



Arab American University
Faculty of Graduate Studies

**“The Effect of Strategic Planning on Partnerships
between Local Governmental Units and Non-
Governmental Organizations in Palestine”**

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**This Thesis was submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the master’s degree in
Strategic Planning and Fund Raising**

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Thesis Approval

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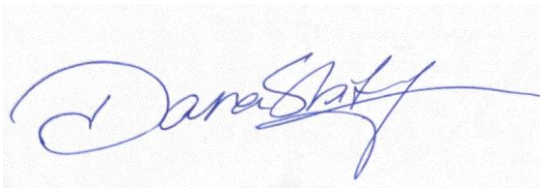

Declaration

I declare that the content of this thesis is my own research work, unless otherwise referenced. I certify that this thesis doesn't contain any material published before by another person or has been submitted elsewhere for any degree or qualification.

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dana Basil Sbitany', is written on a light-colored, textured background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dedication

This dissertation stands as a testament to the inspiration, support and believe I received from my friends and family. The unwavering support and encouragement have been the guiding light through this journey. To all whom have supported me this Achievement is yours as much as it is mine.

Acknowledgment

I am thankful for all the support I have received from my friends, work colleagues, teachers and the respondents who made this research possible and valuable.

I extend my appreciation to my supervisor Dr Abdelrahman Tamimi who has guided me and taught me valuable knowledge during my master's degree studies and not just during my thesis.

Abstract

The aim of this research is to study the “Effect of Strategic Planning on Building Partnerships between Local governmental Units and Non- Governmental Organizations in Palestine” The sample size included two municipalities and two NGOs for the case studies, in depth desk review and interviews. In addition, further data was collected by the researcher from seven municipalities classified as A and B, two more NGOs in a form of survey. The study also aimed to study the effect of partnerships on service delivery by LGUs to citizens, and to build an LGU-NGO module.

The research results revealed that there is a positive relationship between the existence of a Local Strategic development plan and building partnerships with NGOs, especially with the existence of a comprehensive operation plan that defines potential implementation partners based on community priorities and needs. The existence of the strategic local development plan leads to building partnerships with relevant NGOs which had a direct effect on the service delivery process to citizens. This is a result of the NGO support to LGUs by providing services within its development field, on either capacity building, awareness raising or joint implementation of activities. Which is part of the local strategic plan/ operation plan, based on mutual understanding and based on the willingness to cooperate of each party. All these factors lead to successful partnerships and eventually improved service delivery from LGUs towards the citizens.

As the partnerships between LGUs and NGOs hasn't been studied before, the researched recommends that this research is used as a base for further research, especially to capture the citizen perspective and evaluation of the partnership's outcomes. The research also recommends that the National level highlights and promotes the importance of building

partnerships between LGUs and NGOs for the sake of reaching the citizens in the most effective and efficient manner. Another recommendation is to have a fundraising and networking expert as part of the municipal structures who mainly work on networking and building partnerships with different stakeholders.

Key words: Strategic Planning, Strategic Development Investment Planning, Partnerships, Local Governmental Units, Jericho Municipality, Betunia Municipality, Palestinian Hydrology Group, QADER for Community Development, Service Delivery.

Table of Contents

Thesis Approval.....	I
Declaration.....	II
Dedication.....	III
Acknowledgment.....	IV
Abstract.....	V
Chapter 1 – Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	1
1.3 Knowledge Gap	2
1.4 Research Question	3
1.5 Research Objectives	3
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	3
1.7 Study Hypothesis.....	5
1.8 Study Limitations	5
Chapter 2- Theoretical Framework and Literature Review.....	7
2. Theoretical Framework.....	7
2.1.1 Introduction	7
2.1.2 Strategic Management	7
The Strategic Planning Processes	8
Importance and Benefits, and Challenges of Strategic Planning.....	10
2.1.2 Partnerships	12
Stakeholder Engagement and Building Partnerships.....	12
Advantages, Benefits, Disadvantages and Challenges of Partnerships	13
2.1.3 Local Governments in Palestine	17
Municipal Development Programme	19
Strategic Development Investment Planning in Palestinian LGUs	21
The Role of NGOs and CSOs in the SDIP Process	25
2.1.4 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) In Palestine	26
2.1.5 Partnerships between LGUs and NGOs	29
2.1.6 Summary of Theoretical Framework.....	30
2.2 Literature Review	31
2.2.1 Summary of Literature Review	34

Chapter 3- Methodology	36
3.1 Introduction	36
3.2 Research Design	36
3.2.1 Methodology	36
3.2.2 The sample sizes and selection criteria	37
3.2.3 Research Tools	41
Chapter 4 - Findings, Results and Data Analysis	45
4.1 Introduction	45
4.2 Target group/ Respondent Profiles	45
4.2.1 Respondent 1. Betunia Municipality	46
4.2.2 Respondent 2. Jericho Municipality	47
4.2.3 Respondent 3. The Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG).....	48
4.2.4 Respondent 4. QADER for Community Development	49
4.3 LGU Case Studies and Surveys	50
4.3.1 Case Study – Betunia Municipality	50
4.3.2 Case Study – Jericho Municipality	61
4.3.3 Conclusion of LGU Case Studies	71
4.4 NGO Case Studies	74
4.4.1 Case Study - Palestinian Hydrology Group for water and environmental resources development (PHG)	74
4.4.2 Case Study – QADER for Community Development	77
4.4.3 Conclusion of Palestinian NGOs case Studies	81
4.5 Surveys	81
4.5.1 Survey Targeting selected LGUS from the Westbank.....	81
Survey for Selected Palestinian NGOs	91
Chapter 5 – Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations	99
5.1 Introduction	99
5.2 Research Questions	99
5.2.1 Research Question (1): What is the effect of strategic planning on building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs in Palestine?	99
5.2.2 Research Question (2) What is the effect of partnerships on the service delivery to citizens?.....	101

5.2.3 Research Question (3) what is the adequate/ proper module for the partnership between Local Governmental Units and Non-Governmental Organizations?.....	102
Hypothesis of the Study	104
5.3 The Results of the Study.....	104
5.2Recommendations	106
6. References	108
Bibliography	108
Annexes	112
المخلص	124

List of Tables

Table 1 Municipal Grant System under the proposed MDP 3	20
Table 2 Selected LGUs for case studies and survey.....	38
Table 3 Selected NGOs for case studies and surveys.....	41
Table 4 Betunia Municipality projects with secured funds	54
Table 5 Betunia Municipality's reliance on partners in implementation and funding	56
Table 6 Betunia Municipality's partners support methods	56
Table 7 Jericho Municipality's projects with secured funds.....	65
Table 8 Jericho Municipality's reliance on partners in implementation and funding	66
Table 9 Jericho Municipality's partners support methods	68
Table 10 LGUs survey respondent's profile.....	82
Table 11 Distribution of partnerships among sub development fields.....	87
Table 12 Examples on joint projects between LGUs and NGOs and the improved services	97

List of Figures

Figure 1 building networks and partnerships by LGUs.....	84
Figure 2 Types of Organizations LGUs partner with.....	85
Figure 3 Development Areas partnerships are built on.	86
Figure 4 Number of LGU partnerships with NGOs and CSOs	88
Figure 5 Impact of partnerships on service provision to citizens.....	89
Figure 6 NGOs main implementation partners.....	92
Figure 7 NGOs target groups.	92
Figure 8 NGOs support to partners to reach the target groups.....	93
Figure 9 Development Areas NGOs work with LGUs in	94
Figure 10 Essentiality of SDIPs for NGO - LGU partnerships.	95
Figure 11 The process of enhancing service delivery through partnerships.	102
Figure 12 Successful LGU-NGO module	102

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

This research aims to identify the impact of strategic planning on building relationships and partnerships between LGUs and NGOs , identify the impact and added value of partnerships on service delivery to citizens , and create a proper model to create strategic partnerships among LGUs and NGOs taking consideration the sensitivity of the Palestinian Local Governance sector context and fragmentation , the factors affecting NGO performance and funding , and evaluation of existing partnerships to be the basis for the research.

1.2 Problem Statement

“Strategic planning is a crucial success factor for any organization that has a futuristic vision and tends to achieve its goals most effectively and efficiently. In the Palestinian context, many organizations have adopted strategic planning and management, but fail at a certain point to fulfil their plans and achieve their goals”.

On the municipal level, Local Governmental Units (LGUs) have been supported by the national government and the Municipal Development Lending Fund (MDLF) in the development of strategic local development plans, but the implementation of the strategic plans has been a big challenge, especially that the existing plans represent a wish list rather than actual implementable activities that are based on communities priorities, in addition, LGUs usually have scarce financial resources and lack some technical expertise that needs to obtain from different sources. Therefore, for the Municipalities to fulfil their mandate of providing 27 services (according to the 1997 Law of Local authorities) they

are expected to conduct fundraising, planning and implementation of activities, as well as, creating partnerships for implementation either with other municipalities, or local donors, private sector, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Strengthening LGUs through partnerships is very crucial to deliver services to citizens, especially social services, and community development. LGUs usually refer to NGOs for technical and financial support for implementation, this is due to the nature of NGOs in being service providers working on the grassroots level with close contact with citizens and can go to places the governments cannot reach in a more cost-efficient and professional manner. NGOs are categorized into three main functions including operational working on development, advocacy working on defending or promoting a cause and seeking to influence policies, and finally, humanitarian working on human aspects, disasters, poverty, and diseases. These three categories are in harmony with the provided services by the LGUs, creating a good soil for partnerships and cooperation.

1.3 Knowledge Gap

Building Partnerships is a success factor for LGUs with a positive impact on service delivery to society and citizens, yet it is still not clear if the existence of good strategic management and solid strategic plan support in building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs and provide better service delivery.

There is almost no research conducted to study the efficiency and effectiveness of partnerships between LGUs and NGOs and how such relationships and their impact on citizens, therefore, this research will be a fundamental base for future research on building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs. Especially that the private - public partnership

are very common, but partnership between NGOs and LGUs are rare, under uncertain socioeconomic and political conditions.

1.4 Research Question

- **Question 1.** What is the effect of strategic planning on building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs?
- **Question 2.** What is the effect and added value of partnerships on the service delivery to citizens?
- **Question 3.** What is the adequate / proper model for the strategic partnerships between LGUs and NGOs?

1.5 Research Objectives

Objective 1: To investigate the effect of strategic planning, and the presence of a local development plan, on building relationships and partnerships between LGUs and NGOs and better service delivery to citizens. Covering social aspects and community development targeting youth, women, and marginalized groups.

Objective 2: To investigate the main drivers that impact partnerships and service delivery to citizens.

Objective 3: To suggest efficient and effective models for partnerships that are achievable and workable under uncertain political and socioeconomic conditions.

1.6 Significance of the Study

On the theoretical level, not many studies have been conducted regarding LGUs and NGOs in Palestine, unlike partnerships between LGUs and the private sector for instance.

Therefore, this research is expected to be the baseline for future research that tackle strategic partnerships between the LGUs and NGOs.

This study is important for promoting building partnerships and motivating LGUs and NGOs to partner and implement joint activities and services that have a positive impact and great value for the citizens and society.

The key beneficiaries of this study are the LGUs and NGOs, primary beneficiaries include local and international donors, higher administrative layers such as the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA), who could gain knowledge and share with its members, and The Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) to motivate and endorse such partnerships.

On one hand, the finding of this study will highlight the importance and effect of strategic planning and management on partnership- building between LGUs and NGOs, as well as identify the main drivers that impact service delivery.

On the other hand, the study will suggest an effective and efficient partnership- building model for LGUs and NGOs to adopt under the uncertain socio-economic and political challenges and limitations.

The study is expected to emphasise the importance of the building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs, helping decision makers in LGUs and NGOs in utilizing the Strategic Development Investment Plans (SDIPs) as a basis for collaboration and partnerships, to enhance service delivery to citizens on different development areas.

It will also provide the National Level with a background about the importance of LGU-NGO partnerships, the effectiveness of such partnerships, and act as a reference for building awareness on the importance of such partnerships.

1.7 Study Hypothesis

The research hypothesis is summarized as follows:

Hypothesis 1. There is a positive relationship between good strategic planning on building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs. Meaning that if the LGU has good strategic management and planning, it has a high potential in creating relationships and building partnerships with NGOs.

Hypothesis 2. LGU and NGO partnerships and jointly implemented activities lead to better service delivery to citizens.

Hypothesis 3. The NGOs scope of service, and the existence of a strategic development plan, willingness to cooperate and mutual understanding lead to building successful partnerships that improve service delivery to citizens.

1.8 Study Limitations

The obstacles facing this research included:

- Limited resources and literature on the topic of partnerships between LGUs and NGOs.
- Time constraints – the research time frame was relatively short at one-time span and one generation of Local Development Plans could be studied.
- Reaching Palestinian LGUs and NGOs was a challenge due to their lack of responsiveness and availability.
- The impact of strategic planning on partnerships on service delivery from the citizen perspective couldn't be captured due to the timing of the research where most activities were finalized and planning for the new generation of strategic Local Development Investment Plans were under preparation.

- **The sample selection:** identifying the sample and selection of the case studies and interviewees was challenging due to the wide variety of LGUs and NGOs in Palestine. The selection of the municipalities was A and B municipalities, C municipalities were excluded as they tend to be weaker in terms of strategic development planning and less accessible. Meanwhile, Gaza couldn't be targeted due to the distance and more challenging context. As for the NGOs, the selection process was more difficult as many NGOs works with one or more municipality and don't publish publicly their interventions, in addition, communicating with NGOs is more challenging as they are not always available therefore, arranging for interviews took more time.

Chapter 2- Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Introduction

In the past few years, many shifts have occurred in the management of organizations; these changes occurred on different levels that aim to enhance the performance and directions of these organizations. This change is what is known to be Change Management. One of the most important processes required to achieve change management is through strategic management and planning, which it is important for organizations and companies to achieve their strategic goals and objectives in the best possible manner with the support of all the team and main stakeholders.

This chapter identifies the theoretical framework related to Strategic Management and planning linking it to the Palestinian context in reference to the Local Governance Sector.

For the best development and implementation of strategic plans, organizations must take into consideration their stakeholders and form partnerships to maximize the benefit, productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of their deliverables and products or services provided.

2.1.2 Strategic Management

For a company or organization to be successful, it should identify its direction in terms of what it wants to achieve and how and with which resources. Once the organization defines its strategy, it translates the information into a strategic plan document prepared through a strategic planning process with the participation of most or all relevant stakeholders. Strategic planning is a part of the strategic management process.

The Strategic Management process is the overall process of achieving the strategic direction, starting from planning until the implementation. It includes managing action plans, projects, and the life cycle of strategic plans, which are crucial to accomplish long-term priorities defined by the organization or business. (Kling, 2018). Another definition for strategic management is “the comprehensive collection of ongoing activities and processes that organizations use to systematically coordinate and align resources and actions with mission, vision, and strategy throughout an organization. The process of Strategic management transforms the plan into a system that provides strategic performance feedback to decision-makers. (Mohammadian, 2019)”.

The Strategic Planning Processes

The strategic planning process defines as "an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment." (Maleka, 2014). According to the UN, Strategic Planning is a process of looking into the future and identifying trends and issues against which to align the organizational priorities of the department or office. It means aligning a division, section, unit, or team to a higher-level strategy and aiming to achieve goals the most effectively and efficiently (UN, 2022).

In summary, strategic planning is identification of priorities, identification of needed efforts and resources, and development of common goals that need to be adopted by the organization to succeed in its operations and achieve its objectives and goals.

The strategic planning process has five steps the organization needs to follow to develop a strategic plan. The steps include the following:

1. **Environmental analysis:** One of the main steps to develop a strategic plan is to conduct an environmental analysis to identify the main external factors impacting the organization or company. This includes factors such as Politics, Economy, sociology, Technology, Legal and Environment. The major tool used to measure these factors are the PESTEL analysis. This analysis supports professionals and managers in decision-making. (Battista, 2021) or through **SWOT analysis** which is an analysis planning tool mainly used for planning and decision-making purposes; it helps the organization in overcoming challenges and determining what leads to pursue. It analyses the Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a company or organization. (Schooley, 2022).
2. **Strategic framework:** Another main step in strategic planning is identifying the strategic framework, which contains the vision and direction of the organization. It includes the mission- which is the broad picture of how the organization will behave now towards the future vision; The vision-which identifies the future vision of the organization, The values- which are the principles identified by the organization; it represents what the organization stands for. The Objectives: These are the specific goals that, once achieved, will make the strategy tangible. The strategy – the approach the organization will follow to realize its mission and values. Finally, the tactics the methods of the strategy shall be executed and moving towards its objectives. The tactics shall be in harmony with the values, mission, and vision. (CMOE, 2022).

3. **Define the strategic goals and objectives:** The organizations need to identify its direction and set its goals on where it wants to be, through defining strategic objectives required to measure change and achieve its goals.
4. **Develop an action plan and budget:** Once the strategic framework is identified, the strategic planning team and stakeholders need to jointly develop an action plan to identify the steps needed to achieve the goals and objectives under a predefined time frame and with an estimated budget for each activity.
5. **Monitoring and evaluation** are done through tracking achievements of the strategic goals and constant revision of change within the organizations to ensure proper implementation of the strategic plan, according to the desired strategic direction. This constant follow-up gives organizations the possibility of identifying required adjustments in the operations and strategy to achieve the objectives. It is essential that the organization develops indicators to measure its achievements. Proper monitoring and evaluation support the decision makers in making their decisions, and in the reporting process of the achievements and challenges faced. Looking into the Palestinian context, In the past decades Palestinian companies and organizations started to consider strategic planning in their operations; some succeeded and improved.
Meanwhile, others failed to implement and fulfil the strategy due to different factors and challenges defined below.

Importance and Benefits, and Challenges of Strategic Planning

Harvard Business School highlights the importance and benefits of strategic planning by creating a forward-focused vision that touches every employee and serves as an actionable way to reach company goals; it helps in decision-making on both high level

and team level but with a united vision. Strategic planning also draws attention to biased and flaws in reasoning, meaning that participating in the strategic planning process helps to keep decision-making based on data, projection, case studies and other valuable resources. Strategic planning also helps to track progress based on strategic goals (Cote, 2022).

Most organizations, managers and leaders understand the importance of strategic planning, but it is still not an easy process and is not always successful. Victor Cascella notes in his article that only a few organizations or leaders manage to translate their strategies into results, which is caused by paying more attention to planning rather than implementation. Cascella identified three signs that organizations are poor strategic planners:

1. They lack strategic alignment at every level, meaning not all levels in the organization speak the same language.
2. They misallocate resources and don't communicate strategic opportunities.
3. The need for more operational measures, the organization needs to properly communicate the strategy to its employees to achieve the strategic goals.

Cascella recommends that to avoid the downfalls; organizations must empower their employees to implement it; he also mentioned that effective strategic planning requires a strong focus on three main factors, which are summarized in the following steps: Identifying and understanding core processes through effective strategic plans focus on making improvements for better results, making choices about processes to be improved, identify measures to follow to enhance the processes and gauge the success of those accountable for the implementation of the strategic plan. (Cascella, November 2002).

2.1.2 Partnerships

Stakeholder Engagement and Building Partnerships

Stakeholders have an important role in helping an organization or company in meeting its strategic objectives; this is done through their contribution in providing their experience, adding their perspectives, identifying needs, and providing necessary material and resources. Such contributions are important for an organization's success. Stakeholders can influence decision-making, and the strategic direction in terms of goals and objectives, in addition to operational issues, costs, profits and other areas.

The key stakeholders that can influence strategic planning are those who have interests in the success of the organization, including employees, customers, vendors, owners, community members and much more.

Their impact can be measured through the stakeholder analysis tool that measures interest versus power. The higher interest and power, the bigger impact they have on the organization and strategic planning process. It is important for the organization to know when and how to engage its stakeholders; one of the most important places to include them is during the planning process itself; this is important to increase their ownership and motivate them to contribute to the implementation and success in achieving the strategic goals (Posey, 2022).

Building Partnerships

Building partnerships and alliances on different levels with the relevant stakeholders and parties is important to achieve the required goals, objectives, and visions. Partnerships can occur on different levels, such as within a company or organization, between different types of organizations and companies, between organizations and Local Governments,

organizations and state government, organizations and international organizations or donors or on higher levels between governments.

Based on the OECD, a partnership is identified as a "System of formalized cooperation, grounded in legally binding arrangements or informal understandings, cooperative working relationships, and mutually adopted plans among several institutions. They involve agreements on policy and programme objectives and the sharing of responsibility, resources, risks, and benefits over a specified period" (Osborne, 2010).

Partnerships have become an important international trend that has even managed to get a place in the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030. "The Global Goals can only be met if we work together. International investments and support are needed to ensure innovative technological development, fair trade, and market access, especially for developing countries. To build a better world, we need to be supportive, empathetic, inventive, passionate, and above all, cooperative." (Partnerships for the Goals , 2021), meaning that different parties should come together in the form of partnerships to implement activities that have an impact on the local and international levels..

Organizational Partnership

One of the most important engagement mechanisms for stakeholders is through building organizational partnerships. An organizational partnership is a collaboration between two or more organizations to achieve a common goal through shared resources. (GHKC, 2022).

