



# Addressing Spillover Effects of the Syrian Crisis (P167205) Strengthening Collaborative and Inclusive Approaches in Jordan

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**Messages to the World Bank and NTF: Overall Project Findings and Recommendations:***Error! Bookmark not defined.*

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## List of Acronyms

CBO	<b>Community Based Organization</b>
CSCs	<b>Community Score Cards</b>
CSO	<b>Civil Society Organization</b>
GBD	<b>General Budget Department</b>
GPSA	<b>Global Partnership for Social Accountability</b>
HRBA	<b>Human Rights-Based Approach</b>
JBA	<b>Jordan Budget Alliance</b>
LDU	<b>Local Development Unit</b>
MoF	<b>Ministry of Finance</b>
MoMA	<b>Ministry of Municipal Affairs</b>
MSSRP	<b>Municipal Services and Social Resilience Project</b>
NGO	<b>Non- Governmental Organization</b>
NTF	<b>Nordic Trust Fund</b>
OGP	<b>Open Government Partnership</b>
PJ	<b>Partners-Jordan</b>
RONGO	<b>Royal Non-Governmental Organization</b>
RTI	<b>Rasheed for Transparency and Integrity</b>
WB	<b>World Bank</b>

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## Background

Jordan has received a large influx of refugees posing various challenges at the national and local level with the largest impact on the northern governorates which have been hosting the largest number of refugees. Scarce resources and permitted access of refugees to health and education services have resulted in a vast burden on the local communities in these governorates. A major challenge to the municipalities, especially in Mafraq and Irbid, is providing adequate support for host communities. The services, resources, and infrastructure of these municipalities have been strained by the influx of the refugees.

The impact of Syrian refugees on host communities will have a growing implication for stability in Jordan in the coming years. Evidence suggests that inequality is increasing in the areas where refugees are concentrated: the poorest have been the worst hit by price increases and downward pressure on wages. Despite attempts by donors and aid organizations to implement conflict-sensitive programming, there remains a perception among some locals that programs are not conflict-sensitive enough, and that support is unfairly prioritized for Syrians.

The influx of refugees to Jordan resulting from the Syrian Refugee Crisis has placed significant hurdles on the ability of local governments in Jordan to provide adequate municipal services, infrastructure, and public health services to its citizens. This reality has created a need for efforts focused on good governance and social accountability, particularly in areas with limited resources. Civil society organizations (CSOs) play a key role in efforts to introduce sustainable and effective good governance practices throughout Jordan. Since CSOs vary in size, location, and capacity, often national CSOs can provide support and capacity building for local CSOs based in smaller municipalities.

This activity has brought the Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA) and the Nordic Trust Fund (NTF) to work with the Municipal Services and Social Resilience Project (MSSRP– P161982) through strengthening capacities of local CSOs and CBOs, and municipalities to collaborate through social accountability in piloting solutions that improve social cohesion in municipal services. This intervention has made an effort to support MSSRP to develop a work-plan to be implemented by local CSOs in collaboration with pilot municipalities to create collaborative social accountability mechanisms that can inform and strengthen the work of the MSSRP. The lessons learned will be incorporated in the MSSRP Project Operations Manual upon discussion with and consent of the

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**MSSRP Project Management Unit, to be implemented and operationalized under the MSSRP municipal grant cycle. This activity aimed to increase local Jordanian capacities to monitor inclusive service delivery and engage collaboratively with public sector institutions while incorporating the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA).**

## **Statement of Need**

Jordan scored 48 out of 100 in the 2017 Corruption Perception Index and ranked 59th out of 180 countries. On the other hand, Jordan has scored 63 out of 100 in transparency in the Open Budget Index in 2017; this score indicates that Jordan's government provides substantial information on the central government budget and financial activities. Considering these figures together creates more questions than answers. Additionally, Jordan scored 11 out of 100 for public participation which means that Jordan provides few opportunities for the public to engage in the budget process.

