

Planning Capacities within the Palestinian Municipalities

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Abstract:

Municipalities in Palestine are responsible for the planning and organization of cities and public services based on the Local Council Law No. (1) for the year 1997. The capacities within the municipalities vary tremendously throughout their different types, depending on availability of resources in addition to other factors. The study that was conducted on 17 municipalities representing the different types and sizes of municipalities in West Bank and Gaza Strip, in which a questionnaire was developed and focused on the following dimensions: The legal framework: 1) The institutional framework. 2) Awareness (institutional and public) of the importance of planning and community participation. In addition, the study has drafted out the good and bad planning practices within municipalities; these findings will draw the framework of what is needed to enhance and develop the planning process within municipalities. Also, it will enable develop the needed policies and procedures, manual and projects for supporting this sector within municipalities. This initiative has been designed as one of the activities under the overall local government capacity building program. The results of the survey showed the weaknesses and strengths of the planning practices and arrangements within municipalities. The capacity building aspects are considered

in three levels as follows: 1) the environment surrounding the physical planning practices in Palestine. 2) the system within the municipalities; this includes the manuals, tools, etc. 3) the human capacities aspects related to training and equipment. Based on this framework the study will provide the recommendations and activities needed to fulfill the reform process within municipalities in the field of physical planning.

1.0 Introduction:

Municipalities are key players in the control of major risks. They have in-depth knowledge of the realities in their territories; they serve as an interface with the inhabitants and play a role in development and in the regulation of activities. They are responsible for local planning and development, and take an active part in crisis management before, during, and after major events.

In an urban environment, risks are complex, and a wide range of expertise needs to be called on. Municipalities can therefore play their full roles in the management and prevention of risks only by means of a gradual process of which they themselves are in control.

Increased environmental uncertainty and complexity requires Local Government Units (LGUs) to manage strategically as never before. The environments of LGUs have become increasingly turbulent and more tightly interconnected. Even boundaries between the public and private sectors are becoming eroded. During the past two decades, LGUs have innovated new management tools such as strategic development planning, privatization, and performance measurement to deal with complex governance and networks to provide their public services.

Local Government Units in particular have been innovative in economic development policy management and strategic planning to respond to rapid change in the environment and complexity in their governance. In many policy areas, such as the broadly defined area of economic development, trends like fiscal decentralization and localization of policy responsibility mean that cities increasingly manage their affairs through mechanisms of collaboration and governance ⁽¹⁾.

Socio-economic development decision making operates, which depends on physical and strategic planning, in a complex and uncertain environment that requires municipal governments to act strategically to overcome information asymmetry and economic development isolation.

However, some municipalities lack a formally defined socio-economic development strategy despite the fact that such a plan might help them deal with their current complex and competitive environment.

Conceptually, Strategic planning will contribute to local economic development policy outcomes, and it plays an important role to provide criteria for evaluating and measuring program outputs and outcomes and will help in adjusting economic and social transformation and attract new business.

2.0 Planning in Palestine:

The local government in Palestine has been defined in different articles in the constitution; article 167 spells that it is; “regulating the relationship between the administrations of the local units based on decentralized democracy in the local government units” and article 168 says; “local government units is a legal entity and their councils are elected based on the law”. Every LGU is authorized to perform its

(1) Agranoff & McGuire 1998, 67.

legal duties and responsibilities and none of them can sign or commit itself to any act unless it's complying with the assigned responsibilities and in coordination with the Ministry of Local Government. Article 95 in the constitution confirms the LGUs responsibilities as should be specified in the local government law, its financial resources, their relationships with the central government and their roles in preparing and implementing the development plans and in the supervision in the different activities”.

The Local Government Law no.1/1997 mentioned the planning issue in two places; one in article 15 Town and Street Planning where the Local Council is authorized in “planning of town, pavement, cancellation and adjustment of streets and setting up sidewalks, catering for cleaning, maintenance, lightning, naming and numbering, landscaping of buildings, and prohibiting violations, and instructing owner of lands to fence the lands adjacent to street. Secondly; in article 26 titled “allocation LGUs revenues which are collected by the Executive Authority” item 2h the criteria that should be considered in revenues allocation and one of them is “basic needs as reflected in the LGUs Development Plan which is approved by the Ministry of Local Government (MOLG)”. This means that LGUs should prepare their development plans and secure the approval of the MOLG on these plans.