Advantages, Benefits, Disadvantages and Challenges of Partnerships

Organizational partnerships, as any other partnerships, have their own advantages, disadvantages, and challenges.

In the book of the New Public Governance by Ronald W. McQuaid, the benefits of the partnerships are summarized as follows:

- **Flexible and responsive solutions:** Some topics and problems are complex and have multiple dimensions, such problems cannot be solved by one party and therefore require the support of different stakeholders.
- **Innovation and evaluation:** partnerships are a fertile ground for innovation and creativity, through exchange of knowledge and expertise, giving the partnership the possibility to have an overview of any potential risks and challenges that can be contained and solved in a collaborative manner.
- **Sharing knowledge, expertise, and resources:** the exchange of information and expertise builds the capacities of the partners and helps in better service delivery, once different parties join forces and create partnerships, they become a stronger and can provide better services and create products with higher quality, more effectively and efficiently, this also leads to expanding the reach to all its target group and sometimes beyond.
- **Pooling of resources** Partnership between different parties can lead to pooling of resources needed to solve a problem that cannot be fully handled by one party. This includes, financial resources, human resources and other formats needed according to the type of collaboration.
- **Improving efficiency:** Effective partnerships and collaboration can lead to more less duplication in efforts and more harmony, leading to better service delivery.
- **Capacity building:** partnership between different parties in the form of collaboration can result in capacity building of one or both parties, and even capacitating the target group. this occurs due to the exchange of knowledge and

practise in different specialities and expertise that aim to achieve the same goal. This can occur in all types of partnerships leading to expanding the target groups and reaching to the unfortunate and reaching different dimensions such as the policy level when partnering with the government. Such partnerships tend to be sustainable and are financially stabled and secured.

- **Stakeholders buy in and legitimization:** reaching all levels of stakeholders is important as they have different levels of influence. Main stakeholders can share budgets and influence decision and policy making which increases ownership and leads to successful partnerships. Other stakeholders can influence the local level and support community mobilization to reach grassroots and can have influence on the decision making and policy reform and development processes. (McQuid, 2010).

Partnership challenges and downfalls

Although there is a set of benefits of partnerships, there is still some place for challenges that can cause downfalls and challenges in collaborations. “Partnerships with different organizations work well in achieving organizational goals, but they can also create an environment of frustration, delayed implementations and resentment among the collaborating entities” (Kwesiga, 2020).

Kwesiga identified some potential reasons for failed organizational partnerships, which include different goals caused by different focus and direction, where one of the organizations tends to pull the other towards its direction; different subcultures in which each organization has its own environment and processes that might not match with its partner causing some challenges. Another reason is uneven power, which might cause

one of the partners to feel that it doesn't have control over what is happening in the project or collaboration.

In the book of New Public Governance, McQuaid also highlighted conflicts resulting from partnerships are summarised as follows:

- **Conflict over goals and objectives:** This is caused due to unclarity of goals and objectives from the beginning, which are usually generic and not detailed, causing conflict and confusion during implementation.
- **The cost of time:** time is a crucial resource, delays in agreements and decision making may cause frustration and reduces the sense of ownership among partners, leading to negative impact on achieving goals and the collaboration in general.
- **Roles and responsibilities:** distribution of responsibility among partners may cause in frustration for one of the parties, which might be since one partner feels less in control, leading to reduced level of ownership.
- **Impact of partnerships on other activities and services:** partnerships on certain topics may cause to strengthen one intervention on the account of another, which is caused by focusing of resources such as human, financial and time resources that eventually lead to reducing the effectiveness of other services.
- **Organization difficulties:** cause successful inhibiting coordination of programs and approaches, overcoming the specialists' concerns of disparate organizations is a key implementation problem faced by agencies working together. Barriers to effective partnerships working include organizational (mission, vision, orientation, structural and other differences), legal/ technical barriers (rules and regulations of each partner, and technical/technological capacity), as well as the political environment affecting each partner internally or externally.

- **Capacity differences and gaps:** The gap between one the capacities of one partner and another sometimes cause difficulties as one partner is stronger than another, one partner may lack the professional experience, funds, institutionalized processes this difference causes the partnership to be hindered and might lead to unsuccessful collaboration. There can be difficulties when stakeholders are engaged and lack the required capacities from the professional, organization or financial capacity to contribute, causing the development and implementation of the partnership to be hindered.
- **The difference in philosophy, interests, and directions:** this difference may cause in conflict and misunderstanding between the partners, as each party may have its own philosophy, environment, and strategic orientation leading inability to reach to a common understanding.
- **Power and influence among partners:** in partnerships differences in power is expected as each party has a different role and responsibility that should aim to build a collaboration. The party which controls the most resources tend to be the dominant partner with more power and influence. Proper handling of power and agreements can lead to a successful partnership. Power and influence can change during the partnership and implementation based on the partnership phase and implementation. As one partner may have influence in the planning and initiation, the other may have power and influence in the implementation phase.

2.1.3 Local Governments in Palestine

After the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, the Local Authorities 1997 Law was formulated, describing the roles of the Local Authorities (Local Governmental Units) of the Ministry of Local Government as follows:

The 1997 law clarifies the role of local authorities as a financially independent body with functionalities and roles according to the 1997 Law. The Local Authorities are managed by a local council with a specified number of members based on a decree announced by the Minister and approved by the cabinet; the mayor and council members are directly elected according to the election laws. Meanwhile, the role of the Ministry of Local Government is to draw the general policies for the work of the local authorities, with a supervisory role on the speciality and functionalities, organization of the general projects, budgets, financial administration, legal control, and formulation procedures of the local authorities. Performing technical and administrative work related to regional organization and planning in Palestine as well as establishing any necessary regulations and bylaws needed for the LGUs to perform their duties.

LGUs have a mandate of 27 services identified by law; they are expected to conduct fundraising planning and activities, as well as create partnerships for implementation either with other municipalities, international or local donors, the private sector, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Mostly, LGUs don't fulfil all the 27 services due to many factors, including lack of financial resources, lack of capacities, or lack of the technical experience needed; therefore, forming partnerships is very important to be able to fulfil the maximum number of services for the citizens. In 2022, the total number of LGUs was 419, divided into 133 Municipalities and 286 Village Councils in Westbank and Gaza.

Community development through citizen engagement and participation in Local Governance is a new trend in the Palestinian context, in which the Ministry of Local Government and key stakeholders from the sector have been working on and integrating them into different core processes of the Local governance sector, for example, social

participation and inclusion has become a key pillar in the Local Development Plans known as the Strategic Development Investment Plan (SDIP).

Municipal Development Programme

The Municipal Development Lending Fund (MDLF), under the guidance of the Palestinian National Authority, designed a Municipal Development Programme known as MDP. The programme provides municipalities with infrastructural grants. It also improved the performance of municipalities by building operational planning and financial capacities. One of its main cornerstones is the grant allocation mechanism, a formula-based method for the distribution of funds to municipalities for capital investments- based on needs, population and improved performance tools and activities. Based on MDLF brochure describing the Municipal Development Program (MDP), (Municipal Development Lending Fund , 2020) The MDP has four components as follows:

Component 1. Municipal Performance and service delivery

1. MDP financial and municipal infrastructure for improved service delivery in accordance with the LGUs law 1997.
2. Block Grant Eligibility (50%- comprised of 20% population, 30% needs). Municipalities should fulfil the basic eligibility criteria to receive the project's block grant. The basic grant has two eligibility conditions; the first condition is to have the annual budget approved by the Municipal Council and submitted to MoLG on a timely basis. The second condition is to have a Strategic Development Investment Plan prepared according to the latest SDIP guidelines.

3. Performance Grants (50%): Municipal performance is measured through 21 KPIs that are designed to cover three performance areas, namely: i) Financial Performance and Sustainability, ii) Institutional Performance, and iii) Transparency. The municipality gets its ranking based on the number of key performance indicators it fulfils.

4. Municipalities with higher rankings will be eligible for more funding than those with lower rankings. The MDP works closely with municipal leaders to help those in the lower levels move up to a higher ranking.

Table 1 Municipal Grant System under the proposed MDP 3

Table 1: Municipal Grant System under the proposed MDP 3				
1. Basic Grant (50%) allocated based on population and needs				
Eligibility Conditions	i. Annual Budget approved by the Municipal Council and submitted to MoLG on a timely basis ii. SDIP prepared according to new SDIP Guidelines (from year 3)			
2. Performance Grant (50%). Grant allocated to municipalities based on performance according to KPIs				
Categories	D	C	B	A
No. of KPIs	3 KPIs	6 KPIs	6 KPIs	6 KPIs
Graduation	Compliance of all 3 KPIs	C: compliance of 2 out of 6 C+: compliance of (3,4) out of 6 C++: compliance of 5,6 out of 6 In addition to the KPIs in rank D	B: compliance of (2) out of 6 B+: compliance of (3,4) out of 6 B++: compliance of (5,6) out of 6 In addition to the KPIs in rank D & rank C	A: compliance of (2) out of 6 A+: compliance of (3,4) out of 6 A++: compliance of (5,6) out of 6 In addition to the KPIs in rank D & rank C and rank B
Performance Areas	Key Performance Indicators Matrix			
Financial Performance and Sustainability			At least 10% of the budget execution for O&M	O&M Plan in place
		Year on Year Increase or more than 50 NIS municipally collected revenue per capita	Operational Surplus achieved	Staff Costs <45% WB or <70% GZ) of Operational and Capital expenditure
	Separate banks Accounts for Enterprise revenues established	Separate financial accounting for enterprise revenues and expenditures established	No increase in net lending	Cost Accounting Systems set up
Institutional Performance	Financial Accounting Policies and Procedures in place	Executed Budget Statement for the previous FY submitted to MoLG on time	Unqualified Audit Opinion from Annual external audit	IFMIS implemented
		Fixed Asset Register in place and updated	At least 70% Budget Execution	Green Spaces implemented ¹
Transparency, Accountability and Participation	Public Disclosure of annual budget, SDIP and MDP performance ranking	Public Disclosure of executed budget and executed SDIP	Audit opinion disclosed to citizens and stakeholders	
		Municipal Complaint System established		Functional Municipal Complaint System following MoLG guidelines

(Municipal Development Lending Fund , 2020)

Component 2. Capacity Development

1. This component will provide capacity support to municipalities and national-level institutions, namely the MDLF and the MoLG.
2. Development of Municipal Management Systems (IFMIS, O&M, CSC, etc.).

Component 3. Municipal Partnership Projects

This component will provide technical assistance and project financing to municipalities to a) engage more effectively with the private sector and b) work across administrative boundaries to develop joint and/or innovative investments for municipal service delivery and local economic development.

Component 4. Project implementation support and management costs.

This component will finance goods and consultants' services for monitoring and evaluation, outreach and communication and local technical consultants for the engineering supervision of Component 1.

The MDP has emphasized the importance of Local Strategic Development Planning (SDIPs) and made them a KPI for grants. This process led to the institutionalization of strategic development planning within the LGUs to enhance the service delivery to their citizens.

Strategic Development Investment Planning in Palestinian LGUs

In 2009, a Palestinian National Working Group on Local Development Planning ,led by the Ministry of Local Government came together with the Municipal Development Lending Fund, selected LGUs, selected donors and technical support organizations, civil society organizations and local experts to develop a Strategic Development Investment

Planning Methodology for Palestinian Local Governmental Units (Municipalities and Village Councils) to follow, in order to create 4-year Local Development Strategic Plans known as SDIP's, built on community participation and inclusion.

To ensure the sustainability of the planning process and methodology, the methodology is constantly reviewed and updated by the relevant stakeholders to include the latest trends in the Local Development Planning sector, such as social cohesion, SDGs, and Climate change.

The SDIP methodology takes into consideration different aspects, including participation, transparency and accountability, integration and compatibility with other processes related to LGUs, such as spatial and master planning and budgeting. Comprehensive diagnoses of the status quo and the strategic dimension taking into consideration of priorities, resources, opportunities, and challenges. Effectiveness and efficiency through giving the local community the lead to coordinate the local development planning process. (Palestinian Ministry of Local Government , 2018)

The importance of the unified process of Strategic Development Planning is summarized as follows:

- Promote the decentralization principles and local government in Palestine.
- Promote good governance and the mechanisms of decision-making at the local level.
- Improve the mechanisms of identifying the issues and development priorities and improve the quality of services that are served over the local level.
- Support the development, economic and social process at the local level.

- The set basis for an overall development view between different administrative and planning levels in Palestine.
- Facilitate and simplify the process of preparing the strategic development investment plan for small towns in comparison with larger towns regarding needed effort and timeframe.

Based on the methodology, the development-related fields that are major components of the plans and should be taken into consideration while preparing the Strategic Development Plans are the following:

- **Infrastructure & Environment:** municipal services, infrastructure, and environment, including energy, roads and transportation, climate change, water, wastewater, and solid waste.
- **Local Economic Development field:** including employment in different sectors, agriculture, tourism, industry and trade, and support services.
- **Social Development field:** including education, health, social protection, inclusion and enabling women, children, marginalized groups and people with disabilities, culture and heritage, sport, and housing.
- **Good governance and administration field,** including security and disaster management, local and spatial planning, information management, and institutional development of LGUs.

According to the Methodology developed by MoLG, The SDIP process is combined of 5 steps which include the following:

Step I. Where are we now? This is done in three steps: preparation and organization, assembling stakeholder committees, diagnosis of the current situation through preparing

the community profile, diagnosing the current situation, and preparing a report, then identifying the development issues for the community.

Step 2. Where do we want to go? In this step, the vision and development goals are identified to develop the strategic framework of the Local Development Plan.

Step 3. How to reach? This is done by identifying and detailing programs and projects, preparing the implementation plan and preparation of the monitoring and evaluation plan. The plans are then shared and adopted by the community.

Step 4. What makes us reach? At this point, annual implementation plans are developed based on the 4-year initial plan, the budget is identified, and feasibility studies take place. At this point, the LGUs start building partnerships and gather funds for the implementation of the plan. Partnerships are formed and framed in contracts, agreements, or memorandum of understanding.

Step 5. Did we reach? At this step, the LGU reviews its plans and assesses the progress, and shares the results with the local community. Then the annual plan is updated and adopted again for the next year.

The Importance of the Strategic Development Investment Plans for the LGUs is summarized as follows:

- The plan acts as a reference and official document that identifies the priorities of the community in terms of development projects.
- An official document that could be used to develop partnerships with different stakeholders such as CSOs, NGOs and donors and conduct fundraising activities to implement programmes and projects based on the community's priorities.

- An official document that could be a reference to measure the internal progress of the LGU.
- A mean to promote good governance in the Palestinian LGUs
- A tool to develop a database of the community.

Although the Ministry of Local Government, with the support of the National Working Group, has developed a manual for the Strategic Development Planning Process, LGUs still face issues in the planning and implementation of the Plans. Therefore, The Municipal Development Lending Fund provides LGUs with external consultants to support the SDIP preparation process and annual updates. Meanwhile, the LGU is responsible for the implementation.

The consultants are contracted to support the LGUs in the preparation of the strategic framework and implementation by properly engaging the local communities to identify the priorities and prepare all necessary documents to develop a realistic strategic plan.

The Role of NGOs and CSOs in the SDIP Process

NGOs and CSOs have a vital role to play in the Strategic Development process with the LGUs; the first role is to promote the inclusive- participatory planning process and helps to reach the targeted audience due to its nature in working on grass root levels and directly with citizens. The second role of NGOs and CSOs is also to advise and technically support LGUs in the planning and implementation of the SDIP as they have expertise in the different development fields, financial resources, and the trust of the citizens. The third role of NGOs and CSOs in the SDIP process is that they also are part of the civil society and participate as part of the community and identify the priorities, this gives them the

leverage to act as watch dogs and hold the LGUs accountable for the implementation of the plans and service provision processes.

2.1.4 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) In Palestine

Non-Governmental Organizations have been established in Palestine for a long time due to the occupation; starting in 1948, after the expiry of the British Mandate in the area, the Zionists Secured the support of the British to create a state in Palestine. This announcement caused to start of the war with the surrounding Arab countries and eventually led to the occupation of Palestine. The occupation caused Palestinians to lose their lives, homes, and land. People fled the country to become refugees and are, until today, fighting for their right to return. This occupation and disastrous situation affected Palestinians in every aspect of life. (Haddad, 2022).

This situation had a negative impact on the Palestinians, and the need for humanitarian help caused international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to start working in the area with the Palestinian people; it also led to the establishment of different Palestinian NGOs. In general, the NGOs work on two levels, the grassroots level on the ground' working within poor or vulnerable communities, as well as within the policy process and level, as NGOs seek to influence government, corporations and donors aiming to build and stabilize the Palestinian State.

The UN research institute has summarized the role of NGOs and CSOs as “serve an important intermediary role between community organizations and local or central government, acting as mediators or conduits for information. They can also support community-level organizations with training, contacts and, sometimes, funding. But the NGDOs carrying out such roles are relatively few and overstretched, and often have short

time horizons.” (UNRISD, 2000). They tend to facilitate processes and implement activities and disperse funds on behalf of the governments.

Based on an assessment of Palestinian NGOs efficiency and decision-making aspects (Sonokrot, 2005) it could be concluded that although NGOs have their differences, they still have common characteristics. These characteristics are summarized as follows:

- NGOs are organizations- they have an organizational form and are structured.
- They have a private nature which is separated from public administration but still might use state support.
- They don’t share their profit; the profit made is used for implementation and not distributed among the owners or managers.
- They are self-regulating and autonomous, in which they have full control over their activities.
- They have voluntary natures, as voluntary participants are part of their activities and structures.

Based on research conducted in 2011, 80% of Palestinian NGOs are funded by international donors, including the US and Europe (Karin A. Gerster, 2011), alongside other resources, including community foundations, bequests, Corporate social responsibility, governmental grants, and financial aid. These funds are used to implement projects tackling various fields, including advocacy, development, and humanitarian.

Although NGOs are independent organizations, they still struggle and face different weaknesses and challenges. “One main weakness is the lack of strategic and common visions of the roles of CSOs, and the tendencies of CSOs to remain "locked" in service delivery function. To lose their linkages with constituencies and communities, to remain

dependent on donors and other political actors, or to continue to operate in isolation or renounce participating in innovation, etc”. (Costantini, Salameh, & Issa, 2015). According to the mapping report it mentioned that “Despite some tendencies to collaborate and network, there is a prevalent situation of self-isolation by CSOs, which tends to concentrate on their own functioning. Competition often exists among CSOs and in relation to other actors (including other CSOs, local authorities, the private sector, etc.). Therefore, there is a need to support initiatives that would establish bridges amongst CSOs and between CSOs and other actors, with a special focus on the private sector and local authorities.

Most NGOs tend to develop their own Strategic Plans following all of the five steps of the strategic planning process. The stakeholder’s analysis and mapping help them in identifying potential partnership candidates for the implementation of their plans.

A few years ago, The Palestinian NGO development centre (NDC) developed a strategic framework to strengthen the NGO sector in Palestine; this strategic framework aimed to provide a strategic direction to NGOs in addressing key issues in Palestinian society. The objective of the strategic framework was defined as follows “A more Viable and Independent NGO sector that is more effectively engaged in advancing steadfastness, liberation and sustainable economic and social development of Palestine and empowerment of the Palestinian People”.

The strategic framework aimed to enhance the capacities and qualities of the Palestinian NGOs through the following strategic objectives:

- More effective engagement of NGOs in the process of national liberation and democratization based on an internationally recognized legal framework.

- Streamlined and effective relationships between the NGO Sector and Palestinian Development Partners
- Improved access to quality services that are responsive to the needs of the community provided by the government and the NGOs.
- More effective, accountable, and transparent NGOs
- Secured and adequate financial resources for NGOs

One of the main strengths of the NGOs mentioned in the SWOT analysis is that NGOs have relationships with governments and other stakeholders. The documents described the relationships as follows: “NGOs have cultivated potent relationships with other sectors of society in the pursuit of their work. Some believe that there is relative improvement in coordination with the government, which is bringing about a more cooperative atmosphere between them, although these need assessment and further institutionalization and regulation. The NGO sector also enjoys strong linkages with local communities and their target group of beneficiaries.

Volunteerism from different sectors of society in NGO work has fuelled much of what NGOs have accomplished today. There are growing initiatives by NGOs to establish relations with the Palestinians inside Israel and in the Diaspora.” (NGO Development Center, 2013)

2.1.5 Partnerships between LGUs and NGOs

Building partnerships among different stakeholders is an important success factor for organizations to achieve their goals and objective. As for partnerships targeting Local Governmental units, they tend to focus on issues such as economic development, social

cohesion, and livelihood. The partnerships usually take place either with the Private sector or with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

According to the UN, “A civil society organization (CSO) or non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens’ group which is organized on a local, national, or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, civil society organizations (CSOs) perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to Governments, monitor policies, and encourage political participation at the community level.” (UN - Civil society , 2022).

2.1.6 Summary of Theoretical Framework

For an organization to be successful and achieve its goals and objectives, it needs to take into consideration its key stakeholders and develop Partnerships and collaboration with them. These partnerships are important for many reasons, including buy-in and harmony among stakeholders, technical support and exchange, additional knowledge, pooling of financial and human resources, providing coherent services, capacity building and much more.

