability inclusive practices within MoLG's overall policy and regulatory frameworks.	Barriers to full engagement and participation removed and PwDs are valued and respected.	Support municipalities to incorporate the National Framework for PwDs into their strategic action plans, and within their annual budget development process, with clear indicators for measurement of results. <i>This proposed action will address Legal and Policy.</i>	CTP C1, C4	MoLG, Municipalities, GUPWD	Y3-Y5
		Support MoLG to identify and apply	CTP C4	MoLG,	Y2

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
		key performance indicators (KPI) of PwD inclusion in local governance that can be collected and published on a yearly basis. <i>This proposed action is cross-cutting</i>		Municipalities, GUPWD	
		Develop and deliver training on equality and inclusion for municipal staff. <i>This proposed action will address Cultural Norms</i>	CTP Grantees (C2 and C4)	Municipalities,	Y2-Y3
3.2. Increasing oversight and improvement for recruitment and retention of PwDs.	Equal access for employment opportunities in public institutions leads to increase and retention of PwDs and contribution to economic growth.	Support municipalities to review of employment policies and processes to ensure accessible and inclusive for people with disability. <i>This proposed action will address Legal and Policy</i>	CTP C3 and C4	MoLG, Municipalities, GUPWD	Y3
		Promote and encourage employment of PwDs in jobs suitable to their aptitudes, abilities, and qualifications and making adjustments necessary to do so. <i>This proposed action will address Legal and Policy, Inclusion, and structural.</i>	CTP C3	MoLG, Municipalities, GUPWD	Y3-Y5

Strategic Objective 4. Sustainable mechanisms for citizen's engagement in local governance (cross-cutting)

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
4.1. Develop participatory strategies for citizen's engagement (not a 'one fit' approach).	More transparent and accountable governance	Strategies for citizen's engagement developed in each of the municipalities with the focus on gender, youth, PWD. <i>This proposed action will address Participation</i>	CTP C2	Municipalities, Safad TV	Y2, Y3
		Develop SDIP, MAPs and LED to ensure gender, youth and PwDs responsiveness and inclusiveness.	CTP Regional Advisors and CI	MoLG, Municipalities	Y2 (already in process)

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
		<i>This proposed action will address and Representation.</i>			
		Unify and activate complaints systems utilizing municipal websites and complaints boxes at CSC's. <i>This proposed action will address Access.</i>	CTP C3	MoLG, Municipalities	Y2, Y3
		Develop and conduct public information campaigns on role and activities of municipalities in the 55 targeted municipalities as well as use of media and social media. <i>This proposed action will address Cultural Norms</i>	CTP	Al Nasher, Raya, and Safad TV	Y2, Y3
		Support public relations, media and community activation units to better liaise and communicate with the community and the three target groups. This proposed action is cross cutting	CTP Grantees	Municipalities, Safad TV	Y2, Y3
		Work with journalists and media outlets. Present Inclusive Development Strategy, identifying training and capacity building needs to enhance reporting and coverage for issues/priorities identified by target groups. <i>This proposed action is cross cutting</i>	CTP	SKY	Y2
4.2. Inclusive budgeting in policy and program design (planning and implementation).	The most marginalized and vulnerable citizens have access to services and resources Delivery and management of municipal services and effectiveness of municipal operations for the most marginalized and	MoLG budget circular integrates considerations for gender, youth and PwDs into the annual municipal budget process, and municipal budgetary decision-making (i.e. strategic planning including SDIP/LED, budget implementation, monitoring and evaluation). <i>This proposed action will address Legal and Policy</i>	CTP C1	MoLG, Municipalities	Y2-Y5, already in process
		PFM systems should ensure operational efficiency in that they achieve maximum value for money in the delivery of services such as the establishment and expansion of CSCs, inclusive-based and responsive	CTP C1, C3	MoLG, Municipalities	Y2-Y5, already in process