The Palestinian development planning institutions constitute of specialized ministries, the Higher Planning Council (HPC), the regional central committees for planning, the local committees for planning and buildings and other associations that are permanently or temporarily established to solve certain issues and do specific activities. It also includes planning and implementation processes, the laws, regulations and procedures that regulate the work of the councils, ministries and the local units.

There are three levels of planning in Palestine that relates to the different levels of planning authorities and is most likely concerning physical planning.

The Ministry of Planning (MOP) who is responsible for developing the National Development Plan (i.e. Palestinian Reform and Development Plan “PRDP”), and through its spatial planning department is formulating the spatial development policies and urban development policies, definition of settlement hierarchy and preparation of regional plans.

The Higher Planning Council (HPC) consisting of 16 members (chaired by the Ministry of Local Government (MOLG)) from different related ministries and institutions is responsible for defining the towns planning areas, approving of regional and local plans (general plans), reviewing master plans prepared by planning committees, and dealing with appeals on building licenses.

The Ministry of local Government through its Physical Planning department prepares urban plans at the local and regional level of the local government units (LGUs) and prepares and approves detailed physical planning projects.

The District Planning Committees are preparing, in some cases, and approving the LGUs general and detailed plans. Municipalities are usually responsible for issuing building licenses.

The MOLG in its attempt to regulate the local government sector and help in improving the local government planning and services allowed and issued regulations for the establishment of the Joint Services Councils for Planning and Development (JSCPD). The JSCPDs are responsible for developmental planning at their geographical area.

3.0 Development Planning Versus Physical Planning:

There are several types of planning that are used and performed at the Palestinian local level and have been used to relate to different scopes and meanings and

sometimes are used identical, such as (strategic) development plans (SDP), investment plans, strategic development and investment plans (SDIP) and physical plans and master plans, etc.

The physical planning in Palestine forms an input for the physical development and socio-economic activities and is a pre-requisite for national development. It is considered as the improvement of development projects in a geographical area within a specific time, taking into consideration the political, social, economical and environmental dimensions for the community. Based on this, the use of land and the population growth will be determinate. This definitely will encourage investments and economic activities within the community gradual needs.

In this sense, the strategic development would be considered as part of this general approach to planning. There are common linkages between the strategic development planning and physical planning such as; (i) the framework conditions for urban development, (ii) general development characteristics of the city and SWOT-Analysis, (iii) City development strategy: Overall objectives for Sustainable Urban Development, (iv) Urban structure and Morphology. In the other hand both have their unique and special elements that should be considered while planning as shown in the below chart:

Common Elements:

- The framework conditions for urban development
- General development characteristics of the city and SWOT- Analysis
- City development strategy: Overall objectives for Sustainable Urban Development
- Urban structure and Morphology

Strategic Development and Investment Plan:

- Objectives and priorities by most important sectors.
- Priority investment projects
- Costs and financing
- Implementation and management structure
- Monitoring-system

Physical Plan/Master Plan:

- Objectives and priorities by most important sectors.
- Priority investment sectoral assessment and plan
- Land use plan
- Zoning plan and ordinance projects

Source: Frank Samol GTZ consultant presentation to a workshop (Strategic Development Planning) at the MOLG February 14, 2008.

In this part of the paper we will use the term Strategic Development and Investment Plan (SDIP) which includes in its contents as strategic development approach including investment programs. Physical and master plans have been used so often to describe the land use in Palestine, for the purpose of this paper it will be reflected in both names.

SDIP which serves as a road map for the municipality as it creates and enhances programs and services for its residents over a certain period of years. SDIP usually spells out among other things, the municipality vision, mission, values, strategies and programs. These concepts should comply and feed in for the physical plans as well as the later can also feeds the SDIP.