The stakeholders are partners in both the strategic planning process of the organization and in the implementation. This involvement takes success to a higher level and has many advantages, but it also has its challenges and disadvantages.

For LGUs, the involvement of key stakeholders such as NGOs, CSOs and citizens is very important in the strategic development planning process and implementation; this involvement provides additional capacities, resources, and knowledge, as well as support to reach most of the citizens, including youth, women, and people with disabilities. These partnerships have a positive impact which includes the fulfilment of the expected goals,

objectives, and indicators started in the strategic plan; in addition, it strengthens the LGU and increases the involvement and satisfaction of the citizens.

2.2 Literature Review

Various studies could be found that study the relationships between NGOs, LGUs and partnerships in general, but there are only a limited number of studies that study the relationship and/or partnerships between LGUs and NGOs and briefly mention the strategic planning aspect in such relationships.

A local study – “*Cross sectoral partnerships for service delivery on LGU level*” was conducted by Amdad Al Ghanem in 2009 studies the public private partnerships between LGUs and the private sector, it also briefly covers the partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSO). The study mainly investigates the shape and scope of partnerships between the three sectors, the content, and the ability of the organizations in building and managing partnerships. And to study the size and impact of the partnerships between the sectors in terms of number of projects, the successful impact, and strengths and weaknesses of such partnerships.

The methodology of the study focused on interviews with selected LGUs, private sector representatives and Civil Society Organizations. Two surveys were distributed, one targeted LGUs and the other was designed for the private sector and CSOs. Looking into the existence of partnerships, the timeframes, management mechanisms, reasons for no existing partnerships, the goals and objectives of the partnerships and the motives behind the partnerships.

According to the study-partnerships between LGUs, the private sector and CSOs- led to the implementation of projects that cannot be implemented without collaboration; they

also helped in the advancement of the Palestinian Society that needs such partnerships in the challenging political and economic situations it has been facing.

From this study, it could be concluded That partnerships are crucial for the implementation of different projects and activities; The existence of a clear strategic framework for LGUs is important to identify gaps and, therefore, seek the support of CSOs; Municipalities should have strong institution foundations (finance, HR, and PR) and strong strategic orientations to ensure success. Meaning that there is a positive relationship between strategic planning and building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs/CSOs.

A study by Asmaa Al-Kharoub named “*The Impact of Strategic Planning on the Quality-of-Service Delivery of Jenin Municipality*” studies the impact of strategic planning in Jenin Municipality on the quality of the services provided to citizens”. The study was followed the SERVQUAL model to measure the impact on service delivery.

The main results showed that there was a positive relationship between the strategic framework (vision, mission, objectives, and strategic choices) and the quality-of-service dimensions (tangibility, reliability, responsiveness. Security, assurance) in Jenin Municipality. The second result was that there is a direct impact of strategic planning factors on the quality-of-service dimensions. The third result clarifies that the level of satisfaction with the quality of the service provided by Jenin Municipality was measured as moderate by the employees.

The research also concludes that the municipal staff lack awareness about the Strategic plans and are not involved as needed. Therefore, the research recommends increasing the

participation of the staff in the strategic planning process and updating the LGU strategic plan to eventually lead to better service delivery. (Kharroub & Mansour, 2019).

Internationally, the topic of partnerships between LGUs and NGOs is important and has been studied in a few studies. One data analysis report for a study examining the relations between Non-Governmental Organizations and Local Governments in developing countries – the case of Lebanon, has been conducted in 2017 by a group of researchers from the School of Public Affairs – American University, Washington DC (Abouassi, Bowman, & Johnson, 2017)The intent of the survey was to explore the perceptions of the official on numerous issues related to NGO-LGU interactions.

The key takeaway from the survey is that there is a significant cross-sector interaction taking place in Lebanon, in addition to an interest among different stakeholders to collaborate in the future; There are different reasons for the lack of collaboration. LGUs in Lebanon reported that there is a lack of opportunities and interest in NGOs in their case, causing barriers to collaboration. Some NGOs representatives do not perceive benefits in working with LGUs.; LGUs engage NGOs to improve the quality of local services and build a stronger sense of community; meanwhile, NGOs engage LGUs to gain additional resources or funding and improve the quality of services; The partnerships led to an increase in citizen trust and satisfaction, and the collaboration saved financial resources and increased the level of community service and programs.; Some limitations include finance and human resource. Perception of LGUs constrained authority and NGOs' interest in working with central government inhibit these relationships.; Collaborations are usually 1:1 in the case of Lebanon, meaning each NGO works with one LGU.; The social service is the service area in which collaboration is likely to occur; In general, NGOs initiate collaborations, and donors and the central government secure

funding. There is disagreement about LGU and NGO coordination and decision-making responsibilities.

This study shows that there is a positive perception regarding partnerships between LGUs and NGOs, but there is a lack of opportunities to build partnerships and collaborations. There is also a positive relationship between the partnerships and improved service delivery to the citizens. In addition, partnerships lead to better customer satisfaction.

2.2.1 Summary of Literature Review

The group of local and international studies related to the topic of this study are summarized as follows:

Collaboration between LGUs and other stakeholders, such as the private sector and CSOs and NGOs, is one of the main reasons for implementing certain projects and activities. Meanwhile, there are different factors that impact the partnerships and collaborations between LGUs and NGOs / CSO, including lack of trust, misperception about each party, lack of support from the central government, and weakness of laws to support partnerships between LGUs and NGOs/CSOs. Good collaboration and partnerships can enhance the service delivery to citizens leading to better service delivery.

Some studies integrated the aspect of the importance of strategic planning in building partnerships and joint implementation of projects and activities. The existence of a strategic framework with strong internal structures is the base for networking and partnering with different NGOs and CSOs.

Therefore, for LGUs to be able to fulfil their obligations and provide high-quality services for their citizens, it needs to take into consideration proper strategic planning, strong

internal structure, and strong and aware staff on the internal level, in addition to building partnerships and collaboration with different stakeholders to be able to fulfil its strategic objectives and reach its target group.

The study of *the Effect of strategic Planning on Partnerships between LGUs and NGOs in Palestine* looks into most perspectives mentioned in the previous selected studies, focusing on the Strategic Development Investment Plans, operational planning and the starting points of partnerships leading to better service delivery. One of the aims is to provide decision makers, LGUS and NGOs reasons to collaborate, the best partnership mechanisms and binding frameworks that can lead to better service delivery to the citizens.

Chapter 3- Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers and discusses the research methodology used to reach the results of the study. It clarifies the research design, data collection types, method (primary and secondary data), validity and reliability, in addition to the conceptual model, sample size the statistical approach.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the study aims to identify the impact of strategic planning on partnerships between LGUs and NGOs. This study is important for promoting building partnerships and motivating LGUs and NGOs to partner and implement joint activities and services that have a positive impact and great value for the citizens and society.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Methodology

The research methodology follows the **qualitative method** to study the impact of strategic planning and management on building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs, and the impact of partnerships on service delivery to citizens.

- **Data Collection** for this study was obtained through:
 1. **Primary Data** The main source of data for the research is case studies and interviews with selected Local Governmental Units and Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations.
 2. **Secondary data was** collected through a desk and literature review of previous studies and research, in addition to surveys to support the case study results.
- **The Time horizon** of the research is a cross-sectional short-term study, analysing the impact of Strategic Development plan (2018-2023) on partnerships extending in a duration of a few months.

– **Variables**

The variables of the research that tested to achieve the objectives are as follows:

1. For the impact of strategic planning and management on building partnerships
 - Dependent Variable- Partnerships
 - Independent variable- the existence of strategic plans/management

The impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable is studied intensively to accept or reject the hypothesis.

2. As for the impact of partnerships on service delivery, the variables are broken down as follows:
 - Dependent variable- Service delivery
 - Independent variable- partnerships

The impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable are measured to accept or reject the hypothesis.

- The sampling is **non-probability sampling**, with predefined target groups/cases consisting of the following:
 - Municipalities who have a local development strategic plan and have an established partnership with one or more NGO on social topics.
 - NGOs who have partnerships with one or more LGUs on social topics.

3.2.2 The sample sizes and selection criteria

The first sample of Palestinian Local Governmental Units – two municipalities were selected as case studies for the following reasons:

1. The municipalities are similar in terms of municipal structure, size, capacities, and population.
2. The municipalities are from the middle of the Westbank in terms of geographical location.
3. Jericho municipality is classified as (A) according to the Ministry of Local Government, which is a Municipality that is central to the governorate, meanwhile the second municipality is Betunia, classified as B municipality with more than 15,000 inhabitants.
4. Both municipalities have been exposed to three generation of Strategic development Plans.
5. Both municipalities were cooperative and willing to contribute to the study.

A survey was distributed to other LGUs in the Westbank, 7 municipalities provided answers. The following table highlights the LGUs who participated in the case study and survey.

Table 2 Selected LGUs for case studies and survey.

Local Governmental Unit	Classification according to MoLG	Geographical location	Availability of an SDIP
Jericho Municipality (case study)	A	Middle	Yes, the 3 rd generation was ending at the tie of the assignment
Betunia Municipality (case study)	B	Middle	Yes, the 3 rd generation was ending at the tie of the assignment
Hebron Municipality	A	South of WB	yes
Beit Jala Municipality	B	South of WB	yes
Nablus Municipality	A	North	yes

Local Governmental Unit	Classification according to MoLG	Geographical location	Availability of an SDIP
Al Ram Municipality	B	Middle	
Aleizareyeh Municipality	B	Middle	yes
Soureef Municipality	B	South	Yes
Al Bireh Municipality	A	Middle	Yes

LGUs classified as C and Gaza strip were excluded from the sample size, since C municipalities SDIPs are weaker than the A and B municipalities and rely on consultants for planning and implementation and some use a different methodology is that is based one-year operation plans and usually adopt Annual Capital Investment plans (ACIPS) rather than 4-year SDIPS.

As mentioned in table No. one the criteria of the selected LGUs are the following:

1. **LGU classification according to the Ministry of Local Government:** The two Municipalities selected for the case studies and the other 7 LGUs selected for the surveys are classified A and B according to MoLG; Classification A is the Center of Governorates, which in this case is Jericho Municipality. Classification B is an LGU with more than 15,000 inhabitants, which in this case is Betunia Municipality. Both municipalities are similar in terms of number of inhabitants, both LGUs have the same number of SDIPs meaning they have been in the process more than once and have been exposed to the planning processes equally. Yet, each municipality has its own characteristics due to the nature of the area, as Betunia is more industrial, meanwhile Jericho has a touristic and agricultural

nature, these characteristics play a major role in the selection of priorities and projects.

2. **Geographical location**, the second selection criterion is the geographic location for the case studies the LGUs were in the middle due to accessibility and difference in areas nature. The survey was sent many LGUs in the Northern and south of the Westbank to feed into the study and catch the varieties that might appear between different locations and confirm the relationships and correlations that appear from the case study analysis.
3. **Existence of an institutionalized Strategic Development Investment Plan (SDIP)**- the third selection criteria was the availability of a Local Strategic Development Plan and an operational/implementation plan that is the base of networking and building partnerships.

Sample 2. Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations – two NGOs were selected for the case studies and in-depth desk review, the selection was driven by the LGU case studies, which have partnerships with the NGOs, such as Jericho with QADER on the development of the Social Center, and Betunia with the PHG for water projects. The two additional NGOs were selected based on their relevance to the sector and their direct implementation with LGUs, were selected for the surveys.

The selected NGOs were the following:

Table 3 Selected NGOs for case studies and surveys.

NGO	Sector	Research Tools
The Palestinian Hydrology Group	Water & Environment Sector	Case Study, interview, Desk Review, and survey
QADER for Community Development	Social Security and Inclusion	Case Study, interview, Desk Review, and survey
REFORM	Social Security and Inclusion	Survey only
Palestinian Consultative Staff (PCS)	Social Security and Inclusion	Survey only

The criteria for the selection of NGOs:

- Active in the local governance sector in different development fields
- Have an internal strategic plan that is institutionalized and is the basis of their daily work.
- They target LGUs in their operations based on one-to-one or one-to-many approaches.

3.2.3 Research Tools

Research tool 1- Case studies/ desk review:

A desk review was conducted to identify potential LGUs and NGOs who have successful partnerships in different development fields that are based on the Strategic Development Investment Plans. And identify relevant literature related to the topic of the research.

The selected LGUs were Betunia and Jericho Municipalities, and The Palestinian Hydrology Group and QADER for community services were selected.

An intensive desk review of each LGU and NGO took place, The strategic development plans of the LGUs were studied and analysed. The Strategic Plans and objectives of NGOs were reviewed and compared with their relevance to the Local Governance sector development fields and LGUs.

The case studies and desk review aimed to study the relationship between the presence of a SDIPs and building partnerships with NGOs.

The outcome of the case studies and in-depth analysis have supported in identifying partnership patterns, essential preconditions for building partnerships and factors that motivate LGUs and NGOs to partner and implement joint activities.

Research tool 2- Interviews with LGU' and NGOs

Interviews with representatives from each LGU and NGO case study have taken place. The Strategic Planning Head of Unit from Betunia Municipality and the Responsible person for Strategic Planning from the Projects Department from Jericho Municipality were interviewed and provided all necessary information regarding strategic planning, partnerships and implementation of projects and activities.

As for the NGOs, the head of the Palestinian Hydrology Group was interviewed, meanwhile, QADER was approached via email and phone for all necessary information, both NGOs provided all necessary information regarding the implementation of activities jointly with LGUs.

The interview questions were predefined and shared with the interviewees in advance, sessions were documented (consented by the interviewees).

The interviews aim to verify the result of the case study and desk review and obtain additional information that are not available from other resource.

Research tool 3- survey

To collect additional information beyond the case studies, desk reviews and interviews additional surveys were distributed to other LGUs within the same selection criteria and other NGOs who are active in the Local Governance Sector to strengthen the research and verify correlations among different variables.

LGU Survey Components:

1. **General information about the LGU:** The respondent's profile, including LGU name, Governorate,
2. **Strategic Development Planning in LGUs:** availability of a strategic plan, strategic plans generations, the implementation rate of the last plan the importance of the Strategic Development plans, the impact of the existence of SDIPS on fundraising and building partnerships and collaborations,
3. **Networking, collaboration, and partnership between LGUs and different Parties:** The Importance of networking with other parties to enhance service provision to citizens, confirmation of partnerships for the implementation of projects or activities, the importance of strategic or technical partnerships, the impact of SDIPs on building partnerships with different parties, when partnerships with different parties are established, most common partners.
4. **Building partnerships and networking between LGUs and NGOs and CSO's:** availability of partnerships with NGOs, partnerships building based on development areas, reasons for not establishing partnerships with NGOS, defined topics for partnerships, number of existing partnerships, types of activities implemented, the nature of partnerships, types of working / relationship frameworks, the impact of

partnerships on service delivery to citizens the impact of partnerships on service delivery.

NGOs Survey components:

1. General Information

2. NGO partnerships with other organizations based on the strategic plan:

Existence of a strategic Plan, partnerships for implementation of strategic plans, major partners, target group, modes of support to reach target groups,

3. NGOs and LGUs as partners for citizens: NGO work in the Local Governance Sector, stakeholders in the LG sector, existence of partnerships with LGUs, modes of partnership, importance of the partnership, direct partnerships with LGUs, the nature of the partnership with LGUs, development areas with LGUS, importance of partnerships between NGOs and LGUs, the effectiveness of the partnerships.

4. Partnerships in Local Development Planning: Familiarity with the NGO in Strategic Development planning, have the NGO supported in the local development planning process, The number of LGUs the NGO supported in the strategic planning process, the essentiality of the SDIP for partnerships, does Strategic development planning have a positive impact on building partnerships, are the partnerships driven from the SDIPs, the start of partnerships, main reasons of collaboration, key factors/ criteria for building partnerships with LGUs , type of agreements, identification of joint projects, do joint implementation lead to better service delivery to citizens, what are the activities implemented that directly impact service delivery to citizens, the effectiveness of the partnerships. The Positive impact of partnerships on service delivery.

5. Consideration of Future partnerships with LGUs.

Chapter 4 - Findings, Results and Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

To achieve the main objective of the study of “The Impact of strategic Planning on Partnerships between LGU’s and NGOs, and to answer the research question of “what is the impact of strategic planning and partnerships on service delivery to citizens?” Four case studies targeting LGUs, and NGOs were studied and analyzed. The information was collected through a desk review and interviews with representatives from each selected case, in addition to the case studies, surveys targeting LGUs to support verifying /creating correlations.

As the research is mostly qualitative, the data from the interviews and case studies were manually analyzed and documented, meanwhile the results of the survey that was distributed via google forms was exported into the form of excel and results were extracted and concluded accordingly.

4.2 Target group/ Respondent Profiles

The target group was selected based on three main factors, existence of a Strategic plan and availability of partnerships and classification of A or B. For this research, two LGU’s were selected for an in-depth case study, which are Betunia Municipality (B classification according to MoLG’s ranking) and Jericho Municipality (Classification A according to MoLG’s ranking). Both Municipalities have existing Strategic Development Plan and have different partnerships with NGO’s, CSOs and other organizations.

As for the selected NGO’s, The Palestinian Hydrology Group has been selected for being one of the partners of Betunia Municipality on infrastructural development, and QADER for Community Development has been selected for being a partner of Jericho

Municipality on social aspects, in addition, both organizations work with other LGUs on the same topics and development fields. Both organizations aim to enhance the service delivery of the LGU's towards their citizens.

4.2.1 Respondent 1. Betunia Municipality

About Betunia Municipality

Betunia is a Palestinian city located in the Westbank, it falls under the Administration of Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate. The City of Betunia is located in the North of Jerusalem and Southwest of Ramallah giving it a strategic location. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistic (PCBS), the population number in Betunia The area of Betunia is 26.2 km with a population of 26,604 (2017). The city is 820 meters above sea level. The total land area is 23,366 dunums, 5,000 dunum within the municipality jurisdiction and 1,750 dunam planted with olives.

Betunia Municipality was established in 1957 as a village council, and in 1967 it became a municipality. It's classified as B according to the Ministry of Local Government. The first official elections took place in 1975, it has had 6 Mayors from the day of the establishments until today.

The municipality has around 140 staff members distributed among its departments and structure. The municipal structure consists of different 5 departments including: Engineering department, Finance departments, Public Relations department, Administrative affairs. In addition, the municipality has other operational departments including department Procurement department, One Stop Shop, Municipal court, Water Department, Archive Department, Health Department, Health and Environmental Educational Unit, Fleet and Mechanics Department, Projects department- organization and buildings, and Monitoring department.

The vision of Betunia Municipality

“A pioneering Municipality, distinguished and fair in services distribution, works professionally and transparently with all city institutions on the basis of Partnership and Integration.”

4.2.2 Respondent 2. Jericho Municipality

About Jericho Municipality

Jericho is a Palestinian city located in the West Bank, Jordan Valley, with the Jordan river to the east and Jerusalem to the west. Jericho City is 274.02 m below sea level and has its own microclimate. Jericho city is known for being a tourist attraction due to its ancient history and reputation of being the oldest city in the world. Besides having a touristic advantage, Jericho is known for its agriculture and high-quality fruits and vegetables. The land under Jericho Municipality Jurisdiction is around 45 km square, the number of inhabitants is 17,000, and adding the refugee camps nearby the population number is around 25,000.

The Municipality is classified as A category LGU by the Ministry of Local Government as it's in the center of Jericho's governorate. The structure of the Municipality consists of 7 major departments including engineering, administrative affairs, financial affairs, water and sewage, health and environment, public relations and culture, fleet, and maintenance, in addition to and 8 units including strategic planning unit, central archive, legal unit, Information Technology, procurement, one stop shop and the mayor's office.

The vision of Jericho City

“A historical Green city, safe and obtains high quality sustainable services, maintaining its ethnicity and cultural heritage.”

4.2.3 Respondent 3. The Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG)

The Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG) was established in 1987 as an independent non-profit specialized institution dedicated to developing and protect the water and environmental resources; to ensure more public accessibility to adequate water supply sources and sanitary conditions, especially in the rural areas; and to develop a proper Palestinian water information system.

PHG's has around 57 employees distributed in Westbank and Gaza. Sustainable Development perspective is an important issue for PHG, they do consider this issue in all projects, and PHG projects concentrate to alleviate poverty in marginalized small local communities through executing projects that target different sectors (Water, Environment, and agriculture). Secondly, PHG tries to build and strengthen the capacities for partner organizations and locals as well, through evolving them in planning, designing, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating the projects.

PHG's field of work and services are mainly research, development in water and infrastructural fields, as well as institutional building. It has been working in applied research since 1990 and has institutionalized its research by the establishment of a multidisciplinary research institute working under the umbrella of PHG. The research conducted by the research institute consists of Data Base and Information management, Policy oriented research and applied research.