According to a study conducted by Transparency International in 2013, 58% of a representative sample of 1000 Jordanians said that they are paying a bribe in the field of registry and permits services, which are the main responsibility of the municipalities. The study also highlights the citizen's unequal enjoyment of public services in which citizens with little or no financial resources have limited or no chances to access these services. Through examining several municipality budgets, it is obvious that 75% to 85% is consumed by overhead and salaries which leads the municipality with little money to cater for the services and needs of citizens. In Jordan, the various needs of different local citizen groups are not taken into consideration during budget design and the planning level prior to service provision. Furthermore, a 2016 report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in Jordan highlighted that the communities are not aware of the actual role of municipalities, which affects the level of interaction between citizens and municipalities and ultimately the quality of services provided. The report recommended more interaction between municipalities and citizens through town hall meetings, involvement of citizens in decision-making, more transparency about information, budgets and dealing with complaints, procurement contracts and announcement of public employment opportunities. In the view of the Syria crisis, a progressive increase of tensions between the Jordanian host population and Syrian refugees is occurring and accordingly new needs are arising, and

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prioritization exercise is needed with a more participatory approach and prominent response from state institutions and local authorities (municipalities).

Since 2012, Jordan has been a member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), a multilateral initiative aimed at securing commitments from governments on issues of transparency, fighting corruption and empowering citizens. Jordan has committed to increasing access to information at every level of government, including access to timely, high-value data in formats that can be easily understood and utilized by the general public as well as interested parties. While Jordan is heading in the right direction in this area, CSOs must step up their advocacy role and develop efforts to lead the Government to adopt more transparent and participatory practices. It is clear that Jordan is willing and able to increase transparency in public expenditures, which represents an integral part of compliance with access-to-information guidelines. However, it is also apparent that CSOs must be provided with the tools and means to advocate effectively for greater access to information and mechanisms for participation, which will allow them to advocate for better public services.

## **Intervention Rationale**

Partners-Jordan joined efforts with the project key partners including the MSSRP, GPSA, and NTF to develop and implement this activity to pilot tailored social accountability mechanisms in three municipalities. These municipalities are in need of improving service-delivery, resource-distribution, and inclusive public participatory mechanisms which support social cohesion. Partners-Jordan will also support MSSRP in increasing the knowledge base among project stakeholders and communities about the role of CSOs in supporting community monitoring of municipal service delivery, which would be a real added value to MSSRP learning and effectiveness. This activity will support MSSRP to develop a work-plan to be implemented by local CSOs in collaboration with pilot municipalities to create collaborative social accountability mechanisms that can inform and strengthen the work of the MSSRP. The lessons learned can be incorporated into the MSSRP Operations Manual upon discussion with and consent of the MSSRP Project Management Unit, to be implemented and operationalized under the MSSRP municipal grant cycle.

Partners-Jordan implemented this activity and generated timely, operationally useful and fragility-sensitive knowledge on citizen monitoring and oversight applicable to fragile contexts. The activity

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piloted the integration of the principles of equal participation and inclusion in the design and implementation of collaborative social accountability in the targeted municipalities.

### **Project Development Objectives:**

Partners-Jordan has worked with local stakeholders in developing inclusive and collaborative approaches to local governance processes in selected municipalities in Jordan: Dhlail, Zarqa, and Sabha-Dafianah. Partners-Jordan worked with its team of consultants, experts in social accountability and public participation, to identify gaps and work collaboratively to develop solutions to be tested in pilot Jordanian municipalities and civil society organizations (CSOs) in jointly monitoring inclusive service delivery and to inform collaborative public-sector policies while integrating standards of equal participation and inclusion.

The specific objectives of the project were:

- Implement a stock-taking workshops and utilize community scorecards to identify needs for capacity development on collaborative social accountability in target municipalities by drawing on existing municipality-civil society engagement spaces and tailoring pilots for inclusive public services monitoring
- Through social accountability workshops in 26 municipalities, work with local CSO partners in each municipality to produce learning and knowledge aimed at:
  - Improving the understanding of collaborative social accountability processes adapted to local contexts and oriented towards peaceful problem-solving and conflict prevention; and
  - Informing the World Bank’s support to collaborative social accountability for monitoring World Bank operations and public sector reforms in Jordan,
  - Offering support to selected municipalities to identify needs, support opportunities for collaboration and projects development and fundraise to fund all these activities.
- Assess the existing capacities and readiness for integrating the Human Rights Based Approach and efficient ways to do so by incorporating the HRBA into training materials and assessing through pre and post-tests.