Strategic Development and Investment Plan must be both visionary and strategic. It outlines goals and objectives for the future and is the principal guide directing land use policy and decision-making. It defines the policies, programs and specific actions necessary to attain these objectives.

SDIP is prepared every X years (probably 5, 10, or more years) depends on the municipal strategy. All City plans and programs which effect land use and development, including the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, Impact Fees and Capital Improvement Plan, must be in conformance with the policies and directives found in the municipal SDIP.

The SDIP must be considered as a "living document" and not placed on a shelf until the next revisions are due. It should be continually reviewed, modified and expanded as necessary to reflect changing circumstances and opportunities.

4.0 Why Should Palestinian Municipalities have SDIP?

The world is full of opportunities and the Palestinian cities are most in need to take advantage of good planning to achieve progress and prosperity. While it is tempting to deal with issues as they arise—and Council and Administration certainly do that—that is not always the best way to ensure that municipalities maximize their potential. Therefore, the municipal Council should meet to discuss what the future might look like in their city and, having agreed, what strategies will best get them to the highest level of development which may lead to their people prosperity.

The SDIP document is a product of those discussions of several stakeholders in the city, which then shall provides a disciplined, open, and honest assessment of where the city is today, where it hopes to be in the future, and what actions are required to get to that future. It is intended as a way of sharing expectations and plans with cities'

external and internal audience to ensure everyone is aware of the direction the municipality is taking, the principles guiding them along the way, and the targets they are striving to meet.

For the vision presented in any SDIP to become a reality however, other steps must follow its adoption. These include:

- Revision of municipal ordinances and bylaws to ensure the Plan's goals and policies are properly reflected, implemented and enforced
- Development of a capital budget and program to outline long-term public investment needs and commitments
- Development of area-specific plans, programs and policies to offer more detailed and site-specific strategies for selected parts of the city
- Ongoing evaluation of plans, policies and programs; and
- Continuing community involvement in the planning and governing process.

While describing the local council responsibilities, the Palestinian Local Council law (LCL) in article 15 mentioned many areas such as; Planning of the city and streets, controlling of building and construction permits, supplying of water, and electricity, manage and control sewage and solid waste, establish and regulate public markets, public parks, and sports and cultural institutions, regulate and monitor crafts and industry and public stores, etc. All of these responsibilities can't just be done without strategic planning and development objectives that the LGU should draw upfront before acting in these fields since these issues touches every inhabitant's life in their areas.

Submitting a development plan based on the municipal needs to the MOLG is mentioned in article 26 of the LCL as one of the criteria used for allocating the

revenues collected by the central government. Despite this fact, the development plans at the local level are not been used as a common practice at the LGUs.

5.0 Research Aims and Objectives:

This paper aims at describing planning practices (Physical and Strategic Planning) at the Palestinian local level so as to provide a descriptive background for further development. It will also highlight the strengths and weaknesses and provide recommendations for planning development practices, and will provide information for the researchers, planners, students and other interested people.

The paper mainly aims at addressing the planning structure within municipalities, but it also highlights some planning aspects with the Joint Services Councils for Planning and Development; which are considered a very important local government structure.

6.0 Research Methodology:

The research adopted two research methods: data analysis of two assignments conducted recently at the Municipal Development and Lending Fund (MDLF); the first assignment known as the physical planning survey results for selected number of municipalities. The second assignment is data collected by MDLF for developing the transfer mechanism. The researchers insured that the related information was used properly and was supported by intensive literature review as a second adopted research methodology.

6.1 Baseline survey analysis:

The “Urban Planning in Municipalities and Joint Services Councils Baseline Survey” was carried out by New Vision² which was contracted under the Local Government Capacity Building Project (LGCBP) funded by the Danish government, administered by the World Bank, and managed by MDLF for the benefit of MOLG and LGUs within West Bank and Gaza Strip. The survey was conducted on October, 2007 and continued for five months carried out by several engineers with different specialization civil, infrastructure and planning engineers as well as social and planning law specialists as well as social researchers under the supervision of Ministry of Local Government/ Planning Department and Municipal Development and Lending Fund/ Institutional Development and Technical Assistance Department. The researchers supervised the development of the questionnaire which targeted 17 municipalities in WBG based on specific selection criteria³ and representing municipalities from different categories (9 from category A, 6 from B, and 2 from C).

