

Local Government Capacity Programme

LGCP | Country programme 2012-2016

> Palestinian Territory



<u>OBJECTIVE</u>	<u>Employment, food security and improved legitimacy of local government</u>
<u>TARGET GROUP</u>	<u>12 local governments on the West Bank</u>
<u>INTENDED RESULT</u>	<u>Enhanced capacity of local governments to support Local Economic Development (LED)</u>
<u>ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>Financing of municipal projects, workshops, on-the-job coaching and training</u>

It is not always easy to work in the Palestinian Territory. This is not because people are not open to cooperation and the exchange of knowledge, on the contrary. But the political sensitivity is substantial, in numerous areas.

Nevertheless the authorities in the Palestinian Territory and VNG International want to continue their earlier cooperation. This resulted in the LGCP Palestinian Territory programme, which focuses on Local Economic Development.

The Palestinian Authority sees the local approach as crucial for sustainable development, lower unemployment and greater food security. The Dutch government supports this approach, because it promotes the self-sufficiency of the people. The LGCP confirms this.

- In order to be eligible for support via the LGCP the selected local governments must show that their plans enjoy broad support of all parties involved, including local businesses and citizens. •

UMBRELLA

At present Palestinian local governments often lack capacity and funds for stimulating local economic activity. 12 local governments on the West Bank will therefore be supported by the LGCP.

The programme is implemented under the umbrella of the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF), in which the most important donors work together with the Palestinian Authority. Local governments can submit applications for financial and technical support of projects and services which enhance their local capacity.

12 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS STILL TO BE SELECTED, OUT OF A TOTAL OF 107

West bank
★ RAMALLAH
Palestinian Territory
Gaza

Palestinian Territory

• **'Projects can target a wide range of topics. In many local governments the policy for economic development is a reality only on paper, if it exists at all. LGCP can support them in operationalisation. Strengthening the internal organisation is an important aspect, for example, organising the application procedures for licences for local businesses more efficiently. It is also possible that a local government wants to develop its touristic potential and seeks support to develop a strategy.'**

Chris van Hemert, Country Programme Manager of LGCP Palestinian Territory •

Background

The economic prospects on the West Bank are poor. There is high unemployment; most food is imported. The dependence on foreign aid is growing instead of decreasing. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict limits the chance of economic development. Internal political clashes increase the problems.

Nevertheless there are also opportunities. For example, the export of agricultural and fishery products to member states of the European Union has been free of import duties since 2011. There are also encouraging developments from a political perspective. The Palestinian Authority, together with international partners, has made substantial investments in strengthening public institutions and in fostering transparency in policy in the past few years.

Aim

Particularly smaller and more remote local governments are not sufficiently succeeding in creating a conducive economic environment. They are lacking capacity and resources. Citizens, civil society and local businesses are often insufficiently involved in policy development. A number of bigger local governments show how things can be done differently. The municipality of Bethlehem was the first to establish a Council for Local Economic Development, together with the private sector and the civil society.

The LGCP also applies this participatory approach in the selected municipalities. This will take place under the auspices of the MDLF. Cooperation with this fund guarantees that the LGCP aligns with the policy of the central government, and of the donors who also opt for promoting local economic development.

Activities

In order to stimulate capacity development in local governments, the LGCP will set up a grant fund. Through this fund, local governments submit concept notes for LED projects. 12 selected local governments will be invited to further flesh out their proposals. Both in the preparation and in the execution of the project they will receive assistance in the form of training, workshops and on-the-job coaching.

Consultation meetings will also be organised with all parties involved, in particular local businesses. There will also be platforms for the permanent exchange of experiences, challenges and opportunities. Local governments can share lessons learned in a community of practice.

The developed instruments and the best practices of the projects will be integrated in the regular support facilities offered by the MDLF. This will enable the other local governments on the West Bank to also benefit from the LGCP.

→ What do we want to achieve?

- **Commitment and enhanced capacity of the selected local governments to improve their services in the area of Local Economic Development.**
- **More effective municipal policy and the establishment of strategic business alliances.**