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- Pilot tailored social accountability mechanisms which will increase local governance actors' capacities to monitor inclusive service delivery and engage collaboratively with public sector institutions while incorporating the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA).

## **Project Partners**

This pilot project aimed to support the MSSRP's current interventions in Jordan aiming to address the impact of the influx of Syrian refugees on Jordan host communities through building the capacities of municipalities to efficiently use allocated funds to achieve a more equitable and democratic distribution of resources, and bringing CSO's to the table to pilot solutions grounded in social accountability. The key partners for this project were the GPSA, the MSSRP, the NTF, a Social Accountability national advisor, and Partners-Jordan. Partners-Jordan served as the main implementer of activities, leading research and generating knowledge for the pilot project while working in collaboration with the other key partners. The GPSA and MSSRP contributed knowledge, consultations, and resources to assist with the assessments and piloting of solutions. The MSSRP also provided Partners-Jordan with the relevant stakeholders they have been working with including key municipal staff and CSOs. The MSSRP contributed feedback on Partners-Jordan's workplan and knowledge gathered. Finally, the MSSRP offered support to Partners-Jordan's activities by assisting with outreach and invitations for the Social Accountability workshops and the national conference. The Social Accountability advisor served as a support system and liaison between the project partners. Partners-Jordan worked with three local CBOs, one from each selected municipality, who served as a focal point for the activities. These CBOs had the opportunity to qualify for sub-grants to fund activities which played a key role in supporting investigations, conducting the stakeholder mapping, and outreaching to local participants for activities.

## **About Partners-Jordan**

Partners-Jordan, a global partner of the GPSA, has been working in CSO capacity building and social accountability, and peacebuilding and democratization, since 2005 with an extensive network of partners and associates including: CSOs, public sector workers, government agencies, NGOs, RONGOs,

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journalists, activists, consultants, private sector partners, and human rights defenders. Partners has extensive experience in working with these different stakeholders to develop collaborative approaches which support social accountability.

Partners-Jordan was established in 2005 as a local non-profit national center in Jordan. Partners-Jordan is a member of an international network which comprises of over 26 Partners Centers across the globe.

Organizational objectives are to:

- Provide capacity building and facilitate multi-stakeholders to promote the advancement of civil society organizations in Jordan.
- Promote mediation and peacebuilding in Jordan.
- Provide conflict and change management trainings and services.
- Promote good governance and social accountability.
- Promote citizens' participation in Jordan's social and political development.

Partners-Jordan is the sole organization in Jordan implementing participatory budgeting projects in municipalities since 2008 to enhance public participation in decision-making by giving priority to their high-ranked needs and integrating them into the municipal budget. Through these projects Partners-Jordan has created good communication with municipal administrations, CSOs and activists, as well as tested its methodologies in approaching and convincing municipal leadership to buy-in and support social accountability practices.

Partners-Jordan recently completed implementing a country-wide project focused on building the capacities of over 60 CSOs and CBOs across the nation as well as over 27 formal and informal youth initiatives. The purpose of the intervention is to build the capacities of target groups to equip them with skills and tools to utilize media and other campaigns to advocate for their human rights. Partners-Jordan is incorporating a Human Rights-Based Approach in this intervention.

Additionally, Partners-Jordan has extensive experience in community mobilization and implementing social accountability tools including surveys and community-scorecards for its anti-corruption

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programming; as well as conducting needs assessments of local government and civil society and fostering cooperation and collaboration between the two.

Partners Jordan is located in the neighborhood of Swefieh in Amman, Jordan. Partners-Jordan has a staff size of 4 full-time staff and the 2017 annual budget was \$200,000. Partners-Jordan's 2018-2019 budget is nearly \$300,000. Partners-Jordan is legally-registered in Jordan as a non-profit company and its accounts are audited.

For example, Partners-Jordan incubated the Jordan Budget Alliance (JBA). This CSO is a national budget watchdog consisting of an alliance of CSOs, NGOs, private and public sector partners, journalists, and activists. The purpose of the organization is to act as a watchdog and to lobby government to increase its transparency and public participation. As part of this effort in the past Partners-Jordan has implemented joint capacity-building trainings including the JBA and the GBD and the MoF. Also, Partners-Jordan supported the development of the Jordan chapter of Transparency International, Rasheed for Transparency and Integrity (RTI). Partners incubated RTI and supported them by sharing resources and offering capacity building and mentorship, as well as contributing leadership and administrative support.