PHG also works in sustainable development, mainly in implementing water and environmental infrastructural projects such as : Spring Development, Groundwater Well Rehabilitation, Fresh Water Supply Enhancement through Rainwater Harvesting; Environmental Awareness and Water Conservation Waste water treatment and reuse , Good governance and water management projects and solar energy in addition, PHG

also works in institutional building and has an accredited training institute that provides trainings and capacity building for LGUs and Community based organizations, new graduates and young engineers, women associations, women association, farmers and cooperatives.

Having such capacities and activity within the local governance sector, makes the PHG one of the important NGOs supporting LGUs in water and environmental issues aiming for sustainable development and enhancing service delivery to citizens.

4.2.4 Respondent 4. QADER for Community Development

QADER is a non-governmental, not-for-profit, and independent organization dedicated to promoting better well-being of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in Palestine. Established in 2008 with main responsibility in addressing the disability issue from a human rights perspective and demonstrated a rights'-based approach in tackling the various issues of persons with disabilities.

The main strategies are mainly enhancing commitment of public institutions towards fulfilling the rights and needs of PWD, enhancing disability awareness, promoting performance of non-state actors in addressing the needs of PWD, and fostering active participation of PWD in social and economic life. QADER focuses on development models that are based on thorough analysis of the context and needs of persons with disabilities and key stakeholders. Several models were developed, piloted, replicated, or scaled up in many areas and fields, including mainstreaming disability in local authorities & higher education institutions, institutionalizing awareness in the education system, enhancing socio-economic participation of person with disabilities and their families.

Since its founding, QADER made significant contributions in the disability sector. In fact, the professional capacity of QADER's governance body, management and staff has

fostered fast track developments, both at the level of program development and internal capacities.

QADER is recognized for its expertise in the disability sector, and specifically in supporting the capacities of relevant stakeholders among public institutions and non-state actors to mainstream disability within their programs and service. (Qader.ps, 2023)

4.3 LGU Case Studies and Surveys

4.3.1 Case Study – Betunia Municipality

An interview for the purpose of the Case study took place in Betunia Municipality on 18/1/2023, the Head of the Engineering Unit, and Strategic planning coordinator were interviewed for data gathering.

This case study aims to verify the importance of strategic planning in building partnerships with NGOs and other organizations, in addition, based on the results, the researcher shall build a partnership model between LGUs and NGOs.

Betunia Municipality is classified as A+ according to the ranking of the Municipal Development Lending Fund (MDLF), meaning that it has fulfilled up to indicators (3 and 4) from Category A, out of 6 KPI's from the municipal grant system under the Municipal Development Programme III, which are cost accounting systems are set up and IFMIS is implemented, in addition to the other KPI's from the lower rank indicators. One of the major Key Performance (KPI) indicators identified by MDP is for a municipality to have a Strategic Development Investment Plan prepared according to the methodology of the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) for Local Development.

Based on the interview and desk review regarding Betunia Municipality, it has shown that it has always adopted the Strategic Development Investment Planning (SDIP) process,

and has it institutionalized within its structure as a Strategic Planning Unit within the engineering department.

The specialized unit for strategic planning is responsible for the strategic planning process, starting from the initiation of the process, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, in addition to the preparation of the operational plans and Local Economic Plans.

The strategic planning process and the availability of the SDIP is very important as it's the base of the operational plan and budget of the municipality, accompanied by the Local Economic Development Plans. Both plans are the base of operations and the starting point of networking and collaboration with different stake holders.

In alliance with the methodology of local development planning, and based on the templates suggested, the LGU's are required to fill in an implementation /operational plan, this plan states the development field, programme, project, estimated budget, and suggested implementation partners. Once approved by the citizens and the local council, the plan is adopted then the networking process starts to build partnerships with different organizations, companies, and partners.

The LGU is one of the most important drivers in the implementation of programs and projects for the citizens, supported by other partners. The partners' roles differ from one to another, depending on the development field, type of programme, project, and estimated budget.

What are the roles of Betunia Municipality's partners?

The LGU defines its main partners and identifies their roles and states the funding party. Their main partners vary according to the development area and volume of the programme or project, they are mainly from the private sector, international development

cooperation's, Governmental institutions, joint service councils, electricity company, CSOs, NGOs, associations, and others.

The roles of partners in the case of Betunia municipality are defined as follows:

- **Implementation partner:** In this case the municipality and the partner jointly implement the program or project.
- **Source of Funding:** In this case the municipality secures funds from a partner and is fully responsible for the implementation.
- **Technical support and funding:** The partner in this case provides technical support and advice on different processes, and provides funding for the program, project, or activity.
- **Coaching, orientation, and assistance:** the partner takes the role in capacity building of the municipality tackling different topics to enhance the municipal knowledge and capacities.
- **Implementation and funding:** The partner implements the program, project, or activity with its funding in close cooperation with the municipality.

What are the Programs and Projects implemented by Betunia Municipality?

According to the SDIP methodology, programs and their components are driven from four main development fields. In the case of Betunia's Strategy for 2018-2022, it had defined different programs and projects under the development areas as follows:

- Within the **Infrastructure & Environment field** the municipality planned for a total number of 7 programmes, broken down into 12 projects. The programs tackled the following sub development areas: infrastructure and environment including energy, roads and transportation, water, wastewater, and solid waste.

- Within the **Local Economic Development field**, the municipality planned for a total number of 5 programs, broken down into 16 projects. The programs tackled the following sub development areas: agriculture, tourism, industry and trade, and support services.
- Within the **Social Development** field, the municipality has planned for 9 programs with 19 projects. The programs sub development areas included the following: education, health, inclusion and enabling women, children, marginalized groups and people with disabilities, culture and heritage, housing.
- Within the **Good Governance & Administration** field the municipality planned for has 6 programs and 22 projects, including security and disaster management, local and spatial planning, and institutional development of LGU's.

Based on the four-year monitoring and evaluation plan, it has been concluded that most of the confirmed projects are either funded by the municipality itself, or from already established agreements and partnerships with different parties at the time of planning. The four-year plan is then divided into annual plans that are reviewed and updated on an annual basis with the citizens, but with limited margins for change.

The number of projects is defined at the beginning of the strategic planning process. For the second generation of the SDIP, Betunia planned for 69 projects tackling the four development fields distributed as follows:

Table 4 Betunia Municipality projects with secured funds

	Number of programs	Number of Projects	Number of projects with secured funds	Percentage of Secured projects with secured funds
Infrastructure & Environment field	7	12	8	12%
Local Economic Development	5	16	1	1%
Social Development	9	19	7	10%
Good Governance & Administration	6	22	4	6%
Total	27	69	20	20%

These figures show that the municipal budget is mostly allocated for Infrastructural and Social development, meanwhile the remaining projects are either identified as possible that could be secured financially either by internal financial resources or through a partner, or identified as wished for, meaning that no funds or potential partners are secured and need strong efforts to make them possible.

The possible and wished for projects tend to be either big volume projects that need a high number of financial resources or need expertise and technical support from other organizations or experts. The suggested partners in these projects vary from NGOs, CSOs, Private sector to Ministries, international cooperation, and other implementing agencies. The implementation mode differs from one project to another, which includes implementation and funding, networking, implementation only, funding only or operating the project.

The municipality achieved around 78% of the second generation of the SDIPs, which covers the duration from 2018-2022 (originally ending in 2021 but extended for one year

based on a recommendation from MoLG due to covid challenges in the implementation of plans), meaning that most of the planned activities have been implemented and finalized with the support of different partners by the end of 2022.

Who are the partners of Betunia Municipality?

The municipality's partners are initially identified in the planning process and development of the implementation plan; Once the plan is approved by the local council and citizens the municipality starts its networking and fundraising efforts.

According to the interview and revision of the implementation plan, Betunia Municipality identifies its potential partners in the early stages of the planning process and reflect them into the implementation plan. After the approval of the SDIP by the local Council and citizens, the municipality starts working on networking and approaching different partners for different projects, it can be noticed that new potential partners come along during the implementation of the plan.

According to the implementation plan, Betunia has identified many partners for the implementation of the 2018-2022 plan. The role of partners varied between Funding and Implementation.

Based on the analysis of the 4-year implementation plan, it has been noticed that in the planning process the municipality identified the need of implementing and funding partners as follows: (counting the number of partner type repetition as an implementation partner and/ or funding partner).

Table 5 Betunia Municipality's reliance on partners in implementation and funding

Partner	Needed support for Implementation	Needed support for funding	Weight of partner (implementation % + funding % / 200) *100)
International Organizations	27%	33%	30%
Non-Governmental Organizations	24%	19%	21.5%
Private Sector	14%	15%	14.5%
Governmental Institutions	22%	6%	14%
Civil Society	3%	17%	10%
Joint Service Council	5%	4%	4.5%
MDLF	3%	4%	3.5%
Banks	2%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

These figures mean that the most needed partners at the beginning of the planning process were the international organizations, followed by the NGOs, and the Private sector as the top 3 partners.

In the 2018-2022 plan, the potential partners were expected to support Betunia Municipality as follows:

Table 6 Betunia Municipality's partners support methods

Potential Partner	Development Field
International organizations	support in funding and implementation of Infrastructural and Good governance related projects.
Non-Governmental Organizations	support in the funding and implementation of the Local economic development and social projects.
Private sector	Support in the funding and implementation of projects related to infrastructure, Local Economic Development, and social development

Potential Partner	Development Field
Governmental Institutions	Governmental institutions are expected to support the municipality in the provision of technical advice and in the implementation process. Governmental institution usually supports in the implementation of infrastructural and environmental fields, LED, social and food governance fields, but rarely provides direct financial support to municipalities, they are usually allocated through MDLF or other funding mechanisms.
Civil Society	The citizens and civil society usually provide funds but don't interfere in the implementation, they tend to fund LED or social development fields. The funds come in a source of social or ethical financial support or donations from the citizens, with minimum interference with the implementation
Joint Service Council	Joint service councils usually work with municipalities in implementation of infrastructural and environmental field.
MDLF	According to the plan, The MDLF is supporting in the implementation and funding of a few activities within the field of good governance.
Banks	Banks financially support in the social aspects or infrastructure and environment, according to the theme of the social responsibility.

Based on the desk review and interviews, looking into the actual partnerships formed during the four years of the plan, Betunia municipality was capable of building different partnership mainly with the *Privat sector* such as Paltel, Qirresh Motors, Sarsour Alaminum, Coca Cola, Dar Al- Shifa, Royal Plastics and other companies. Most of these companies tend to support the municipality as part of their social responsibility and their belonging to Betunia City. Most of the projects with the private sector was infrastructural such as construction of roads in small areas near their locations, health activities targeting citizens, building bus stop waiting areas and funding of social activities targeting women, youth, and people with disabilities. Most of these partnerships were small scale programmes or projects with limited budgets.

Other partnerships include line ministries such as the Ministry of Health, international representative offices, and development cooperation's and Organizations, such as The

Danish representative office DANIDA, The Indian Representative Office, German Development cooperation GIZ, KFW, AFD, USAID.

Some of these partners were identified during the planning process as potential partners, then have become actual partners, and other partnerships were formed because of the post planning networking and communication.

Betunia Municipality Partnership with Palestinian NGO's

In terms of Palestinian NGO's, Betunia Municipality has a limited number of partnerships with Palestinian NGOs and CSOs. The existing partnerships tackle social issues and infrastructural projects, they come in the form of capacity building, awareness raising as well as joint implementation of programs, projects, or activities.

Betunia municipality has partnered with a couple of CSOs who target the citizens of Betunia including Betunia's Women Association, and Expatriates Association of Palestinians from Betunia living abroad. In addition, Betunia Municipality has infrastructural projects with the Palestinian Hydrology Group, and partnership with Riwaq for the rehabilitation of the old city of Betunia.

The partnership between Betunia Municipality and the Betunia's Women Association aims to enhance the status of women in Betunia City through awareness, capacity building and joint implementation of activities as part of the Local economic development, and empowering women to generate their own income. As for the expatriate's group, they have supported the municipality in rehabilitation of playgrounds and sports field for youth in Betunia area.

Another partner that supported Betunia Municipality in infrastructural projects is The Palestinian Hydrology group in a form of contractual partnership, it supported Betunia

municipality in the renovation of Giryou water spring to enhance the irrigation systems and enhance the tourism in the area.

Some of the NGO partnerships were identified in the planning process, and others came as an effort of networking, fundraising efforts, and communication.

How are the partnerships agreements managed?

In Betunia Municipality, each partnership has its own characteristics and has a different method for organization each relationship. Based upon the desk review and interview relationships among the municipal partners are regulated through the following forms:

- **Verbal Agreements on joint implementation** with no written documents is also one method for building partnerships for different causes, they are developed based on ethical commitments.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** is usually used to describe the main outlines of an agreement between two or more parties. It tends to clearly state the objectives of these partnerships and what is expected from each partner. Usually, MoU's act as a starting point for future contracts between LGU's and their partners. Although it's a written document, it's not legally binding on any partner.
- **Official Contracts** signed by two or more parties and have legally binding articles, such partnerships usually occur when one party is funding the other or has financial contributions towards a programme or project.
- Others, in some cases the municipality is part of implementation activities conducted by The Ministry of Local Government, Municipal Development Lending Fund, Association of Palestinian Local Authorities who are mandated to work with LGU's to achieve goals.

What is required from municipalities to establish a partnership?

Most potential partners have a set of conditions or requirements that are a prerequisite for building a new partnership with the municipality, based on the experience and case of Betunia Municipality it needed to fulfill include the following conditions:

- The municipality needs to have a strong structure and institutionalized processes with certain flexibility. This is important for the communication, reporting, fund disperse and other requirements for the collaboration,
- The municipality needs to prove that it has a capacitated team capable of implementing activities and projects and achieving common goals and objectives.
- An approved operational plan by the local council built based on community needs.
- A concept paper mentioning and confirming the sustainability of the envisioned project or activities with a time frame.
- Identification of the contribution of the municipality, which includes financial contributions, assets, capacities, experts, or other forms.

Successful Partnership

According to Betunia Municipality, partnerships are a successful factor and are important for the success of the municipality in delivering services to the citizens, the better the relationships, the better the outcomes of the projects leading to higher citizens satisfaction. Most partnerships the municipality formed in the past few years were successful, they have faced only minor challenges during implementation of projects.

One major factor that is important for the success of the partnerships is the mutual understanding and common goals between the partners. In addition to trust, transparency, and professionalism.

Summary

- Betunia Municipality has a rank of A+, meaning that it has fulfilled most MDP III indicators, including the existence of an SDIP.
- Betunia Municipality has 78% achieved its strategic plan for the years of 2018-2022.
- Betunia self-funds 20% of the total number of projects from its own budget or through previous agreements and/ or partnerships. Focusing on the fields of infrastructure and environment and social aspects.
- some partnerships are suggested through the planning process and become actual during implementation, and some partnerships are formulated after the planning process as part of the networking, communication, and fundraising efforts.
- Other development fields need networking efforts to build partnerships for implementation.
- Betunia Municipality evaluates most existing partnerships as successful and having a positive impact on service delivery.
- Most existing partnerships are with the private sector.

4.3.2 Case Study – Jericho Municipality

The second LGU selected as a case study for this research was Jericho Municipality, Classified as A municipality according to MoLG's ranking. An in-depth desk review and in person interview took place to collect data for this research. The strategic Development Investment Planning Coordinator from Jericho Municipality was interviewed, the interview took place on 19/01/2023 at Jericho Municipality, the interview aimed to verify the importance of strategic planning on building partnerships with NGOs and other organizations, and support in building the partnership module.

According to the MDP grant system, Jericho municipality has the classification of B++, meaning that it has fulfilled indicators 5 and 6 out of 6 which are 70% of the budget is executed and audit opinion disclosed to citizens and stakeholders.

Based on the interview, Jericho is a municipality is active in Strategic Development Investment Planning (SDIP), it has recently started to work on the third generation of the SDIP's that is built on the latest methodology and with the support of the Municipal Development Lending Fund (MDLF).

The process of developing and implementing the Strategic Development Investment Plans falls under the responsibility of the engineering and projects department within the Ministry. The Strategic Development Investment Plan (SDIP) is the base of the municipality's operational plan and budget. The SDIP acts as the base of networking and collaboration with stakeholders to implement different activities. The implementation plan is reviewed and updated annually and is the base of operations for the same year.

The municipality is currently preparing the third generation of their SDIPs. The plan will be developed based on the lessons learned from the last two generations, which were relatively weak and were more wish lists than actual realistic development plans.

In alliance with the methodology of local development planning and based on the templates suggested in the methodology itself, the LGU's are required to fill in an implementation /operational plan, this plan states the development field, programme, project, estimated budget, and suggested implementation partners. Once approved by the citizens and the local council, the plan is adopted then the networking process starts to build partnerships with different organizations, companies, and partners. This networking process and fundraising is the responsibility of the project's unit.

The LGU is the main driver in the implementation of the strategic plan supported by different partners and stakeholders. The partner roles are different from one case to another depending on the development field, programme type, project, and estimated budget.

What is the role of Jericho Municipality's partners?

As in the case of Betunia, The LGU defines its main partners and identifies their roles and states the funding party in the operational plan. Their main partners vary according to the development area and volume of the programme or project, they are mainly from the private sector, international development cooperation's, governmental institutions, joint service councils, electricity company, CSOs, NGOs, associations, and others.

The case of Jericho municipality partners role is similar the case of Betunia, in which the partners roles as defined as follows:

- **The Implementation partners**, these partners usually support the municipality jointly implementing programs or projects. The implementation partners provide support as follows:
 - **Technical support and administration** – These are usually led by governmental institutions and take place in coordination with the municipality. This applies to infrastructural projects with high volume projects that are implemented on the national level or small projects that need technical skills with minimum financial support.
 - **technical support and funding** -these are usually the roles of international organizations who share the know -how, capacitate the municipality and financially implement the program or project.

- **Technical support, funding, and administrative support** – this is the role of multiple partners who joined forces to implement a certain program or project. It includes international organizations, NGOs, governmental institutions and others.

According to the SDIP methodology, programs and their components are driven from four main development fields. In the case of Jericho's Strategy for 2018-2022, it had defined different programs and projects under the development areas as follows:

- Within the **Infrastructure & Environment field** the municipality planned a total of 5 programmes and 23 projects.
- Within the **Local Economic Development field**, the municipality planned a total number 5 programs and 30 projects.
- Within the **Social Development** field, the municipality has planned 5 programs and 15 Projects.
- Within the **Good Governance & Administration** field the municipality planned for 6 programs and 27 projects.

Based on the four-year monitoring and evaluation plan, it has been concluded that most of the confirmed projects are either funded by the municipality itself, or from already established agreements and partnerships with different parties at the time of planning. The four-year plan is then divided into annual plans that are reviewed and updated on an annual basis with the citizens, but with limited margins for change.

The number of projects is defined at the beginning of the strategic planning process. For the second generation of the SDIP, Jericho Municipality planned for 95 projects tackling the four development fields distributed as follows:

Table 7 Jericho Municipality's projects with secured funds

	Number of programs	Number of Projects	Number of projects with secured funds	Percentage of Secured projects
Infrastructure & Environment field	5	23	9	9%
Local Economic Development	5	30	6	6%
Social Development	5	15	13	14%
Good Governance & Administration	6	27	16	17%
Total	21	95	44	46%

These figures show that the planned municipality budget is mostly allocated for Good Governance followed by the social development, meanwhile the remaining projects are either identified as potential that could be secured financially either by internal financial resources or through a partner, or identified as wished for, meaning that no funds or potential partners are secured and need strong efforts to make them possible.

The possible and wished for projects tend to be either big volume projects that need a high number of financial resources or need expertise and technical support from other organizations or experts. The suggested partners in these projects vary from NGOs, CSOs, Private sector to Ministries, international cooperation, and other implementing agencies. The implementation mode differs from one project to another, which includes implementation and funding, networking, implementation only, funding only or operating the project.

Who are the partners of Jericho Municipality?

The municipality has a variety of partners from different sectors, they include governmental institutions and line ministries, partnerships with the private sector, Civil Society Organizations, Community Based organizations, internal donors and

representatives and NGOs. The type of partnerships is different from one sector or an activity to another, they may differentiate from partnerships to twinning to joint implementation.

According to the interview and desk analysis, Jericho Municipality identifies its potential partners in the early stages of the SDIP process and are reflected in the implementation plan. After the approval of the local council and citizens, the municipality starts networking, partnership, and fundraising efforts. Potential partners become actual during the implementation of the plan, and others join according to programs and projects as well.

During the planning of the 2018-2022 SDIP, the partners were identified and integrated into the implementation plan, giving the partners different roles including implementation, funding, technical advice, and administration.

Based on the analysis of the 4-year implementation plan, in the planning process, the need of implementation partners was distributed among implementation and funding as follows:

Table 8 Jericho Municipality's reliance on partners in implementation and funding

Partner	Needed support for Implementation	Needed support for funding	Weight of partner (implementation % + funding % / 200) *100)
International Organizations	33%	40%	36.5%
Non-Governmental Organizations	10%	9%	9.5%
Private Sector	13%	10%	11.5%

Partner	Needed support for Implementation	Needed support for funding	Weight of partner (implementation % + funding % / 200) *100)
Governmental Institutions	35%	31%	33%
Civil Society	0%	0%	0%
Joint Service Council	0%	0%	0%
MDLF	10%	9%	9.5%
Banks	0	0	0
Total	100%	100%	100%

These figures show that the highest expected partnerships in terms of implementation are the international organizations. They are expected to fund projects more than getting involved in the actual implementation of the projects. The second highest expected partnerships are with the governmental institutions, they are expected to have a good contribution in the implementation of the project and financial contribute alongside other partners. The third highest expected partnership is the private sector, they are expected to implement and fund projects jointly with the municipality and other stakeholders.