6.2 Transfer Mechanism Data collection results:

The MDLF has conducted a survey on 132 municipalities on June 2008 for the purpose of evaluating them as a step for implementing the MDLF transfer mechanism. The researchers have supervised the data collection. The MDLF transfer mechanism uses three main criteria to allocate funds based on them, these are; (i) population, (ii) Needs based on a development plan and (iii) the performance of the municipality. The MDLF has conducted a survey to gather information about the municipalities’ capacities and performance to verify and evaluate the level of their capacities. One of the criteria under the performance indicators is whether the municipalities have developed their strategic development plans or not. 38 municipalities answered

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- (2) New Vision, a Palestinian firm, specialized in management, marketing and training.
 - (3) The selection criteria was developed by the consultant and approved by MOLG.

positively that they have developed Strategic Development and Investment Plans (SDIP), but after verification only 10 municipalities⁴ were found to have a visionary strategic development and investment plans.

6.3 Literature Review:

The researchers reviewed related literature, mainly the legal documents representing the laws, government and local government planning practices and different reports produced by MOLG and MOP in relation to the planning. The plans developed by different municipalities and international documentation related to the planning in the local government sector.

7.0 Research Structure

The objective of improving the institutional capacities of municipalities planning functionality should be enhanced within the following three levels of capacity building as illustrated in Fig. (1):

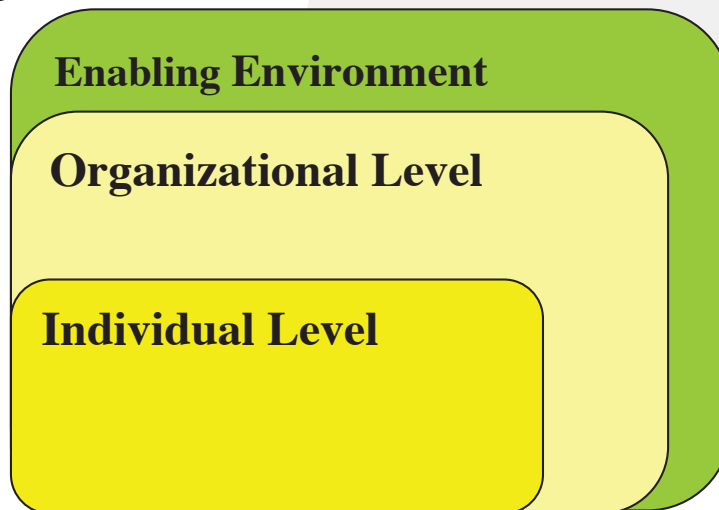


Figure (1): Capacity Building levels.

(4) Municipalities are Hebron, Ramallah, Salfeet, Beit Sahour, Taffoh, Beita, Qabalan, Jamaeen, Beitunia, Maithalon,

The overall context within which municipalities undertake their functions are also key considerations in planning functionality. The municipalities and their planning staff function in a complex environment, or an environment of change, traditional approaches to institutional development have failed or were only partially successful because they did not take into account the broader system or environment within which they functioned.

This research paper is tackling the planning process within municipalities to identify the gaps that need to be considered to enable the planning process to operate within a well designed system where a set of entities operate towards a common purpose and according to certain rules and processes within the following three levels:

7.1 The Enabling Environment/system level:

A positive enabling environment is needed to address the cross-sectoral issues relevant to all parts involved in the planning process, the laws and regulations governing the planning process, and the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders MOLG, private sector, and engineering association. It also includes the different kinds of infrastructure facilities (technical, socio-economic and environmental) and the financial resources that are available at the local level.