Some current and past projects of Partners-Jordan include:

- Innovation for Change – Jordan MENA Hub Incubator (2017-Present)
- Together we Can: Capacity Building Project for Civil Society in Jordan (2016-2018)
- Participatory Budgeting, People Voice in Numbers (2017-Present)
- Encouraging Open Government Policies that Support Economic Growth (2013-2015)
- Towards Promotion of Transparency and Combating Corruption (2012-2015)
- Integrating Anti-Corruption Best Practices on the Municipality Level (2013-2014)
- Empowering Women through Economic Mentorship (2011-2013)

## **Scope of Work**

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The geographic scope of the project has covered 3 municipalities for targeted social accountability work: Dhilail, Zarqa, Sabha-Dafianah, and 23 other municipalities have benefitted from training sessions.

Key performance indicators were:

- To Develop guidelines for interviewing targeted municipalities and CSOs working on service delivery monitoring to identify existing gaps for effectively applying a human rights-based approach to collaborative social accountability.
- To support local multi-stakeholder participatory forums of government, civil society, and communities to embrace a human rights-based approach to collaborative social accountability mechanisms to address service delivery and grievances management.
- To increase awareness and benefits of using collaborative social accountability tools to improve dialogue and inclusiveness at local and national forums while ensuring non-discrimination and participation.
- To support MSSRP to develop a work-plan to be implemented by local CSOs in collaboration with pilot municipalities to create collaborative social accountability mechanisms that can inform and strengthen the work of the MSSRP.
- To incorporate the lessons learned in the MSSRP Project Operations Manual upon discussion with and consent of the MSSRP Project Management Unit and beyond this pilot activity to sustain their operationalization under the MSSRP municipal grant cycle.
- To produce a final document on lessons learnt out of the local pilot with targeted municipalities to feed into knowledge products co-developed with local partners for local and international audience.

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## Project Outputs:

### Activity 1: Project Inception

- **Detailed workplan**

The workplan has set the project activities against a timeframe and a sequence of activities that follow a logical pattern, that serves the project objectives and in way that allows a space for incorporating lessons learned at each activity to inform later activities. The work plan was reviewed and approved by the MSSRP team.

- **Inception Report**

The report was prepared by Partners-Jordan, aiming to set out the approach of the project which entailed the description of project's overall requirements as well as the methods to be used, terms of reference and finally the staffing requirements. The report also outlined the project objectives and activities. Report later was validated by the social accountability advisor, the MSSRP, and the PMU. As well as to give a proper and accurate description of the proposed work. Th inception report has proposed to conduct the project activities in three municipalities, Dhlail, Zarqa, and Sabha-Dafianah.

The report has also contextualized the situation in both Zarqa and Mafraq governorates as among the most affected governorates by the Syrian refugees' crisis, and the impact of that crisis on the resources available at the local level and related consequences to these issues on social cohesion status. The context description in these two governorates has gone into further details regarding; level of service provided, economic opportunities, educational opportunities, role of civil societies and finally social tensions drivers in each governorate. The team has used a set of tools to draw the report conclusions among them is the key informant interviews and the desk review. Main inception report conclusions are: principal underlying cause of tensions in both Mafraq and Zarqa governorates are the strain on local resources caused by the large and rapid influx of Syrian refugees, the absence of community participation and social responsibility, the lack of effective governing institutions (or support for institutions), uneven provision of governmental services and the absence of social accountability mechanisms. Of the issues that cause the most tension, living costs and uneven provision of governmental services were the primary concerns.

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The report has also described briefly the role of municipalities as first point of interaction between citizens, communities, and their government. Municipalities were also recognized for being responsible for providing basic and social services to their citizens and communities, are struggling to fulfill this responsibility due to the following factors: overpopulation, lack of resources, lack of municipal staff capacity, and the Syrian crisis. The report has also mentioned that municipalities face lack of trust and collaboration between communities and municipalities, and that citizens feel that they are not consulted or participating in planning, therefore they are not motivated to be active citizens and fulfill their social responsibility.