Unlike Betunia Municipality, Jericho municipality has only planned implementation with international organizations, NGOs, The private sector, Governmental institutions and the MDLF. The development field each potential partner is expected to support in are as follows:

Table 9 Jericho Municipality's partners support methods

Potential Partner	Development Field
International organizations	support in funding and implementation mainly of Local economic Development, followed by Infrastructural and environment, then social development and good governance.
Non-Governmental Organizations	NGOs are expected to support in the implementation, technical advice, and administration in addition to funding of mainly the social development projects and Local economic Development.
Private sector	Support in the funding and implementation of projects related to Local Economic Development, followed by Infrastructure and environment, then social development.
Governmental Institutions	According to the Jericho implementation plan, the governmental institutions are expected to be active in all development fields, mainly in the infrastructural and environmental development field, followed by the others equally. The Governmental institutions are expected to support the municipality in the provision of technical advice, administration and funding of the projects depending on the topic
MDLF	According to the plan, The MDLF is supporting the implementation and funding of a few activities within the infrastructure and environment development field. The support is in the form of implementation and funding as well as administration.

Looking into the actual implementation until the end of 2022, most infrastructural and large projects take place through line ministries such as the Ministry of Public works and Housing, and international organization, other stakeholders.

Jericho Municipality Partnership with Palestinian NGO's

On the citizen level, the municipality in partnership with different NGO's, CBO's and CSO's implement different social related activities in the form of capacity development, joint activities, and others. One of the major partnerships was with QADER organization to develop a community center in Jericho that was developed in 2010, until today they have ongoing activities targeting people with disabilities in different topics.

The municipality has partnerships with different CBS's including the Qamar Association, Jericho Women's association, the open cinema club, Youth Councils in addition to neighborhood committees who have representatives in direct contact with the municipality.

Volunteering is a crucial element for implementing of activities in the community, different organizations and people tend to support such as the security forces, the heavy machinery operators, students, and others which have an impact on the implementation of activities and the community spirit.

How are the partnerships agreements managed?

Each partnership has a different method of organization the relationship, as in the case of Betunia Municipality the forms are similar, they include the following:

- **Verbal Agreements** on joint implementation with no written documents is also one method for building partnerships for different causes, they are developed based on ethical commitments.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** is usually used to describe the main outlines of an agreement between two or more parties. It tends to clearly state the objectives of these partnerships and what is expected from each partner. Usually, MoU's act as a starting point for future contracts between LGU's and their partners. Although it's a written document, it's not legally binding on any partner.
- **Official Contracts** signed by two or more parties and have legally binding articles, such partnerships usually occur when one party is funding the other or has financial contributions towards a programme or project.

- **Others**, in some cases the municipality is part of implementation activities conducted by The Ministry of Local Government, Municipal Development Lending Fund, Association of Palestinian Local Authorities who are mandated to work with LGU's to achieve goals.

What is required from municipalities to establish a partnership?

Most potential partners have a set of conditions or requirements that are a prerequisite for building a new partnership with the municipality, they include the following conditions:

- The municipality needs to have a strong structure and institutionalized processes with certain flexibility.
- The municipality needs to prove that it has a capacitated team capable of implementing activities and projects and achieving common goals and objectives.
- An approved operational plan by the local council built based on community needs.
- A concept paper mentioning and confirming the sustainability of the envisioned project or activities with a time frame.
- Identification of the contribution of the municipality, which includes financial contributions, assets, capacities, experts, or other forms.

Successful Partnership

According to Jericho Municipality, and a common factor with Betunia Municipality, one major factor that is important for the success of the partnerships is the mutual understanding and common goals between the partners. In addition to trust, transparency, and professionalism.

Summary

- Jericho Municipality has a rank of B++, meaning that it has fulfilled most MDP III indicators, including the existence of an SDIP.
- Jericho Municipality has achieved more than half of its strategic plan for the years of 2018-2023.
- Jericho has secured 46% of the total number of projects from its own budget or through previous agreements and/ or partnerships. Focusing on good governance and social development aspects.
- some partnerships are suggested through the planning process and become actual during implementation, and some partnerships are formulated after the planning process as part of the networking, communication, and fundraising efforts.
- Other development fields need networking efforts to build partnerships for implementation.
- Jericho Municipality evaluates most existing partnerships as productive and having a positive impact on service delivery.
- According to the municipality most existing partnerships are with the Government and Social CSO's.

4.3.3 Conclusion of LGU Case Studies

According to the interviews and case studies, it can be concluded that the existence of A Strategic Development Plan is crucial for receiving grants from the Municipal Development Lending Fund, empowering the municipality to fund its own projects. It's also essential for building partnerships and networking with various stakeholders. These partnerships are necessary for implementation of the remaining planned projects with the

status of “possible/ potential” or “wish” that lack resources to be implemented but are identified as a priority by the citizens.

The networking, partnerships and grants are additional resources and contributions crucial for capacitating the municipality and empowering them to implement projects that lead to better service delivery to the citizens.

These facts answer the research question of “what is the impact of strategic planning and partnerships on service delivery to citizens?” – the presence of a strong Strategic Development Plan is the basis for building partnerships. The implementation plan identifies the potential partners, but they require strong communication and networking to become actual partnerships. These efforts also end to new partnerships beyond the planned partnerships but within the framework of the strategic plan.

The partnerships with different organizations including NGOs help in strengthening the municipality, by joint implementation, funding technical advice and capacity building, leading to better municipal performance and better service delivery to citizens.

There are different types of partnerships in Palestinian Municipalities they include:

- Partnership with Governmental Institutions and Line Ministries
- Partnership with the private sector (PPP)
- Partnerships with international cooperation’s and embassies
- Twinning with international Municipalities
- Partnerships with NGOs, CBO’s and CSO’s

Partnerships have different agreement formats; they include the following:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) usually is used for small activities and might evolve and take another shape of agreement such as contacts.
- Official Contracts signed by both parties and have legally binding articles.

- Verbal Agreements on joint implementation with no written documents.
- Implementation through third parties such as the Municipal development Lending Fund

There is a set of preconditions that should be applicable before starting a partnership or implementations of the projects/ activities:

- Mutual Interest and understanding between the Municipality and the potential partner.
- The municipality should have strong institutional processes with certain flexibility.
- The municipality should have an existing operational plan or predefined activities (usually driven from the SDIP).
- A project description or activity identification with an agreed upon timeline should be documented or approved in case of nonverbal agreements.
- The municipality should have a capacitated team capable of planning and implementing activities and projects.
- The municipality should have a contribution that could be in different forms such as: financial contributions, assets, capacities, experts, facilitation, or other forms required to achieve the goals and aim of the project or activity.

The Strategic Development Investment plans are usually the base of operation of the municipalities. The municipal operation plan is driven from the SDIP and is broken down to annual implementation plans. In the operational and implementation plans the key stakeholders for different projects are identified, once approved by the municipality and citizen representatives, the networking, seek for partnerships and fund-raising process is initiated.

The SDIP methodology has defined the fields of development, all partnerships fall under these categories:

- Infrastructure & Environment
- Local Economic Development
- Social Development
- Good Governance & Administration

The partnership with NGO's, CBO's and CSO's usually small-scale projects or activities, aim to enhance the lives of the citizens, either through social activities targeting women, youth, and people with disabilities, or through small scale projects that eventually enhance the service delivery of the municipalities and provide better services to the citizens in different development fields.

Most partnerships within the selected LGU's fall in most of the categories of development, mainly social development, followed by infrastructure and environment, then Local Economic Development.

4.4 NGO Case Studies

4.4.1 Case Study - Palestinian Hydrology Group for water and environmental resources development (PHG)

As mentioned in the respondent's section above, PHG mainly works in the field of water and environment and provides services to LGUs in the form of capacity building and implementation, and technical advice, it also has a partnership with Betunia municipality and others making PHG an example to be considered as a case study.

Based on the survey and interview, PHG implements projects and activities in close cooperation and coordination with different stakeholders on water and environmental issues. PHG mainly collaborates with international organizations, CSO's and CBO's.

these collaborations and partnerships target different beneficiaries including local governmental units, local communities, and the marginalized groups within the local communities.

PHG provides its services to its beneficiaries through direct implementation of programmes, projects, or activities; PHG also funds projects and activities and provides capacity building and mentoring services. The funding for implementation comes from various resources and partnerships with different stakeholders to ensure proper implementation of the required services, activities, and projects.

Based on the result of the interview and survey, PHG works in the Local Governance Sector with LGUs as their main partners and beneficiaries, and not through any third party or higher administrative level. Emphasising that “partnerships are important success factors”. PHG provides its services to the LGUs as one to one and one to many, meaning either it works with on LGU on a certain project or activity such as infrastructural projects and constructions, or implements one project or activity targeting many LGUs such as capacity building and mentoring.

PHG partners with LGUs based on their mandate as service providers of water and environmental related services, leading to a fertile ground for partnerships and joint implementation of projects that eventually enhance the services provided to the citizens. PHG considers the importance of partnerships with LGUs as very high (scored 5/5) meanwhile the effectiveness of the partnership is efficient (scoring 3/5).

PHG is very close to the Local Governance sector and has supported LGU's with developing their local development plans known as SDIP, PHG supported between 1-5 LGUs in the development of the SDIPs and consider them as an essential tool and starting point for building partnerships and ensuring that common goals are achieved. Yet mostly

the LGUs approach PHG for any technical, financial or implementation requests driven out of the SDIP and start the partnerships from there.

The partnerships between PHG and LGU's usually start by LGU's approaching PHG for support on water and environmental related fields. PHG believe that the partnerships are usually built and needed due to the inability of the LGUs to address a problem alone, and therefore needs external support accordingly.

Based on the survey, PHG considers two key factors when starting a partnership, which are the existence of a Strategic development investment Plan (SDIP) that mentions the need of the project or activity and is a priority of the community, in addition, LGU's should have a contribution towards the activity and project to be implemented (assets, financial or human resources. etc). These partnerships are either formed through Memorandum of understandings or through legal contracts.

Since water and environment is one of the main services provided by LGUs in Palestine, and is the main scope of PHG, infrastructural and capacity development activities provided to LGUs with better resources and capacities to provide their services in a more efficient and effective manner to the citizens, therefore, the partnership leads to better service delivery to citizens. PHG will consider building partnerships with LGUs in the future as they are one of their main target group and beneficiaries.

Summary

- PHG supports its partners through implementation of activities, funding project and activities, capacity developing, coaching, and mentoring.
- PHG works in the Local Governance sector and partners with and target LGUs.
- The partnership strategies are one to many through direct implementation.

- The form of partnership is joint implementation mainly in environmental and infrastructural fields.
- Strategic development planning is taken into consideration when planning to implement and select LGUs as it ensures achieving common goals and has positive impact on building partnerships.
- PHG has supported 1-5 LGU's in developing their SDIP's.
- The type of agreements is MoU's and official legal contracts.
- The implemented projects and activities on water networking and capacity development of LGUs lead to positive impact of service delivery of LGUs to citizens.

4.4.2 Case Study – QADER for Community Development

QADER for community development is one of the Palestinian NGOs has that a fixed strategic orientation and plan that guides its operation, QADER has a set of 5 strategic objectives summarised as follows:

- S.O 1) Strengthening the commitment of official Palestinian institutions to the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities.
- S.O 2) Promoting community practices supporting the inclusion of persons with disabilities within the society.
- S.O 3) Improving the performance of civil society organizations and local government units to respond to the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.
- S.O 4) Enhancing the Social Economic participation of persons with disabilities.
- S.O 5) Enhancing QADERS performance towards achieving its vision and mission.

The most relevant strategic objective to the study is strategic objective number 3 which is: "Improving the performance of civil society organizations and local government units to respond to the rights and needs of persons with disabilities". This strategic objective falls under the Social Development field, giving QADER the access to the Local Governance Sector and Local Governmental Units as target groups.

Based on the survey and desk review, QADER works intensively with Palestinian LGUs, on social development mainly in disability rights and inclusion. QADER believes in the importance of partnerships which is one of its main ways of implementation with its main implementing partners such as international organizations, the Governmental Institutions, CSOs, CBOs and LGUs. The main development field QADER works in Local Economic Development Social Development and Disability inclusion with focus on marginalized groups.

The target audience of QADER are mainly people with disabilities and marginalized groups, LGUs, Governmental Institutions, refugee camps, educational institutions, and local communities. QADER also targets the different institutions on capacity building and awareness on inclusion, people with disabilities and other relevant topics.

The support of QADER to its partners comes under the forms of Implementation of projects and activities, Funding projects and activities, Through Technical Advice, Capacity building, coaching and/or mentoring in their field of specialty.

QADER works in the Local Governance Sector, it partners with LGUs very often as they are part of the strategic orientation to achieve their objects. They partner with LGUS in a form of one to many, meaning it targets more than one LGU at a time. It also considers LGUs as crucial partners for implementation, which are highly effective and efficient. The partnerships are usually either joint implementation of projects and activities with

LGUs or by providing the know-how and technical support required. Therefore, the partnership with LGUs is as high importance.

QADER also partners with higher administrative levels such as the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipal Development Lending Fund. The relationship with MoLG is formulized through an MoU that aims to enhance the inclusiveness of people with disability in the Local Planning Process. Therefore, QADER has been involved in the preparation of Local Development Planning process known as SDIP, sensitizing the planning process and plans to be more inclusive to people with disabilities and marginalized groups to reflect their needs. QADER has support more than 10 municipalities in the Westbank in the local planning process. In addition, QADER is currently preparing for supporting the priorities of the local development plans and will also support the capacities of the LGUs in disability inclusion.

Although QADER supports LGUs in the development on inclusive Strategic Development Plans and is intensively supporting LGUs in this aspect, it doesn't consider the Strategic Plans to be essential for building partnerships with LGUs and has no impact on building partnerships from their perspective. QADER has jointly implemented activities that are based on the strategic development plans of the LGUs, usually the LGUs approach QADER for the support, and in some cases or activities QADER initiates the networking and partnership with LGUs based on envisioned activities.

The importance of the partnership with LGUs are to address a problem that couldn't be solved by one party, to build a stronger sense of community, to improve community access to services, to promote shared goals, improve community relations, and to improve the quality of services provided by LGUs and promote inclusive local governance.

The partnerships are built either by LGUs approaching QADER for joint implementation or support or QADER approaches selected LGU's. QADER also builds partnerships on the National level, and with international organizations and donors who require to target LGUs.

The key factors required for partnering with LGUs are the existence of a Strategic Development plan and/or operational plan, Joint understanding, and willingness to cooperate; contribution from the LGU side (assets, resources, capacities. Etc), strong and capacitates team; institutionalized processes; strong conceptualization and planning skills. The partnerships are formulized through Memorandum of Understanding with broad agreements as well as agreements with third parties (international orgs, Gov. MDLF, APLA, others).

QADER mainly works on enhancing local capacities in inclusive community development and covering social needs through Local Governments mainly in the local development planning process. QADER believes that joint implementation and partnership with LGUs leads to better service delivery to citizens and people with disabilities in specific.

QADER supports LGUs to establish social services for PWD at the community level (large scale community centres that provide direct services to children with disabilities such as special education, MOVE program for children with severe disabilities, physiotherapy, speech therapy, and psychosocial support services). These centres are under the full responsibility of LGU, they include municipalities such as Jericho, Beit Oula, Sammou, Beit Umar and Al Dahreyeh which target persons with disabilities. In addition to the capacity development packages delivered by QADER to LGUs and other stakeholders in the sector.

The services that were enhanced by the partnerships were mainly social and rehabilitation services, access to public facilities, inclusion in labour market. QADER considers the partnerships to be effective and efficient and have positive impact on service delivery.

4.4.3 Conclusion of Palestinian NGOs case Studies

- Palestinian NGOs tend to have Strategic Plans that are the base of their work and provides them with strategic orientations, In the case of PHG and Qader, both have strategic objectives to work on local governance related issues and tend to work with LGUs to reach the community and enhance the public services on topics related to water and infrastructure, and social security and inclusion.
- Although both organizations supported LGUs in the development of the SDIPs of different LGUs, Qader doesn't consider the SDIP to be an essential tool for partnerships, as partnerships can be developed based on different factors and work modes, also depending on the type of activities and target group.
- Both NGOs work with many LGUs to implement their activities with LGUs through MoUs and legal contracts.
- Technical Advice, Capacity building, coaching and/or mentoring are the essential services provided by PHG and QADER to LGUs to enhance service delivery to citizens.
- Common goals and mutual understanding are essential for the success of any partnerships from their point of view.

4.5 Surveys

4.5.1 Survey Targeting selected LGUS from the Westbank

In addition to the two interviews and in-depth analysis of the Strategic Development Investment Plans of Betunia and Jericho Municipalities, a set of surveys were distributed

targeting other LGU's to strengthen the research and find the correlations between different factors, only 7 LGUs responded. The survey targeted municipalities from the Westbank classified as A and B, who have a strategic development investment plan for the years of 2018-2023.

1. The respondent's profile is summarised as follows:

Table 10 LGUs survey respondent's profile

Local Governmental Unit	LGU Type	Classification according to MoLG	Geographical location	Availability of an SDIP
Hebron Municipality	Municipality	A	South of WB	Yes
Beit Jala Municipality	Municipality	B	South of WB	Yes
Nablus Municipality	Municipality	A	North	Yes
Al Ram Municipality	Municipality	B	Middle	Yes
Aleizareyeh Municipality	Municipality	B	Middle	Yes
Soureef Municipality	Municipality	B	South	Yes
Al Bireh Municipality	Municipality	A	Middle	Yes

All respondents are from the Westbank, classified as A and B, the geographic locations are mainly from the middle of Westbank, followed by the south then the north, in which all of them have strategic plans as mentioned above. The participants all have adopted the strategic planning methodology created by the Ministry of Local Government, all of them have had created a strategic plan for the periods of 2018-2021 and 2023-2026 which are the base of this study.

1.1. Implementation of the strategic plan (2018-2023) 57.1% of the respondents confirmed that the 2018- 2023 plan implementation was between 51-70%, noting that the

original time frame of the strategic plan was 2018-2021, but extended until 2023 due to covid restrictions.

2. Relevance of Strategic Development Investment Planning to building partnerships and enhancing service delivery to citizens

2.1. The importance of the SDIPs for the municipalities and relevance to building

partnerships: 71.4% of the participants confirmed that the existence of an SDIP is very important and 100% of the respondents confirmed that the SDIP supports in fundraising and building partnerships.

2.2. The importance of networking in enhancing service delivery to citizens:

100 % of the respondents believe in the importance of networking with other parties to enhance the service delivery to the citizens, all respondent's work with other parties in a form of partnerships to implement programmes, projects, activities.

2.3 Importance of partnerships from the LGU perspective 71.4% confirmed that the existence of partnerships is very important, meanwhile 28 % believe it's important.

2.4 Existence of an SDIP and building partnerships 85.7% of the respondents confirm that the existence of a strategic development investment plans facilitates building partnerships and networking.

2.4 when does the LGU network and build partnerships with LGUs?

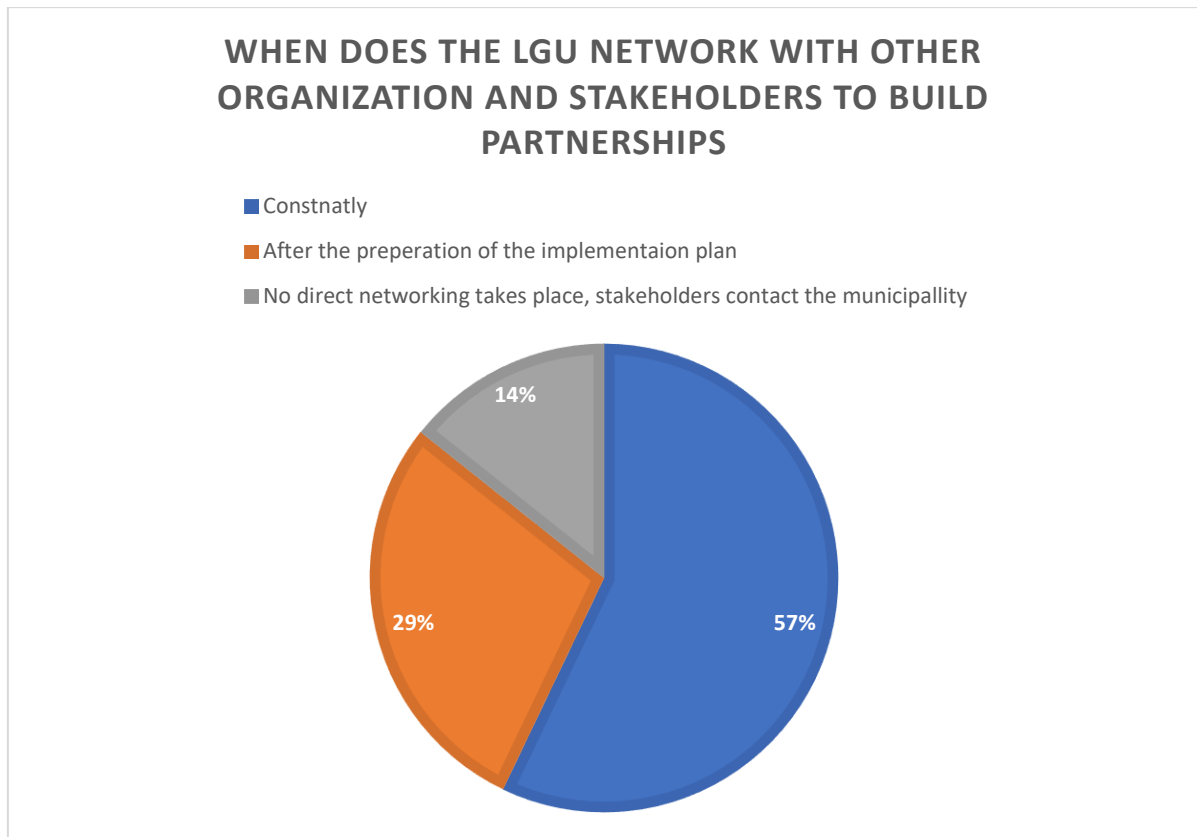


Figure 1 building networks and partnerships by LGUs.