7.2 Organizational Level:

This capacity level focuses on the municipality structures, processes, resources and management issues related to planning process. An important dynamic exists among the municipality, manuals and operational systems that enable the municipality to work within the surrounding environment (rules and regulations). The more successful methodology is to examine all dimensions of planning at the municipality level, including its interactions within the system, and with other institutions (i.e

MOLG), “stakeholders,” or public. This applies to the municipality sub-units (e.g. departments, sections, units, workgroups and committees, etc.).

7.3 *The individual level:*

This level of planning process development refers to individuals as municipality actors (employees). Change at the individual level should be contemplated as part of the broader framework. Individuals must be able to participate in decisions and have a clear understanding of their role and function within the planning process. But this will not guarantee that the person will be productive or effective. Education, on-the-job training, and formal and informal skills development to accomplish tasks and solve problems are core requirements.

8.0 The Environment surrounding the physical planning processes

8.1 *the Jordanian Law:*

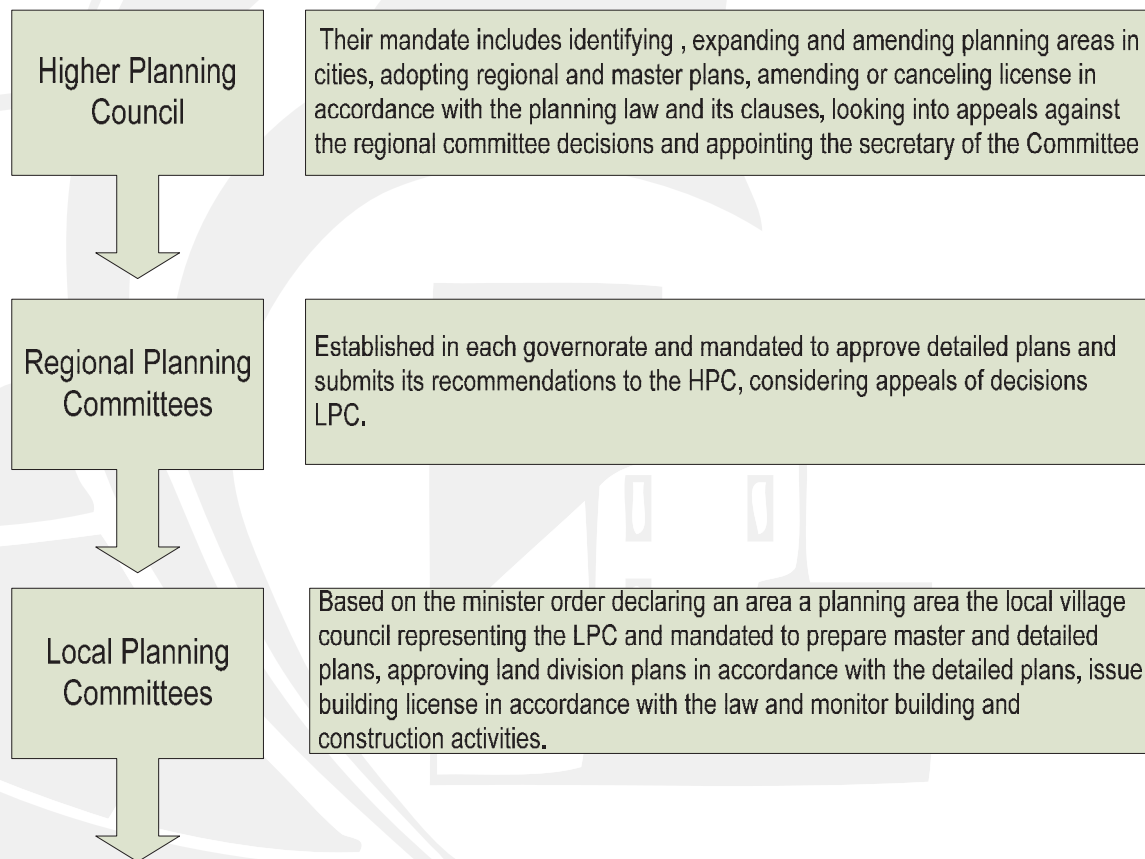
(City, Village and Building Law No 79/1966) remains the legal framework for planning.. There are three levels of planning administration: the Higher Planning Council, the District Planning Committees, and Local Planning Committees. This is the situation in West Bank; while in Gaza Strip the British Mandatory Law entitled Town Planning Ordinance No 28/1936. Both laws are outdated and not contemporary, and there is a need to have one unified law governing the planning process in West Bank and Gaza Strip.