The report also identified the need to work with municipalities to enhance their role in cooperating with local communities, encourage a sense of inclusion and social responsibility, and play the role of mediator and communication channel between communities and municipalities.

- **Output Analysis from Municipality Meetings**

Based on municipality meetings, Partners-Jordan identified the following conclusions regarding commonalities between all three municipalities:

- The lack of development role in municipalities (due to their overwhelmed role in fulfilling community-based needs which mainly include providing basic services)
- Lack of skills and capacity for LDU staff members to play a development role
- Lack of social accountability and awareness measures
- Lack of approaches, methods, ways to enhance social accountability in the municipalities
- They all shared that the main issue in their communities is the huge influx of Syrian refugees; and they see this as a threat and not an opportunity
- Have a basic understanding of the challenges that Syrian refugees face
- Lack a capacity in understanding their obligations as duty-bearers
- Lack a capacity to meet their obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights
- All municipal mayors and LDUs expressed their passion about changing their role to a development role, and not just to provide basic services.
- All LDUs were more open and realistic about the challenges their communities are facing, whereas mayors tended to favor presenting a positive image of the municipality.

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- Syrian refugees were not mentioned as priorities for municipality mayors; their importance and participation seemed minimal.
  - Like all of Jordan there is competition, sometimes positive and other times negative, between tribes for influence and priority.
  - Mayors shared that there is a lack of community awareness about the priorities of the community and the services that the municipality can and cannot provide.

**Based on the context analysis findings, the training topics outline was defined based on the gaps found in the selected communities.**

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## Activity 2: Preparatory Activities

In this activity, preparation meetings were held among project team to decide how to conduct the outreach process, and outline roles and responsibilities. Clear steps to take were identified to direct how the project will proceed per activity, as outlined in details below.

### *Stakeholders Mapping*

#### **1. List of Key CSO's, CBO's and contributors to the project**

This activity aimed to conduct a brief mapping of the working CSOs and CBOs in each of the multitudes vicinities and had worked to assess their ability to take part in the project based on several criteria such as: legitimacy, access and outreach, interest in the project subject matter and their overall operational capacities. Partners-Jordan developed and utilized particular tools to aid with this effort, which can be found in Annex 6. Below is a description of the process that was followed in this mapping.

#### **2. Compiling available information from current databases:**

A detailed list of operating CBOs in the geographical areas of the selected municipalities were requested from the Bureau of Associations at the Ministry of Social Development.

#### **3. Filtering:**

An initial filtering took place following the compilation of full lists to exclude the following types of CBOs:

- Charity organizations
- Tribal/family-based organizations and centers (Dawaween 3a'iliya).

#### **4. Recommendations:**

Later, Partners-Jordan and its local governance experts sought recommendations from municipalities and consultants with local expertise who have worked in these specific municipalities before, as well as main implementers or projects operating within these municipalities including but not limited to, CITIES (USAID funded project), Mercy Corps, and GIZ.

## Selection Criteria Tool and Ranking

Each of the CBOs in the three targeted municipalities were ranked based on a certain set of criteria through a scoring sheet; these criteria included:

<b>Financial Criteria</b>	<b>Marks</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the organization have a system to track its finances? Does it have a computer-based accounting system using commercially available accounting software?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the organization have activities which are funded from external financial sources?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the organization have a standard procurement manual that includes clear and comprehensive policies and procedures?</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there an existing standard effort reporting system?</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the organization have a written, comprehensive Finance Manual?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<b>Past Experiences</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the main projects that CBO have implemented effective?</li> </ul>	<b>15</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the CBO have any working experience with NGOs?</li> </ul>	<b>15</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the CBO have any relevant experience in developing inclusive and collaborative approaches to local governance processes, collaborative social accountability processes?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<b>Staff and Capacity</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does CBO staff have any experience in Internet usage (Email exchange and correspondence)?</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the CBO have a filing system?</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the CBO have any experience in dealing with Syrian Refugees?</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
<b>Project Evaluator Remarks</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there any major finding/problems during previous projects implementation?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there any finding related to financial problems in the CBO?</li> </ul>	

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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does the CBO succeed in implementing sustainable projects?</li></ul> |  |
|--|--|

The mapping process was able to identify the following number of CBOs in each of the municipalities (this information can be found in Annex 2):

- Zarqa: 35 CBOs
  - Dhlail: 34 CBOs
  - Sabiha and Dafiana: 26 CBOs
5. Later the project team gathered contact information and finalized the list of organizations that will be invited to the Context Analysis validation meeting. During this meeting, project team also was seeking more recommendations on potential CBOs to take part in the project.
  6. A list of selected CBOs was finalized to be chosen for invitations to attend the focus groups discussions and trainings.