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
	vulnerable	infrastructure, etc. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Access</i>			
	Improve LGU fiscal management and increase revenue generation	Incorporate gender, youth and PWD considerations in the activities that will streamline and automate municipal services (such revising and automating municipal services and operations)	CTP – C3	Municipalities	Y2, Y3
		Incorporate gender, youth, and PWD considerations in the activities that will improve LGU fiscal management and revenue generation for municipalities	CTP – C1	Municipalities	Y2, Y3
		User-friendly services at partner CSC's and all municipal facilities - accessibility to transportation, e-services, recruitment of female staff, and for PWDs - sign-language, Braille systems, availability of TV multi-media screens. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Access</i>	CTP C3	Municipalities	Y2-Y5
		Promote and advocate for safe and secure spaces for men, women, youth and PwDs to access municipal services (CSC's) that are fully inclusive for all PwDs. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Access</i>	CTP C3	Municipalities	Y2-Y5
		Municipalities provided awareness training by MoLG on youth, gender, accountability and participation national frameworks within the annual budget preparation process, and how these frameworks should be translated into municipal strategic and budget processes, and budget execution, monitoring and evaluation. <i>This proposed action is cross cutting</i>	CTP C1, C2	MoLG, Municipalities, NGOs and relevant Development Partners	Y2-Y5

Strategic Objective 5. Promote collaboration, partnerships, learning and professional development on equality and inclusiveness.

Recommendation	Expected Impact	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Partner(s)	Timeframe
5.1. Establishing inclusive recruitment practices	Inclusive hiring practices and diversity of employees	Ensure CTP recruitment systems and processes are in line with equality and inclusiveness. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Structural</i>	CTP/HR		Y2
		Develop inclusion criteria in CTP recruitment processes for staff and consultants. Individuals who are recruited are aware of and agree to apply CTP’s inclusive development strategy in all aspects of their work. <i>This proposed action will address Inclusion and Structural</i>	CTP/HR		Y2
		Develop and deliver training on equality and inclusion for CTP staff. <i>This proposed action is cross-cutting</i>	CTP Inc. Dev. Focal Point		Y2-Y5
		All CTP staff engage in meetings and workshops that are related to the inclusive development strategy and apply main guiding principles and recommendations in their work. <i>This proposed action is cross-cutting</i>	All CTP staff		Y2-Y5
5.2. Forge and leverage partnerships and collaboration to promote this Inclusive Development Strategy.	Increased coherence on equality and inclusiveness	CTP will promote the Inclusive Development Strategy in all fora and identify partnerships among international organizations and private sector companies for joint implementation where relevant. <i>This proposed action is cross-cutting</i>	CTP Senior Technical Team and Regional Advisors	MoLG, Municipalities, Development Partners	Y2-Y5
		Consult and coordinate with inclusive related donors, in preparation for MoLG awareness and capacity building of Municipalities in relevant national frameworks. <i>This proposed action is cross-cutting</i>	CTP Senior Technical Team and Regional Advisors	MDLF, GUPW, GUPWD, GIZ and UN entities, Development Partners, etc...	Y2-Y5

VI. Operational Strategies

The responsibility for implementing this strategy is CTP wide, but CTP's Social Accountability Specialist, Rasha Alyatim, will follow up on it with each component leader and report to Chief of Party in this regard.

Accountability mechanisms for monitoring progress should be established; 1) meetings addressing progress for all CTP staff every 6 months, 2) reporting, and 3) monitoring and evaluation using process indicators.

Inclusivity sensitization should be integrated in all CTP technical interventions at the municipal level.

Include explicit language related to gender, youth, and PwD must be included in all project documents, bids, scope of works, plans, job postings, and communication materials.

Make CTP's 55 LGUs aware of CTP's inclusivity efforts and activities.

Coordinate with other USAID's projects on gender, youth, and PwD.

VII. LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of References and SoW

Annex 2: Survey Questionnaire and Guiding Questions for FGDs

Annex 3: List of Interviewees

Annex 4: List of participants for Strengths Weakness Opportunities Threats (SWOT) analysis

Annex 5: Key Issues

Annex 6: Summary of notes on interviews/FGDs

Annex 7: PPPs for CTP and USAID