Based on the responses, 57% of the constantly network to build partnerships with other parties, meanwhile 28.6% start networking once they prepare the implementation plan of the SDIP, and 14.3% don't directly network with other parties and wait for other parties or stakeholders to approach them.

2.5 with which types of different organizations/parties has the LGU partnered with?

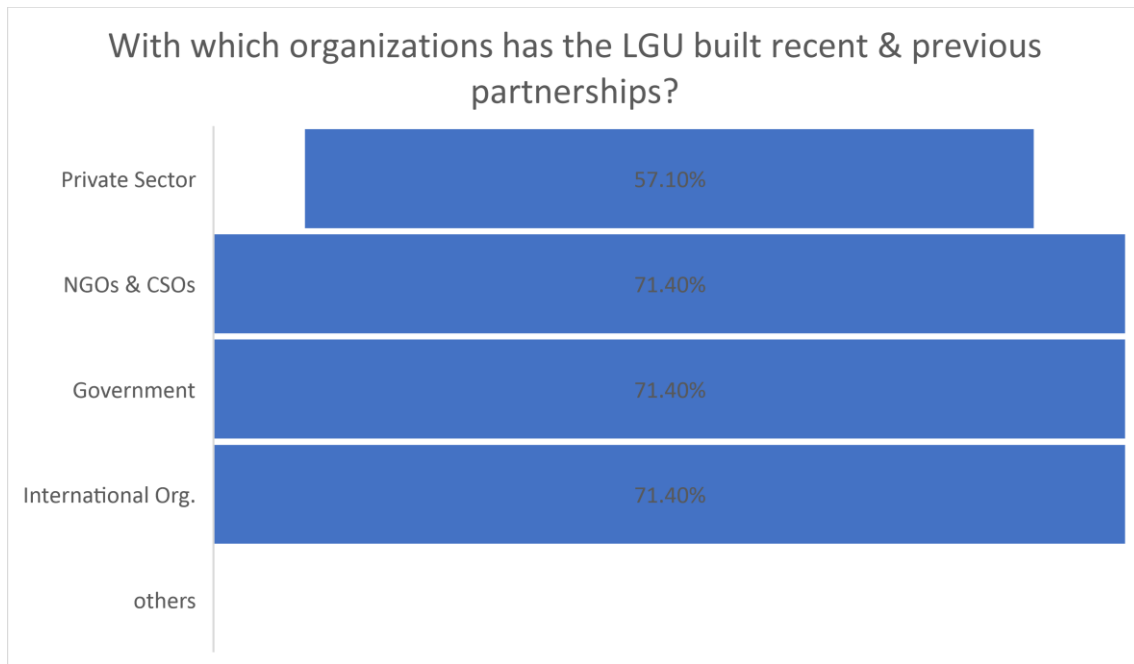


Figure 2 Types of Organizations LGUs partner with

According to the respondents, usually the LGU's partner with most types of organizations, they partner with NGOs /CSO's, the government and international organizations almost equally, and less with the private sector.

3. Partnership with Palestinian Local NGO's

3.1 Existing partnerships according to the survey 85.7% of the responses confirmed that they have existing partnerships with Palestinian NGO's/ CSO's.

3.2 Fields of cooperation between LGUs and NGO's

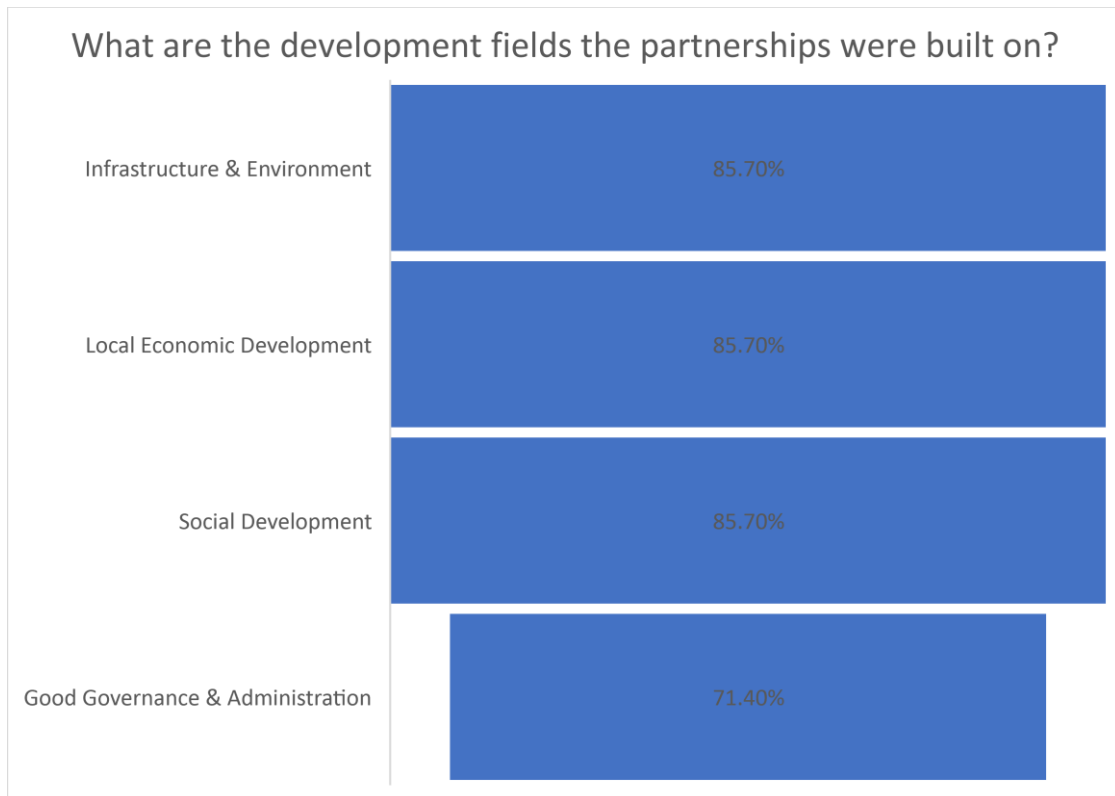


Figure 3 Development Areas partnerships are built on.

Most of the partnerships are built on the fields of infrastructure 85.7%, Local Economic Development 85%, and social development 85.7%, meanwhile partnerships with NGO's are less about good governance and administration 71.4%.

3.3 Reasons for limited or no previous partnerships as for the participants who have limited or no partnerships with NGOs mentioned that the reason is because the LGU lacks the needed resources, the previous experiences were not successful and or they didn't have an opportunity to work with a local NGO/ CSO. But they confirmed that they are interested in working with NGOs in the future.

3.4 Distribution of partnerships across development fields: Based on the responses of the LGUs, the partnerships are distributed among the development fields as follows:

Table 11 Distribution of partnerships among sub development fields

Development Field	Sub Development Fields						
Infrastructure & Environment:	Municipal services	Energy	Transportation	Infrastructure	Water	Solid waste	Climate change
	57.14%	57.14%	57.14%	42.86%	42.86%	42.86%	14.2%
Local Economic Development field	Tourism	Industry & trade	Employment			Supporting services	
	71.43%	71.43%	42.86%			14.2%	
Social Development field	Education	Empowerment of marginalized groups	Health	Family protection		other	
	71.43%	71.43%	57.14%	28.57%		14.2%	
Good Governance and administration field	Urban and spatial planning	Risk management	Institutional development	Information Technology		Security	Good governance & administration
	57.14%	42.86%	42.86%	42.86%		14.2%	14.2%

These figures show that the most partnership occur under LED and Social development, mainly in Tourism, Industry and trade, and education and empowerment of marginalized groups.

3.5 The existing Partnerships between LGUs and NGOs

42.9% of the respondents have 5-10 partnerships, 14.3% have 10-15 partnerships, meanwhile only one LGU has more than 15 partnerships with NGOs.

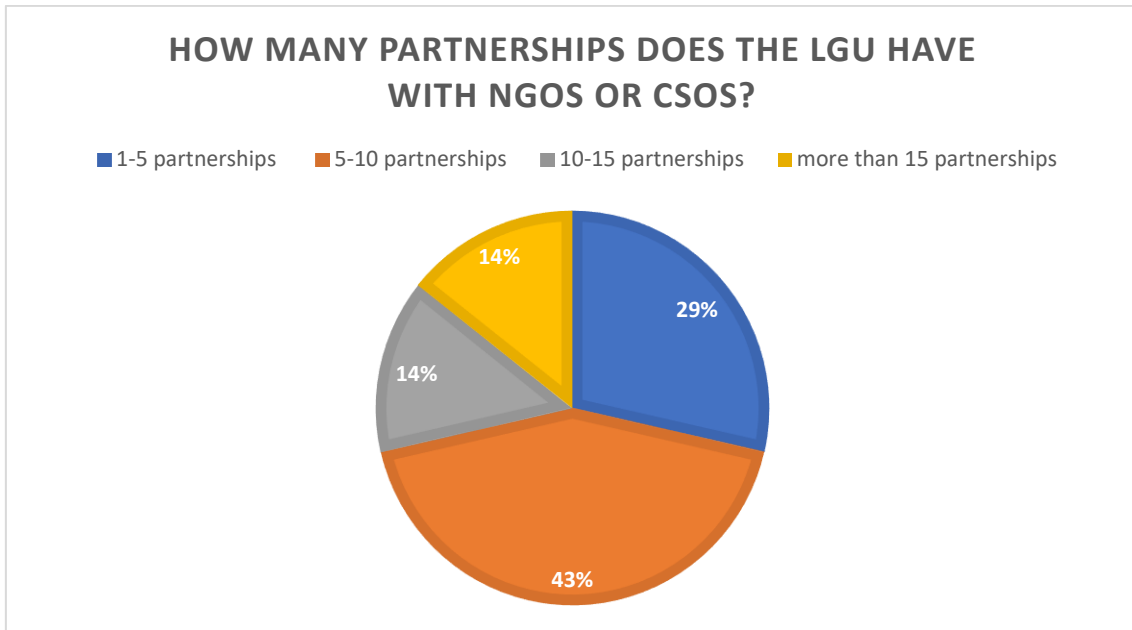


Figure 4 Number of LGU partnerships with NGOs and CSOs

3.6 Joint activities between LGUs and NGOs based on the responses of the LGUs on the multiple selection question regarding the types of activities that take place as part of the partnerships are the following:

1. 85.7% of the Partnerships are related to capacity building.
2. 57.1% of partnerships are on building awareness.
3. 57.1 % of partnerships are for implementation of joint activities.
4. 42.9% of partnerships are on other topics.

3.7 The nature of the partnerships between LGUs and NGOs based on the responses of LGUs on the multiple selection question are as follows:

1. 57.1% of LGUs responded that existing partnership with NGOs is based on technical support.
2. 57.1% of LGUs also responded that the existing Partnerships with NGOs are based Financial and technical support.
3. LGUs responded that 42.9 % of partnerships are based on financial contribution only by NGOs.

4. 42.9% of LGU partnerships with NGOs are based on Financial and implementation partnership.

3.8 The contractual frameworks between LGUs and NGOs are based on MoU's, legal contracts, direct implementation with no written agreement or partnerships through third parties, the LGUs answered the multiple selection question as follows:

1. 71.4% of the LGUs have partnerships framed by memorandum of understanding.
2. 42.9% of the LGUs have partnerships framed by legal contracts.
3. 28.6% of the LGUs have partnerships framed by direct implementation with no contracts or written agreement.
4. Partnerships framed and built by third parties are around 14.3%.

3.9 The impact of partnerships between LGUs and NGOs on service delivery based on the respondents, 100 % of the respondents confirmed that the partnerships with the NGOs an CSOs have positive impact on the services provided to the citizens. The impact on the service delivery was distributed as follows:

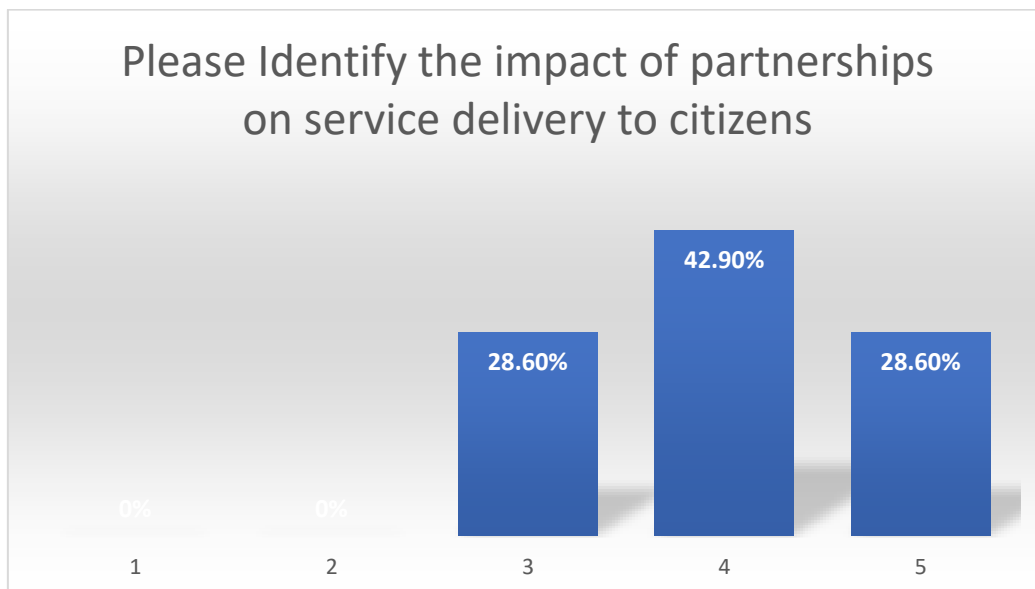


Figure 5 Impact of partnerships on service provision to citizens.

1.10 Other additions and insights of LGUs towards partnerships with NGOs

One open end question was added at the end of the survey for any recommendations, one municipality noted that partnerships are usually prerequisites by donors, therefore, its recommended that the process of building partnerships becomes institutionalized within the LGUs and not imposed by any external or third party.

Conclusion of the LGU survey analysis

- All A and B municipalities have strategic development plans – one main factor is due to the key performance indicator identified by MDLF through the Municipal Development Fund. Most LGUs have implemented 51-70% of the plan which indicates that the LGUs have created partnerships with different stakeholder including NGOs to implement their plans, these LGUs consider SDIPs as important to have, and confirm that the plans are the base for networking and building partnerships with different partners including NGOs and CSO. These LGUs initiate networking either constantly or after the preparation of the implementation plan of the SDIP. Most of the LGUs with high implementation rates tend to build partnerships with the Government, international organizations, the private sector, local NGOs and CSOs.
- The more partnerships the LGUs build, the potential to cover more development fields become higher, mainly covering the essential mode of implementation of capacity building, awareness raising, joint implementation. The wider variety of partnerships leads to a wider variety of contractual frameworks including MoU's, direct implementation, and legal contracts. In addition, the LGUs who considered the SDIPs and partnerships as important have higher percentage of accomplishments.

- All participants confirm that the partnerships with NGOs and LGUs have positive impact on the service delivery of the LGU to the citizen, based on the services provided (Capacity development, awareness, or joint implementation).
- The municipality with low implementation rate of the SDIP (below 50%) considers the SDIPS as not very important to have. It is also the LGU that doesn't initiate networking and rather waits to be approached by other parties to start any collaborations or partnerships and mostly rely on partnering with the government and no existing partnerships with NGOs (Al-Ram), the development areas are infrastructure and LED, they receive technical support and capacity development with direct implementation, the LGU believes that partnerships enhance the service delivery of LGUs.

Survey for Selected Palestinian NGOs

A survey targeting specific NGOs was distributed targeting selected Palestinian NGOs to strengthen the research and find the correlations between different factors, besides the two case studies respondents (PHG and QADER), REFORM the Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Development and the Palestinian Consultive Staff (PCS) provided their information.

1. Sectors, strategies, and partnerships

1.1 Sectors and Strategic plans the survey results show that the targeted NGOs work in most sectors except the health sector, they all have strategic plans as a base of their operations.

1.2 Reliance on Partnership for implementation with other parties - 80% of the NGOs rely on partnerships with other organizations in the implementation of their strategic plan, 20% sometime rely on partnerships according to the project and activities.

1.3 Main implementation related Partnerships - Most NGOs implement their activities mainly with Community based organizations, Followed by LGUs and CSO's, then international organization and the Government with the following rates

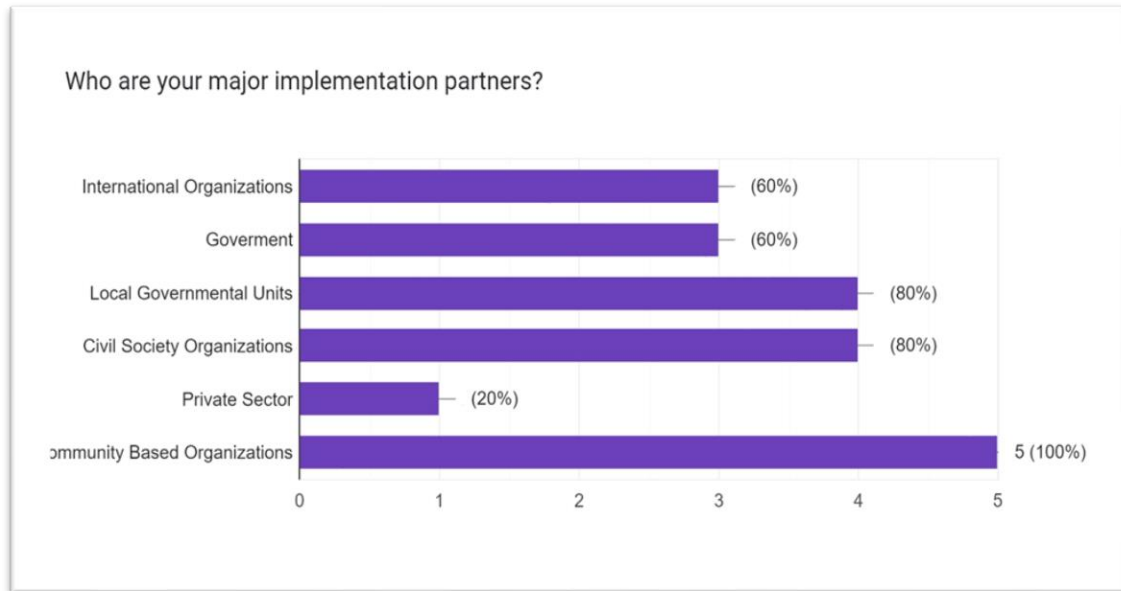


Figure 6 NGOs main implementation partners.

1.4 The target groups of the selected NGOs are the following: - Marginalized groups, woman, youth, PWDs and LGUs followed by Local Communities, then governmental institutions, followed by refugee camps then educational institutions.