#### Context Analysis Validation Workshop:

This activity aimed to set the initial actions that will inform later activities and will lay the ground for a better understanding of project objectives by several stakeholders and partners. A first introductory workshop has been conducted aimed to validate the context analysis conclusions. The workshop was attended by representatives from the municipal councils, municipal staffers (LDUs) and representatives from the CBOs each of the selected municipalities, in specific the workshop aimed to:

- Introduce partners to project goals, activities and expected outcomes.
- Identify existing gaps for effectively applying a human rights-based approach to collaborative social accountability
- Identifying existing spaces for collaboration to promote social inclusion and prevent/address conflicts as well as spaces for collaboration on monitoring public services.

During the workshop a set of structured questions and discussions were addressed with attendees and were orbiting around the following themes: service provided by municipalities, their quality and coverage, community development role of municipalities, relationship between municipality and local communities, main issues and conflicts in communities and how municipalities are responding to these challenges especially in issues related to social cohesion, social accountability and monitoring of

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services means and methods, and finally if these methods are able to address aspects of human rights and good governance practices.

### ***Gaps Identified***

The workshop was able to identify the following gaps:

- Mistrust between the civil society and services providers (Municipality) due to lack of coordination, misguided interventions and lack of conflict sensitivity
- Absence of public spaces to interact, to meet and to build a sense of community
- Public perception about the negative impact of Syrians stems further alienation and exclusion of Syrians
- Perceived and actual insecurity (group and Individuals) through mistrust, fear and hopelessness because of economic instability (sense of resignation, mistrust in the State, no perspective)
- Absence of social accountability and empowerment approach of civil society as an important actor for development

The opportunities that can be built on going further are listed below:

- 1- Vocational trainings provided by NGOs for host communities
- 2- Interventions related to government and changing negative perspectives
- 3- Increasing economic small projects for growing entrepreneurships
- 4- International support (financial, material) and investments in public services
- 5- Through NGOs youth are getting experience working with communities; Zarqa and Dhail in particular have promising models for including youth in their work with communities
- 6- There are plans to develop Mafraq into an industries investment attraction zone by the mayor
- 7- Passionate CBOs bringing/seeking innovation
- 8- Some Mayors support efforts to coordinate with CBOs
- 9- Shadow councils in schools that are observing the heads of the councils, representing the students and also the communities
- 10- Community Centers and Youth centers/clubs are hubs for community work
- 11- Decentralization laws give more autonomy and capabilities to the municipalities
- 12- Open communication channels between civil society and the municipalities
- 13- LDUs role and coordination with CBOs

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## **Existing spaces for collaboration & promotion of social cohesion to prevent/address conflict**

- 1- Very strong connections and solidarity within tribes
- 2- Tribal law as a coherent system with respected rules (mediation of conflicts through tribal authorities prove successful)
- 3- Existence of projects/programs in building capacities in schools and in other hubs (youth centers, CBOs)
- 4- Due to the proximity to the Syrian border, Jordanians physically see the war and sympathize with Syrians (positive stereotypes), trading means and commercial exchange possibilities
- 5- Media influencers have lobby power with authorities/parliamentarians
- 6- High culture of volunteerism and youth initiatives
- 7- Existing Mayors support efforts to coordinate with civil society.

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## **Activity 3: Piloting specific social accountability measures in three target municipalities in partnership with local CBO/CSOs**

### **Survey on Municipality Services Implemented**

A survey of social accountability was administered to attendees of Social Accountability workshops in order to assess their evaluation of the performance of municipalities. The results of the survey informed the development of the tools created as well as subsequent project activities as well as the findings and recommendations of the project. The report on the survey can be found in Annex 7.