There is long legal procedures to settle cases of planning violations at courts, hence, rendering them inefficient. The law suffers from the inefficiency in the enforcement tools for local councils and MOLG to enforce the law and regulations in the urban planning.

Another important legal document is the Palestinian Local Council Law No.(1)/1997 (LCL) which provides the base legal framework for municipalities and village councils.

8.2 MOLG:

The Ministry of Local Government, the regulator for the local government sector through the Minister, who by law is responsible for the coordination of land use and planning in the best public interest. The Minister ensures that planning of cities and villages is compliant to the social policy of the government and progress of the society; monitors and directs joint local and provincial steering committees to ensure that their operations and decisions conform to the law. The Minister identifies, expands and cancels planning areas for cities and villages upon the recommendation of the Higher Planning Committee; this was given to the Minister based on the LCL.



8.3 Private sector:

The involvement of the private sector in developing the master or physical plans is not regulated and there are no available standards on the requirements for the master plans. The available engineering offices that could provide the service are considered limited and not equipped with the different needs of qualification related to the master plan preparations.

Enabling the environment will require the availability of financial resources at the local government level mainly through the intergovernmental fiscal transfers and/or the local revenues system as part of the local financial system. It's clear that the Palestinian local government sector is the least in the region who receives support from the central government⁽⁵⁾.

9.0 The Institutional setup within the municipality:

The municipality is responsible by law to develop the **master (physical) plans** which are the foundation for physical planning, through which land use, as well as roads, public utilities, infrastructure, residential and green zones and others are identified, for a specific residential area within a specific timeframe. Findings show that 65% of municipalities have master plans ratified by HPC, 35% don't have officially ratified master plans. Most category (A) municipalities have officially ratified master plan.

(5) World Bank and MDLF study; Intergovernmental Fiscal Relations & Municipal Finance Policy Note, June 29, 2006.

Municipality category	Are there master plans officially ratified by the Higher Planning Council		Total	
		Yes		No
Category (a)	Number	6	3	9
	Percentage (%)	67	33	100
Category (b)	Number	5	1	6
	Percentage (%)	83	17	100
Category (c)	Number	0	2	2
	Percentage (%)	0	100	100
Total	Number	11	6	17
	Percentage (%)	65	35	100

Arial images, are the first necessary step towards preparing master plans. Findings of the survey elevated that all municipalities, of different categories, have Arial images.

Policies and procedures, development of master plans is only regulated by the laws governing the process but there are no written procedures such as the Physical Planning Policies and Procedures Manual (PPPPM).

As such, the municipalities are supposed to prepare the strategic development and investment planning; the strategic development plans at the municipal level have been accompanied by a mis-interpretation and mis-reference. Therefore, the MDLF in its attempt to verify these strategic development planning practices as been considered one of its main fund allocation criteria has conducted an evaluation survey on June 2008 on the 132 municipalities to examine the availability of Strategic Development Plans and has received answers from 38 municipalities that have strategic plans. When

screening and verifying the collected data, about 10 of them can be considered as having strategic development and investment plans which are visionary and strategic within its concepts. They outlined the goals, objectives and programs for the future and were developed in coordination with the people in their communities.

The development plans of the rest of the municipalities, who answered positively, can only be considered as lists of projects that the municipalities have identified either through community participation or by the municipal staff and councils despite some of these lists have identified some objectives.

This result shows that in general the municipalities have not been practicing strategic planning and their development projects is not linked with real needs and priorities which should be determined through community participation and they may not be able to operate and maintain them efficiently.