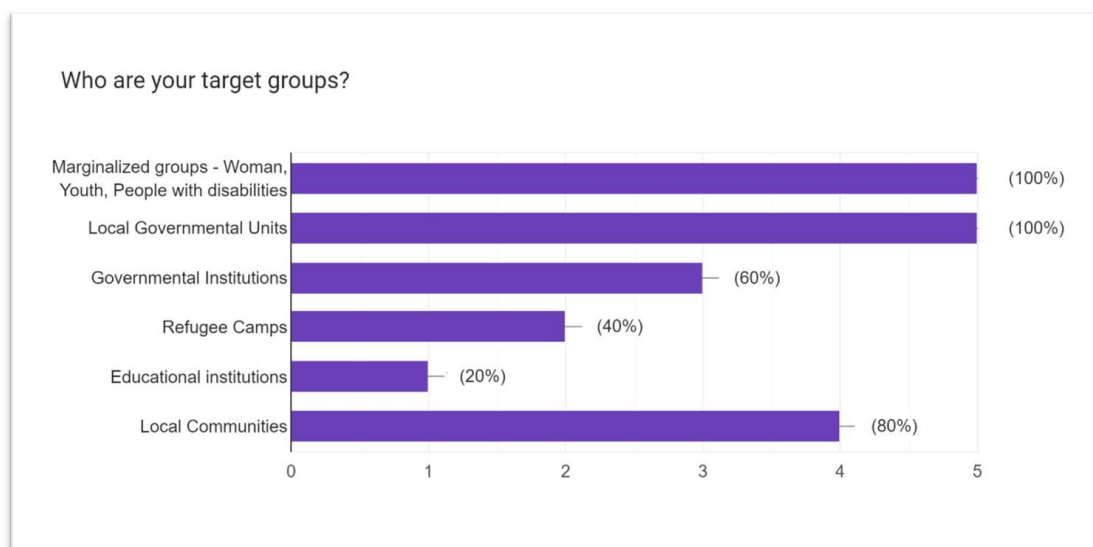


Figure 7 NGOs target groups.

1.5 NGOs support their partners - The NGOs support their partners mainly with implementation of projects and activities and capacity building, coaching and/or mentoring, followed by technical advice the funding projects.

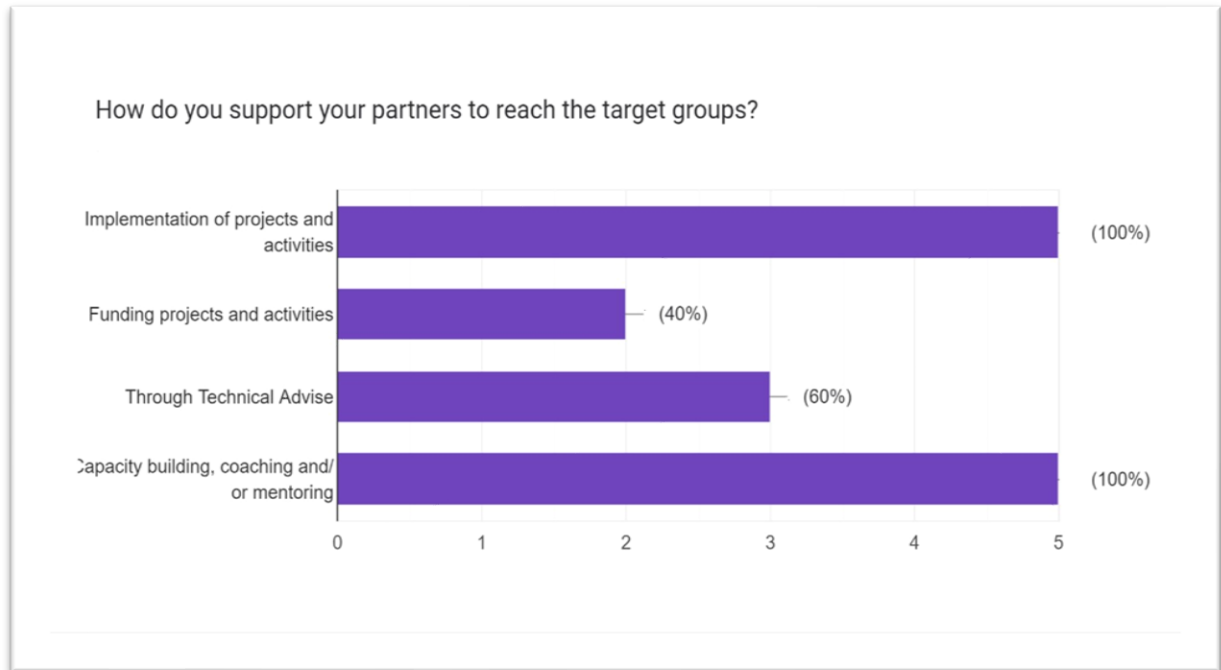


Figure 8 NGOs support to partners to reach the target groups.

2. NGO support in the Local Governance Sector

2.1 NGOs work in the Local Governance Sector All of the selected NGO's work in the Local governance sector, LGUs, followed by the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipal Development Lending Fund.

2.2 NGO approach of targeting LGUs- 60% of the NGOs partner with LGUs on the base of "One to One" and "One to Many", 40% of the respondents only work on the One-to-Many basis.

2.3 The recurrence of partnership with LGU's - 80% of the respondent's partner with LGUs very often, and 20% partner with LGUs sometime according to the project.

2.4 NGO Modes of implementation with LGUs All of the selected NGO's support LGUs through joint implementation of projects or activities, only 60% of the respondents provide technical support and know-how.

2.5 Development Fields 80% of the respondent NGOs work on social development, followed by Good Governance and Local Economic Development, and only 20% work on infrastructural and environment field and disability inclusion.

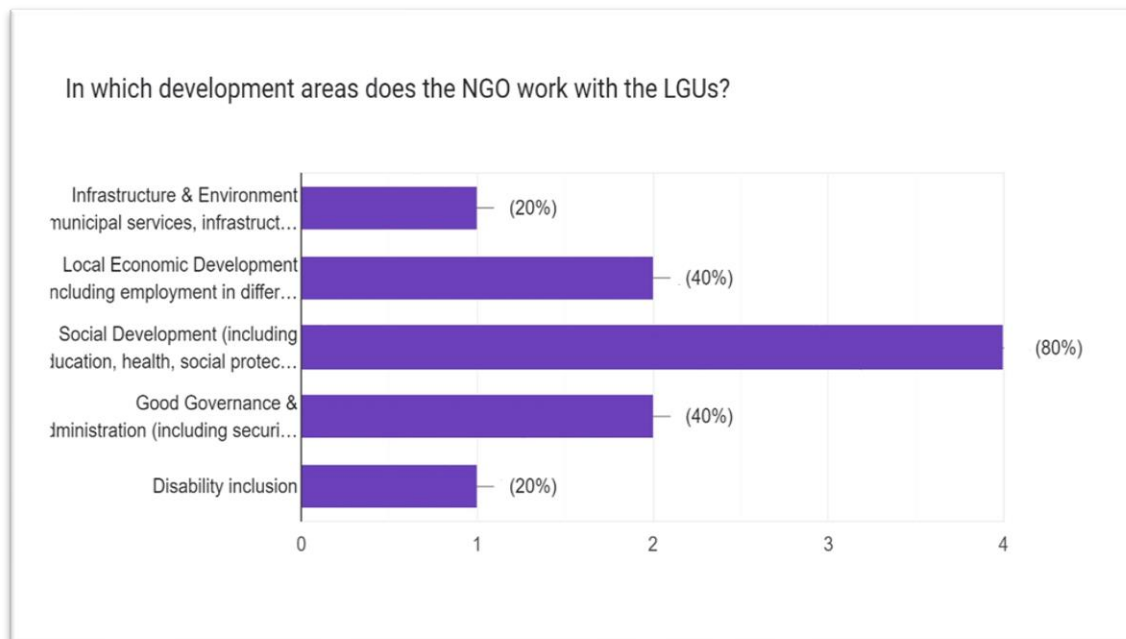


Figure 9 Development Areas NGOs work with LGUs in

2.6 Importance and effectiveness of NGO partnerships with LGUs - All NGOs agree that the partnerships with LGUs are very important, even though the effectiveness rate of partnerships from the perspective of NGOs towards NGOs is moderately effective.

3. Partnership in Local Development Planning

3.1 NGOs support in the Local Development Planning - Only 60% of the selected NGOs supported LGUs in the development process of SDIPs. 50% of the respondents supported between 1-5 LGUs, 25% have supported more than 10 LGUs and 25% supported none.

3.2 Importance of the existence of a Local Strategic Development Plan from the perspective of NGOs - 40% of the participants confirm that the SDIPs are an important base for the selection of LGUs for partnerships, 40% confirm that it's good to exist to ensure common goals, meanwhile 20% believe that they don't have an impact. 60% of respondents believe that it has a positive impact on partnerships.

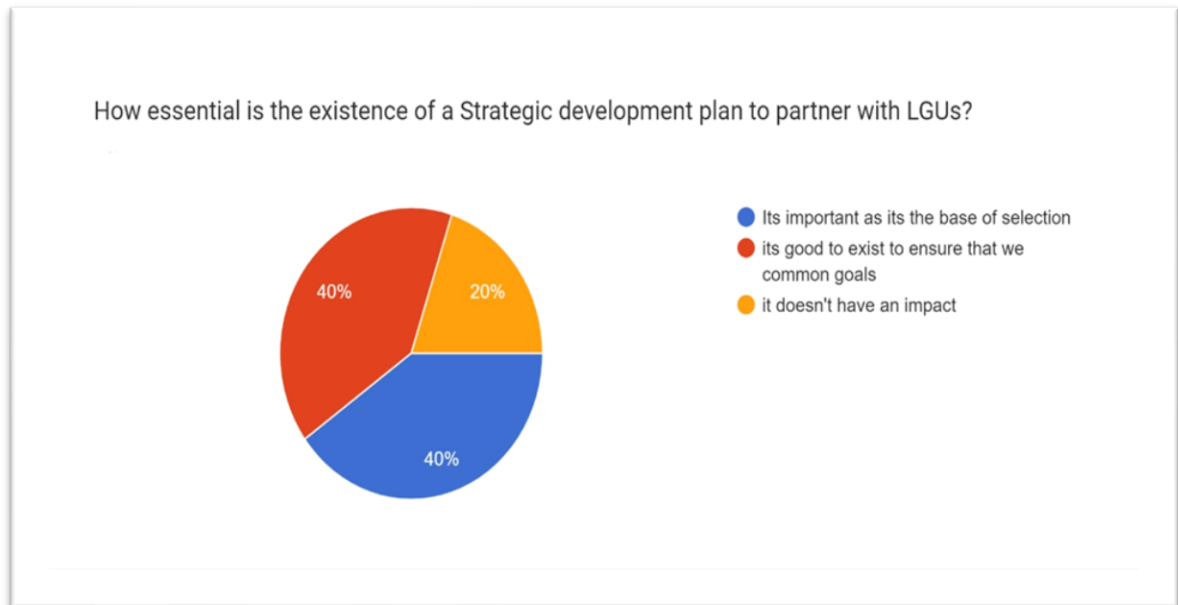


Figure 10 Essentiality of SDIPs for NGO - LGU partnerships.

3.3 Partnerships driven from the strategic Development Plans 80% of the NGOs confirmed that the implementation of activities is driven from the Strategic Development Investment Plan

3.4 Establishment of Partnerships - 40 % of the participants confirmed that the partnerships start by LGUs approaching the NGO for partnership, 40% have partnerships with international organizations that require to target and partner with LGUs, 40 % of NGOs approach LGUs based on a certain predefined internal criterion, and 20 % are approached by higher administrative levels to support LGUs.

3.5 The main reasons for NGOs to collaborate with LGUs' - 100 % of the respondents confirm that the main reasons for NGOs to partner with LGUs is address a problem that cannot be solved by one party, meanwhile 80% also believe that the main reasons to collaborate with LGUs Is to build a stronger sense of community, improve community access to services, to promote shared goals, to improve quality of local services, followed by meeting donor requirements then improving inclusive local development.

3.6 Key Factors for partnering with LGUs - 100% of the participants agree that the existence of a strategic plan or operation plan is essential for partnerships, 80% believe that joint understanding and willingness to cooperate and contribution from the LGUs side are also a criterial for building partnerships. 60% confirm that a strong capacitated team from the LGU and institutionalized processes are important, 40% confirmed that strong conceptual and planning skills are also an essential criterion for building partnerships.

3.7 Types of Agreements between NGOs and LGUs- Based on the responses, 80% of the NGOs partner with LGUs based on MoU's with broad agreements, 40% of the respondents have agreements with 3rd parties who require to target and partner LGUs, 20% of the respondents also build partnerships based on verbal agreements and 20% on with third parties such as international organizations, the Government, MDLF and others.

3.8 Examples of the existing joint projects and their impact on service delivery between the LGUs and NGO

Table 12 Examples on joint projects between LGUs and NGOs and the improved services

Organization	Joint projects and/or activities	Services Improved
Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG)	Palestinian Hydrology Group has partnerships on water networks and water infrastructure with different LGUs.	Water management Efficiency of LGUs
QADER for Community Development	QADER supported LGU to establish social services for PWD at the community level (large scale community centers that provide direct services to children with disabilities such as special education, MOVE program for children with severe disabilities, physiotherapy, speech therapy, and psychosocial support services). these centers are under the full responsibility of LGU.	Social and rehabilitation services, access to public facilities, inclusion in labor market.
REFORM – The Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development	REFORM Monitoring the satisfaction of the local community, policy suggestions, and monitoring the performance and commitments against the LGU's strategic plans, advocacy campaigns	Infrastructure-related service. In Sae'er the trucks used to use the same roads as the primary school students we succeeded in lobbying for independent roads for trucks to enhance children's safety. disclosure and information sharing Jamain, responsiveness to the vulnerable groups, Qalqilya.etc.
Palestinian Consultative Staff (PCS)	Social accountability, disability inclusion, women's participation, economic empowerment of vulnerable groups.	The rights of vulnerable groups, improving the quality of services through accountability, electricity, water...

Conclusion of NGOs survey

- The Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations consider partnerships as essential for their implementation, they consider SDIPs as important but not essential for building partnerships.
- Joint efforts in terms of planning and implementation are important to reach the desired target group and enhance service delivery.
- NGOs work in different development fields but have one aim of enhancing the lives of citizens through supporting LGUs and other stakeholders in the local governance sector.

Chapter 5 – Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This research aimed to study the Impact of Strategic Planning on partnerships between LGUs and NGOs in Palestine, mainly to answer the following research question “What is the Impact of Strategic Planning on Partnerships between LGUs and NGOs in Palestine.”

The conclusion of the study is summarised by answering the main research questions and the results of testing the hypothesis. After analysing the case studies, interviews, desk reviews and surveys the main results answered the research questions are as follows:

5.2 Research Questions

5.2.1 Research Question (1): What is the effect of strategic planning on building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs in Palestine?

Based on the case studies, interviews, desk reviews and surveys, the researcher has concluded that there is a positive relationship between the existence of a Strategic development Investment Plans in Palestinian LGUs, with building partnerships with local NGOs in Palestine. Having a strategic plan helps LGUs map potential partners in the operational plan, based on community priorities that fall into the development fields and activities. The existence of a realistic operational plan supports in easing the process of networking, fundraising, and building collaborations with different partners and stakeholders which are the fundamental elements for the implementation of the strategic plan.

The topic of partnerships between LGUs and NGOs is still limited between a few LGUs and NGOs, governed by many factors that influence the partnership types, modes of implementation and partnership frameworks. To give the LGU-NGO partnerships a higher weight and highlight its importance the National level should mobilize, raise awareness, promote and support building such partnerships. The National level includes the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipal Development Lending Fund, whom are the main influencers in the Local Development planning process – Strategic Development Investment Planning (SDIPs), as they are the main developers of the methodology and influence the implementation in Westbank. Both MoLG, MDLF and other key implementation agencies and stakeholders had an impact on the constant development and update of the methodology to include new perspectives in development areas and trending topics such as inclusion, climate change, and Sustainable Development Goals. This constant update enhances the quality of the local strategic plans and responsiveness of LGUs towards its citizens. Yet, the National level still needs to further strengthen the capacities of the LGUs, not only in planning but also in implementation of the plans, especially in the challenging Palestinian context influenced by occupation, limited resources, and capacities. The National level needs to capacitate the LGUs in terms of project management, networking, and fundraising, this is needed for building independent decentralized Local Governmental Units who can provide high quality projects and services to the citizens effectively and efficiently.

5.2.2 Research Question (2) What is the effect of partnerships on the service delivery to citizens?

Based on the research, in-depth study, interviews, and surveys, the study has shown that there is a positive effect of building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs on the service delivery to citizens.

The study highlighted the NGOs support to LGUs in different development fields, using different implementation methods and support mechanisms. All efforts of the partnership are basically for empowering, capacitating and supporting the LGUs in reaching the targeted audience who are of common interest with the NGOs, and lead to achieving common goals. The NGOS have a monitoring role as well, they act as watchdogs as they are also considered to be part of the community and define priorities with the civil society. This gives NGOs the power to hold LGUs accountable for their implementation of the plans that leads to better service delivery to the citizens.

Having the local Strategic Development Plans and the partnerships between the LGUs and NGOs are crucial elements if the LGUs want to enhance their service delivery. As the results confirmed, some issues cannot be addressed by only one party; collaboration, networking, financial and human capacities, having common goals and strategic partnerships are what makes the implementation of certain programmes, projects, and activities more efficient and effective, leading to an enhanced service delivery process and higher quality that ensure citizen satisfaction, ease their lives, and enhance the trust and relationship with their local governmental unit. Therefore, having strong strategic plans lead to a higher potential of building partnerships and collaborations with different parties, eventually leading to improved service delivery to citizens.

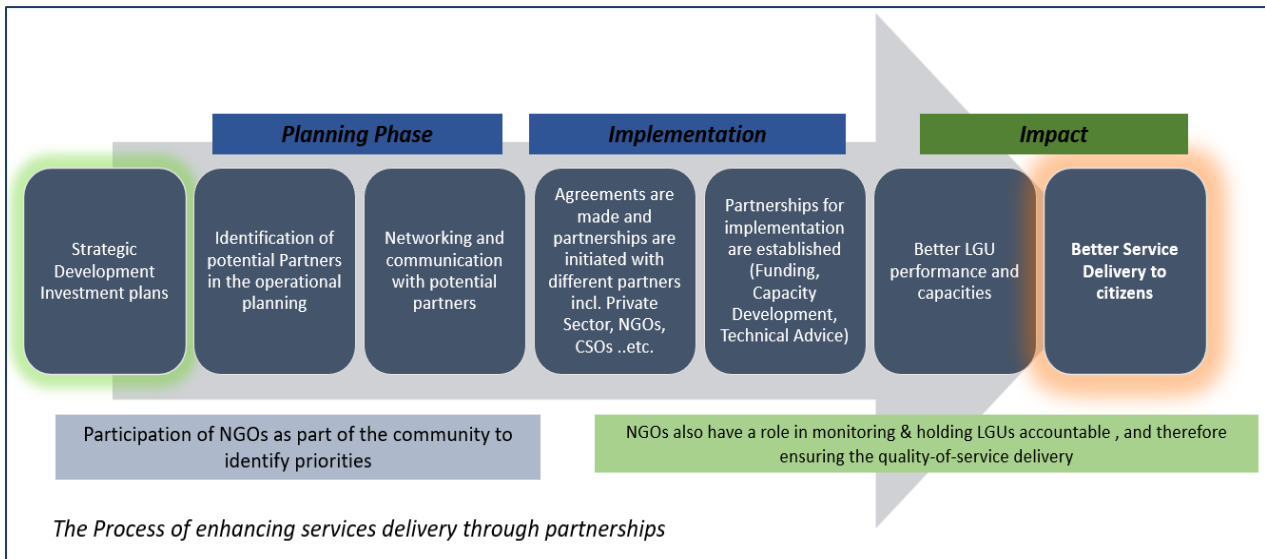


Figure 11 The process of enhancing service delivery through partnerships.

5.2.3 Research Question (3) what is the adequate/ proper module for the partnership between Local Governmental Units and Non-Governmental Organizations?