With reference to the October 2007 survey on urban planning practices conducted by the MDLF, the following main findings were registered out of the 13 JSCDPs that were surveyed:

1. Out of the 85 JSCDPs there were only about 45 active as of the opinion of the General Department for Joint Service Council in the MOLG.
2. 13 JSCPDs out of the 45 were surveyed and 9 of them had strategic development plans most of which were supported by donors. Taking into consideration that none of the 13 councils have integrated physical plan that includes all geographical area of the individual council members. This in fact raises the doubt about the quality and/or the viability of those strategic development plans.

These results show that the field of strategic development planning is a fertile field for development and work at the local government level in Palestine.

10.0 The Individuals Level:

10.1 Departments:

The development of physical plans could be implemented within the municipalities or through contracting private engineering offices; this mainly depends on the available capacities within the municipality. The results of the study shows that those engineers exist within the planning department or the engineering department usually develops the physical plans, the existence of these plans varies between the municipalities involved in the study. Most of the municipalities have their planning departments which are mainly linked or refer to the engineering department which takes care of all project plans, detailed design and implementation of these projects.

10.2 Roles and Responsibilities:

The different functionality within each department if both exist in the municipalities is not clearly defined and documented; based on the study it shows that the engineering department performs all duties related to master plans, detailed projects and building licensing. The function between the planning department which is in some cases located within the engineering department is not clear and not unified between municipalities. It depends on the individuals' capacities and positions within the municipalities' administration structure. The parties involved in the preparation of master plans are different. The results showed that 45% of the prepared plans are prepared by the municipalities, 18% are prepared by the MOLG while 27% are prepared by private planning offices.

The strategic planning was not institutionalized at the municipalities; therefore, no identified roles and responsibilities were classified.

10.3 Individual Capacities:

The engineers specialized in physical planning are only within the large municipalities, there are scarcity of design and planning engineers and staff in the medium and small municipalities. Training programs in planning are restricted to large municipalities and are not provided to executive staff within the local council.

The number of engineers varies tremendously; this might be in relation to the municipality functionality and number of population; or due to over employment. There are no specialized planners at the municipalities and strategic development plans remains marginalized and not carefully addressed at the municipal functionalities.

As for the survey study of the 13 JSCPDs, the staff issue was also one of the concerns of the JSCDP, where they hardly been able to attain their salaries and mainly they have an engineer, an accountant and a surveyor. Despite the fact that the main function of these councils is planning and development, no planners are employed nor are considered in their organizational structure.

There are no incentives for the employees who take planning training and neither their salary is enough to give them more incentives. In small municipalities and village councils the issue is more negative.

11.0 Recommendations

11.1 Environmental surrounding Level:

11.1.1 Legal Framework:

It is recommended to unify the planning law in West Bank and Gaza Strip considering the special circumstances in the Palestinian Territories, the new planning law should solve the following issues:

1. identify the level of planning within the country to two or three levels,
2. the formation of the planning committees to wider the representation to include civil society to improve public participation
3. development of a Physical Planning Policies and Procedures Manual would outline in details the mechanisms set within the law as follow:
 - a. identify the organization of planning process; i.e. work program, preparation phase, recording of information and local events
 - b. identification of planning framework; i.e. regional determinants, urban structure and existing land use
 - c. definition of key problems and potentials, sectoral assessment, physical constraints, physical problems and physical potentials
 - d. evaluation of alternative;
 - e. elaboration of development strategy

The local government law should be amended to include clear articles that highlight the municipal responsibility in strategic development planning.

11.1.2 MOLG:

Has been mandated as a regulator for this sector, therefore, an institutional development program addressing the needs and requirements for the planning department within the MOLG need to be designed and implemented; this should include the following:

1. The ministry plays the role of implementer and planner of urban planning, instead of playing its main role as regulator, supervisor and guide for municipalities in this regard.

2. Operational guidelines for each unit within the planning department at MOLG, specifying the procedures to be implemented for reviewing master plans prepared either by the municipality internally or externally through contracting private planning offices
3. Local government planning policy that would be reflected from the national policy, and developing the work plan and techniques to provide assistance to municipality to be committed to the policy
4. provide training and on the job training for MOLG staff to enhance their responsibilities as supervisors and monitors on the planning process
5. Provide all needed soft wares, equipment and institutional tools to increase the employees' efficiency.

Promoting rural community economic development requires a realistic understanding of community resources, the opportunities for using those resources, and any trends in state and national economies that are likely to affect the community and its resources. An *environmental scan should be done for each municipality so it can provide such an understanding by identifying the community's internal strengths and weaknesses and by identifying external opportunities and threats to the community's economic viability. This specifically includes:*

- **Basic Information:**

The basic information refers to that which can give an overview for the planners about the community, in terms of its geographical location and conditions, the population and demographic development at the community, the livability of the community in terms of environmental conditions and socio-economic and competitiveness factors, the institutional and capacity level at the LGU, etc.

- **Development condition:**

The Planning team shall analyze the existing technical, social-economic, environmental, infrastructure facilities and the financial resources and the bankability of the LGU.

11.1.3 Develop curriculums:

And educational courses and training courses at the universities and training centers about a visionary strategic development and physical planning so to enhance the planning capacities and improve practical skills.

11.2 Institutional Setup:

Within the Municipality, based on the assessment conducted on the municipalities and the weaknesses identified it is recommended to:

1. **Develop the data base system**, and the collection of information needed to develop the physical planning process
2. **Set up, roles and responsibilities** within the municipalities planning unit need to be reorganized
3. **Develop operational manuals**, and technical manual (Physical planning polices and procedures manual and strategic development and investment plan manual) and the employees to be trained on these manuals practically.
4. **Design the development Goals, and recommended Strategies by individual municipalities**; thorough analysis of the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are basic tool to identify the LGU situation. Highlight all the internal and external impacts that could possibly affect the plan.
5. **Set up Visions, Missions Goals and Strategies**, A strategic vision is usually thought to be solely future oriented; therefore, the first step is to envision the

future by providing a forward looking, idealized image of the LGU and moves outside the usual assumptions. A vision is not a destination, but an intangible structure that surrounds and guides the daily activities. From this perspective, a shared vision is a form of self-identity. The mission should be developed which is the ultimate purpose for why the organization exists. Once a set of issues has been analyzed and selected, goals and recommended general and sectoral strategies for achieving those goals are identified too. A *goal* is an outcome that the community would like to attain. It is often expressed as a challenge. A number of strategies that will be used to achieve the goal are also highlighted and agreed upon. These strategies should be linked with spatial reference framework.

6. **Formulate Action Plans,** Once goals and recommended strategies have been discussed, key implementers and support groups should be identified for each strategy, and an *action plan* that can be used to carry out the strategy should be developed. The action plan should list the specific steps to be taken, assign responsibility to specific individuals or groups who will carry out those steps, and assure that tasks are completed according to a detailed timetable that is evaluated along the way. Key implementers are individuals or groups who assume strategic responsibility, whereas supports groups help carry out the action. The action plan should identify the investment programs and activities together with their expected budgets to be done to achieve the goals and objectives.
7. **Implement Action Plans,** A well-designed action plan helps the *implementation* process by ensuring complete understanding of the various tasks and the time required to perform them. Consequently, implementation should follow the action plan closely. Of course, unforeseen events may require changes along the way. For this reason, it is important to monitor the implementation process.

8. **Monitor Results,** Continual *monitoring* will supply the local government sponsors of the strategic planning process with the information necessary to assess the progress toward meeting the goals and recommended strategies adopted by the community. Continuous, scheduled feedback provides an early warning system that will alert the responsible when actions are not proceeding according to plan. In addition, the planners may need to perform periodic environmental scans to ensure that emerging opportunities are not overlooked and unforeseen developments outside the community do not interfere with the action plans. Finally, monitoring should also track expenditures and allocation of resources.

11.2 Individual Enhancements:

The staff responsible for planning need to be provided with on the job training to enable them to manage and implement the development of master and strategic plans. The institutional development related to the individual level need to focus on enhancing the cooperation and relation between the municipalities and the private sector, and the staff needs to be trained in public participation and involvement in the planning process development.

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