Based on the results in depth review of the strategic development plans, the interviews and surveys, the researcher has developed a partnership module that could be used for future partnerships between LGUs and NGOs. The module is as follows:

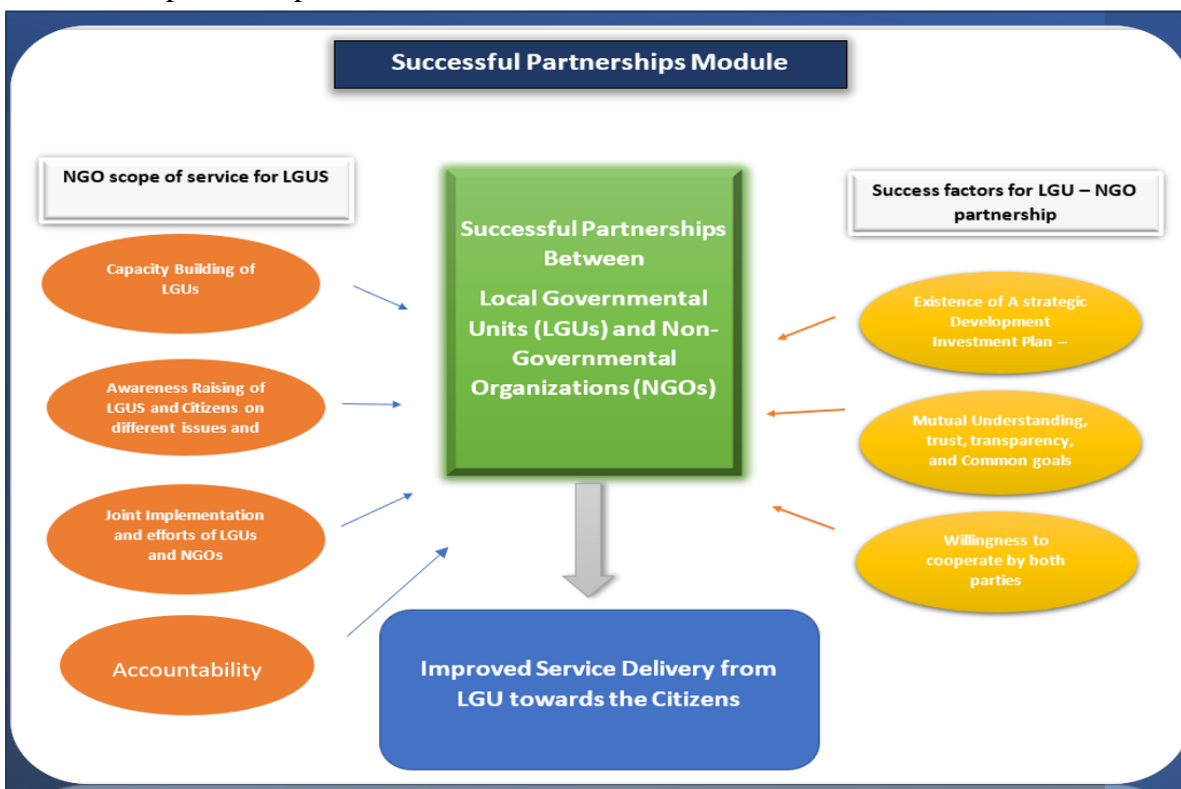


Figure 12 Successful LGU-NGO module.

For LGUs and NGOs to build successful partnerships, both parties should agree on the scope of service that will be provided by the NGO to the LGU, the development field is influenced by the development field the NGO is specialized in and the need of the LGU. Usually, the support of NGOs come in the form of capacity development, awareness raising or implementation of joint projects. The partnership between LGUs and NGOs are influenced by three main success factors, including the existence of a Strategic Development Plan and its operational plan, mutual understanding, transparency, and common goals, in addition to the willingness to cooperate between both parties to eventually build the successful partnership. All these factors feed into the improvement of the service delivery from the LGUs to the citizens.

This module is based on positive attitudes and willingness to build partnerships, yet Partnerships between LGUs and NGOs are tailored according to activities and needs of LGUS, which might differ from one to another. Therefore, each partnership has its own characteristics and success factors. Based on the research the participants confirmed that partnerships are usually positive and successful, but in real life they are still challenging and require a lot of mutual efforts, negotiations, common understanding and might not succeed due to different issues, such as conflict during implementation, resistance from one partner, from the targeted audience, due to unexpected factors or situations that might face these partnerships.

In this case, priorities and the added value of the partnerships should be taken into consideration to confirm the relevance and effect on the service delivery to the local community.

Hypothesis of the Study

Hypothesis 1. There is a positive relationship between good strategic management and planning on building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs. Meaning that if the LGU has good strategic management and planning, it has a high potential in creating relationships and building partnerships with NGOs.

- The result of the study confirms the positive relations between strategic planning and management on building partnerships between LGUs and NGOs.

Hypothesis 2. LGU and NGO partnerships and jointly implemented activities lead to better service delivery to citizens.

- The results of the study confirm that there is a positive relationship between jointly implemented activities and enhanced service delivery to citizens through partnerships.

Hypothesis 3. The NGOs scope of service, and the existence of a strategic development plan, willingness to cooperate and mutual understanding lead to building successful partnerships that improve service delivery to citizens.

- The result of the study confirms that the existence of an SDIP, and having mutual understanding and willingness to cooperate leads to building successful partnerships that improve service delivery, a module has been built accordingly, see figure 11.

5.3 The Results of the Study

- Most Municipalities Classified as A and B have Strategic Development Investment Plans and confirm they are the bases of partnerships with NGOs. This is due to stronger capacities of the LGUs and it's a predefined Key Performance Indicator by The Municipal Development Programme (MDP) that provides grants to LGUs based

on performance. Therefore, existence of SDIPs enhance municipal ranking, have positive financial implication, and provide a platform for networking, partnerships, and collaborations.

- The partnerships between LGUs and NGOs cover all development Areas, depending on the scope of the NGO services, the scope of service effects the joint working areas and selection of programmes, projects, and activities.
- The main NGOs scope of service in the Local Governance sector are Capacity Building, awareness, and joint implementation of projects and activities, leading to strengthened LGUs, aware LGU staff and citizens, and stronger allies form implementation and service provision.
- The major role of NGOs is to support LGUs with the technical Advice, the know-how and financial support to provide better services, the NGOs may be able to provide the LGUs with some or all of support types based on the mutual agreement.
- The binding framework for mutual agreements under the partnerships include mainly MoUs, Legal contracts, direct implementation or through 3rd parties, predeveloped concept papers and municipal contributions.
- NGOs require certain criteria's for LGUs to have to be able to support them, it includes strong institutional structures and processes within LGUs, capacitated teams for joint implementation, an approved operational plan extracted from the SDIP.
- According to the survey results and interviews with the LGUs and NGOs, they both confirm that partnerships are essential and important to reach citizens and provide good quality services.
- Some LGUs referred to a few reasons for limited or no partnership as a lack of needed resources from the LGU side, or negative/ unsuccessful previous experiences, or have

had no opportunities for networking and collaboration. They confirmed they are still willing to partner with NGOs in the future.

- The higher number of partnerships created by the LGUs the higher implementation rate of the SDIP.
- NGOs rely on partnerships for implementation of their activities, they approach LGUs in the one to one and/or one to many approaches depending on the type of programmes, projects, and activities, in addition to the requirements of third parties like The Ministry of Local Government or International Organizations that can influence the selection process.
- NGOs consider partnerships as important for implementation and reaching the targeted audience such as the local community, but refer to the effectiveness rate as moderate, which is due to the commitment, capacities, bureaucracy, different approaches, and other factors impacting the partnership.

5.2 Recommendations

The researcher recommends the following:

- This study only targeted LGUs and NGOs and studied the effect on the partnerships on the LGU service delivery to the citizens, The citizen perspective wasn't taken into consideration due to timing of the study which was at the end of the 2018-2023 generation and the start of the new generation was taking place, therefore, no activities were on going at the time of the research leading to a recommendation for a follow up study on the actual impact of the partnership on citizen satisfaction shall be measured.

- A continuation of this study on a broader target group is recommended, especially targeting C classified municipalities, Village councils by studying the Annual Capacity Investment Plans in addition to expanding to include municipalities and NGOs of Gaza.
- A quality assessment of service delivery is recommended to measure the quality of services provided as results of partnerships.
- The importance of partnerships in the planning and implementation of Strategic Development Plans should be highlighted during the planning sessions by the Municipal Development Lending Fund, especially for the LGUs with less capacities as the strong Municipalities.
- A partnership unit for different Local or international partnerships are recommended to be established by LGUs, or through a fundraising expert to be located at the municipalities to ensure partnerships are established for different purposes that enhancing the capacities and service provision of the LGU.

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Annexes

Survey / interview questions for Local Governmental Units

Dear Participant,

This survey aims to support a researcher to study the impact of strategic Planning on partnerships between Local Governmental Units (LGUs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Palestine. This survey will measure the impact of partnerships on the service delivery to citizens, it shall support the researcher to identify main drivers that impact partnerships and service delivery to citizens.

The results of this survey will be analyzed and be part of master's degree thesis in Strategic Planning and Fundraising from the Arab American University (AAUP). The information and data in this form is for scientific research purposes only.

Your responses are highly appreciated,

Dana Sbitani

General Information

LGU name: _____

Type of LGU

- Municipality
- Village Council

Governorate: _____

Name and Function of Participant: _____

Section 1. General Questions about Strategic Planning in LGU's

Q1. Does the Municipality have a Strategic Development Investment (SDIP) plan?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please choose which plans the Municipality has.

- 2012-2015
- 2016-2029
- 2019-2021
- 2023-2026
- others

Q3. How important is the existence of the Strategic development plan for the municipality? Please rate from 1-5 on how important the SDIP is.

1	2	3	4	5
Not Important				Very Important

Q4. To which extent / range did the municipality Implement its Strategic Development Investment Plan?

- 0-30%
- 30-50%
- 50-70%
- 70-100%

Q 5. The existence of a Strategic Development Investment Plan facilitates fundraising and building partnerships and networks with different partners.

- Yes
- No

Section 2. LGU Partnerships with NGO's and CSO's

Strategic Development Investment Plans (SDIPs) are based on community participation and priorities. They cover four main fields including Infrastructure & environment, Local Economic Development, Social Development and Good Governance. Not all fields could be covered directly by the municipalities and therefore require partnerships and fundraising.

Q5. How important are partnerships to the Municipality?

1	2	3	4	5
Not Important				Very Important

Q6. Are there existing partnerships or collaborations with other organizations.

- Yes
- No

Q7. Does LGU believe in the importance of networking to enhance service delivery. to citizens?

- Yes
- No

Q8. Does the LGU work with other partners to implement Programs, projects or activities?

- Yes
 No

Q9. Please identify the importance of having different strategic, implementation or technical partnerships with different partners

1	2	3	4	5
Not important				Very Important

Q10. Does the Existence of a strategic plan help in building partnerships with different parties?

- Yes
 No

Q 11. When does the LGU conduct Networking efforts with different partners, organizations, and stakeholders?

- Constantly
 After finalizing the operation plan
 No networking is initiated from the LGU side.

Q12. With which organization has LGU partnered in the past?

- Private Sector
 NGOs, CCOs
 Government
 International Organizations
 Others

Partnerships between LGUs and NGOs

Q13. Does the LGU have existing partnerships with NGOS or CSOs?

- Yes
 No

If not, please state why. _____

Q14. In which field does partnership serve?

- Infrastructure & Environment** (municipal services, infrastructure and environment including energy, roads and transportation, climate change, water, wastewater, and solid waste).
- Local Economic Development** (including employment in different sectors, agriculture, tourism, industry and trade, and support services)
- Social Development** (including education, health, social protection, inclusion and enabling women, children, marginalized groups and people with disabilities, culture and heritage, sport, housing).
- Good Governance & Administration** (including security and disaster management, local and spatial planning, information management, and institutional development of LGU's).

Q16. Please list the activities/ projects the Partnerships implement:

Q17. How many partnerships with NGOs does the LGU have?

- 1-5
- 5-10
- 10-15
- More than 15

Q18. What are the binding frameworks of partnerships?

- Memorandums of Understanding
- Legal contracts
- Through third parties
- Unofficial partnerships with direct implementation

Q19. What is the nature of the partnerships between LGUs and NGOs?

- Implementation
- Financial / funding
- Technical support
- Technical and financial
- others

Q20. Do you believe that partnering with NGO's has a positive impact on the service delivery to the citizens?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please rate from a scale 1-5 the level of impact on service delivery to citizens if you have existing partnership:

1	2	3	4	5
Low Impact				High Impact on Service Delivery

Q. 21 Is there a willingness to form future partnerships with NGO's/ CSO's?

- Yes, please state why _____
 No, please state why _____

Q22. If you have any additional information that could benefit the research, please feel free to add.

Survey/ Interview Questions for NGO's (shared via Google forms)

Dear Participant,

This survey aims to support a researcher to study the impact of strategic Planning on partnerships between Local Governmental Units and Non-Governmental Organizations in Palestine. This survey will measure the effect of partnerships on the service delivery to citizens, it shall support the researcher to identify main drivers that impact partnerships and service delivery to citizens.

The results of this survey will be analyzed and be part of master's degree thesis in Strategic Planning and Fundraising from the Arab American University AAUP. The information and data in this form is for scientific research purposes only.

Your responses are highly appreciated,

Dana Sbitany

Section 1. General Questions about the NGO

Name of NGO:

Date of Establishment:

Participant Name & Position:

Q1. In which Sector/s does The NGO function? Please state:

- Health Sector
- Education Sector
- Local Governance Sector
- Social Security & Development Sector
- Infrastructure & Environment Setor
- Other: _____

NGO Partnerships with other organizations

Partnerships are an important success factor in the implementation of projects and activities envisioned in the Organizational Strategic Plan. This section aims to measure the importance and impact of partnerships of the NGO's work and operations.

Q2. Does the NGO have a strategic plan?

- Yes**
- No**

Q3. Does the NGO rely on partnership with other organizations in the implementation of the Strategic Plan?

- Yes**
- No**
- Sometime, according to the projects and activities**

Q4. Who are your major Implementation partners?

- International Organizations**
- The Government**
- Local Governmental Units**
- Civil Society Organizations**
- Private Sector**
- Community Based Organizations**
- Others** _____

Q5. Who are your Target groups?

- Marginalized groups - Woman, Youth, People with disabilities**
- Local Governmental Units**
- Governmental Institutions**
- Refugee Camps**
- Educational institutions**
- Local Communities**
- Others** _____

Q6. How do you support your partners to reach the target groups?

- implementation of projects and activities
- Funding projects and activities
- Through Technical Advice
- Capacity building, coaching and/or mentoring.

Section 2. NGO's and LGUs Partnerships for citizens

NGOs work on the grassroots levels with different partners to reach the citizens. This section shall collect information about partnerships in the Local Governance Sector targeting the citizens and improving service delivery.

Q7. Does the NGO work in the Local Governance sector?

- Yes
- No

Q8. Which Local Governance Stakeholder do you partner with?

- Ministry of Local Government (MoLG)
- Municipal Development Lending Fund (MDLF)
- Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA)
- Local Governmental Units (Municipalities and/ or village councils)
- Others** _____

Q9. Is there any existing collaborations or Partnerships with LGU's?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please state which LGU's does the NGO have existing partnerships – one or more.

Q10. How does the NGO partner with LGUs?

- one to one (the NGO partners with one municipality at a time)
- one to many (the NGO targets more than one municipality at a time)
- both, depending on the type of project/activity.

Q11. How important are the partnerships to the NGO?

1	2	3	4	5
Not Important				Very Important

Q12. How often do you form partnerships with LGUs directly?

- Very often, we implement them directly in partnerships with LGUs.
- Sometime, according to the project
- We don't go for direct partnerships; we partner through a third party.

Q13. What is the nature of your partnership with the LGUs?

- Joint implementation of projects or activities
- We support the implementation and funding.
- Funding only, the LGUs are responsible for implementation.
- We provide technical support and the know-how.
- all the above
- other _____

Q14. In which development areas does the NGO work with the LGUs?

- Infrastructure & Environment** (municipal services, infrastructure and environment including energy, roads and transportation, climate change, water, wastewater, and solid waste).
- Local Economic Development** (including employment in different sectors, agriculture, tourism, industry and trade, and support services)
- Social Development** (including education, health, social protection, inclusion and enabling women, children, marginalized groups and people with disabilities, culture and heritage, sport, housing).
- Good Governance & Administration** (including security and disaster management, local and spatial planning, information management, and institutional development of LGU's).
- Others**, please specify _____

Q15. Please rate the importance of Partnerships between NGO and LGU's

1	2	3	4	5
Not Important				Very Important

Q 16. Please rate the effectiveness of partnerships between NGOs and LGUs

1	2	3	4	5
Not Effective				Very Effective

Partnerships in Local Development Planning

Local Development planning is an important process that helps the LGU formulate a 4-year Strategy for the development of the city, town, or village. The strategy is developed based on community needs and participation. This section studies the importance of NGOs in supporting this process in terms of planning and implementation. especially that LGUs plan for partnerships in this process to enhance service delivery to citizens.

Q 17. Is the organization familiar with Local Development Planning? known as the Strategic Development Investment Plans for Municipalities (SDIP's), or the Annual Capital Investment Plan for Village Councils (ACIP's)?

- Yes
- No

Q18. Has the Organization ever supported LGU's in the Strategic Development Investment Planning Process (SDIP)?

- Yes
- No

Q 19. If yes, how many LGU's has the organization supported?

- None
- 1-5
- 6-10
- More than 10 LGUs

Q20 How essential is the existence of a Strategic development plan to partner with LGUs?

- It's important as it's the base of selection.
 - It's good to exist to ensure that we have common goals.
 - it doesn't have an impact.
 - Others,** _____ please _____ specify
-

Q21. Does the strategic plan have a positive impact on building partnerships with LGU's?

- Yes, it's the basis of reaching common understanding.
- No, it has no impact on building partnerships.

Q22. Has the NGO partnered with the LGUs in implementation of projects or activities driven from the Strategic Development Plans?

- Yes
- No

Q23. How did the partnership/s start?

- The LGUs approach the NGO for support.
- The NGO was approached by higher administrative levels to implement activities targeting LGUs.

- We have partnerships with international organizations that require to target LGUs.
- Others: _____

Q24. What are the main reasons to collaborate with LGUs?

- to address a problem that cannot be solved by one party.
- to build a stronger sense of community
- to meet donor requirements
- to improve community access to services
- to promote shared goals
- improve community relations.
- improve quality of local services
- Others: _____

Q25. What are the key factors or criteria essential for partnering with LGUs?

- existence of a strategic plan and/or operational plan
- Joint understanding and willingness to cooperate.
- contribution from the LGU side (assets, resources, capacities')
- strong and capacitates team.
- institutionalized processes
- strong conceptualization and planning skills
- Others: _____

Q26. What is the type of agreements the NGO forms with LGUs?

- Verbal agreements on joint implementation
- Memorandum of Understanding with broad agreements
- Official legal contracts
- Agreements with third parties (international orgs, Gov
- Others: _____

Q27. Based on the existing partnerships, please state the joint projects/ activities that resulted from the partnerships

Q 28. Do you believe that joint implementation with LGU leads to better service delivery to citizens?

- Yes
- No

Q29. What activities has the NGO implemented with LGUs that directly impact service delivery to citizens, please state?

Q30. What services have partnerships enhanced? please state?

Q31. To which level are the Existing Partnerships effective and efficient?

1	2	3	4	5
Not efficient nor effective				Very efficient & effective

Q32. Do you believe that partnering with NGO's has a positive impact on the service delivery to the citizens?

- Yes
 No

If yes, please rate from a scale 1-5 the level of impact on service delivery to citizens if you have existing partnership:

1	2	3	4	5
Low Impact				High Impact on Service Delivery

Q33. will your organization consider new partnerships with LGUs in the Future?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

الملخص

يهدف هذا البحث الى دراسة أثر التخطيط الاستراتيجي على بناء الشراكات بين الهيئات المحلية والمؤسسات الغير حكومية في فلسطين. اتبعت الدراسة منهجية البحث النوعي بحيث تم الحصول على المعلومات الاولية من حالات دراسية ومراجعات مكتبية ومقابلات لبلديتين ومؤسسات من المؤسسات الغير حكومية في فلسطين. بالإضافة تم توزيع استبيان تم فيه استهداف مجموعة اخرى من الهيئات المحلية بنفس تصنيف البلديات التي تم اخذها كعينة دراسية وعددها سبعة، بالإضافة الى مؤسساتين غير حكومية تعمل في قطاع الحكم المحلي وتستهدف هيئات محلية مختلفة ومواطنين. اظهرت نتائج الدراسة والبحث أن هناك تأثير مباشر بين وجود خطة تنموية استراتيجية في الهيئة المحلية وبناء الشراكات مع المؤسسات الغير حكومية. وأن الشراكات بين الهيئات المحلية والمؤسسات الغير حكومية تؤثر إيجاباً على عملية تقديم الخدمات للمواطنين من قبل الهيئات المحلية. وتأتي هذه نتيجة للخدمات التي تقدمها المؤسسات الغير حكومية للهيئات المحلية مثل بناء القدرات، رفع الوعي لدى الهيئات و المواطنين، بالإضافة الى التنفيذ المشترك بين الجهتين للبرامج و المشاريع والأنشطة المختلفة تكون مشتقة من الخطة التنفيذية المستخلصة من الخطة التنموية الاستراتيجية، التي وضعت بالتشارك مع المجتمع المدني.

العلاقة بين الهيئات لمحلية والمؤسسات الغير حكومية لم تدرس من قبل في فلسطين، فهذا البحث تطرق لهذه العلاقة من المنظور الشامل وتأثيرها على عملية تقديم الخدمات للمواطنين من وجهة نظر الهيئات المحلية والمؤسسات الغير حكومية، لذلك توصي الباحثة ان يتم النظر والبحث في هذه العلاقة وتأثيرها على تلقي الخدمات من وجهة نظر المواطنين. اضافة الى ذلك توصي الباحثة ان يتم التأكيد على اهمية هذه العلاقة من قبل المستوى الوطني وذلك لتسليط الضوء على اهمية العلاقة و تأثيرها على عملية تقديم الخدمات للمواطنين بطريقة اكثر فاعلية وكفاءة. واخيراً و ليس آخرأً توصي الباحثة ان يتم تخصيص وظيفة او شخص في هيكلية الهيئات المحلية بحيث ان يكون مسؤول عن عملية التشبيك ، بناء الشراكات وتجنيد الاموال مع الجهات الاخرى لتحسين اداء الهيئات المحلية و الوصول الى جميع المواطنين بطريقة احترافية.