The following summarizes the findings from the survey on “Strengthening Social Accountability at the Municipal Level.”

#### **A. Findings from the survey**

1. The survey reflects 65 responses. The gender distribution was split evenly 50-50. It was noted that 13 participants were between the ages of 18-30, 24 between 31-45, 14 between 46-60, and 1 exceeding the age of 60. When asked “which category best describes you?”, 21 participants identified as community leaders/civil society representatives. This was the most common identification. 15 identified as public servants, 5 as citizens or elected officials respectively, 3 as academics, and 2 from outside of Jordan.

#### ***Ratings on municipality performance***

Most respondents initially expressed positive views of their municipality’s performance. As the first question asked on the survey, 74% of responses rated performance either “Good” or “Very Good”. Only 3.9% of respondents answered that the municipality’s performance was “Very Poor”. However, this point should be disputed when considering the specific ratings for municipal duties. Out of 10 listed areas of activity, only 3 times did positive ratings outweigh negative. Local municipalities scored positively on their capacity to communicate information with citizens, support citizen participation in monitoring/evaluating public services, and handle complaints. Yet, the municipality received “Poor” or “Very Poor” marks on the following seven initiatives:

- i. Educating citizens about civic rights and responsibilities
- ii. Citizen-state dialogue
- iii. Financial transparency (publicly disclosing information about budgets and expenditures)
- iv. Supporting citizen participation in processes of planning
- v. Supporting citizen participation in processes of budgeting
- vi. Municipality responsiveness and accountability to citizens
- vii. Supporting citizen participation in oversight/anti-corruption measures

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Per these seven areas, an average of 35 participants indicated that local municipal functions were executed poorly or worse. This figure consists of over half (54%) of the total participant base, challenging the initial evaluation where 74% of surveys rated local municipality performance positively.

Survey participants most frequently rated 14 of the 17 factors influencing social accountability as “Limited”:

- viii. Awareness of citizen rights (among the general public)
- ix. Ability of citizens to access public information
- x. Ability of citizens to publicly voice their opinions and concerns
- xi. Ability of citizens to influence public decision-making
- xii. Ability of citizens to hold municipality accountable
- xiii. Role of independent media in promoting democracy and accountability  
Operational capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs)
- xiv. Internal democratic governance of CSOs
- xv. Democratic governance of local municipality
- xvi. Administrative capacity of local municipality
- xvii. Financial management capacity of local municipality
- xviii. Willingness of local municipality authorities and service providers to listen/respond/account to citizens
- xix. Existence of spaces and mechanisms for citizen-state interaction
- xx. Availability of funding/support for social accountability practices

The remaining 3 of 17 were most commonly deemed “OK”:

- xxi. Ability of women to participate in public life
- xxii. Ability of youth to participate in public life
- xxiii. Existence of an enabling legal and regulatory framework

Accordingly, “Very-strong” or “Non-existent” encountered the lowest frequency. While no factor received a majority “Very-strong” grade, the ability of women and youth to participate in public life was considered important. 14 respondents mentioned that women’s participation was a “Very-strong” influencer. Likewise, 21 respondents wrote that youth participation was equally significant. This likely is connected to concerns about underrepresentation and a lacking bridge between societal goals and the actual endeavors of the municipality, largely viewed as futile, weak, and subject to corruption

Survey responses identifying constraints to social accountability varied. This being said, the following three constraints were generally understood as a foremost impediment:

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- xxiv. Public sector corruption (Over 50% (54.2%) of surveys specify public sector corruption as a constraint.)
  - xxv. Weak or tense relations between municipality and civil society (32.2% of participants stated that weak or tense relations between municipality and civil society is especially problematic)
  - xxvi. Weak municipal capacity (30.5% who mentioned that weak municipal capacity is concerning.)

### ***Principles of social accountability***

The survey inquired to what extent respondents personally agree with principles of social accountability. The principles were as follows:

- b. Good governance cannot be achieved without the active involvement of citizens
- c. It is the obligation of municipality authorities to answer to and account to citizens
- d. Citizens have the right to be informed about public finances
- e. Municipality authorities should provide public services in a transparent and objective manner to citizens

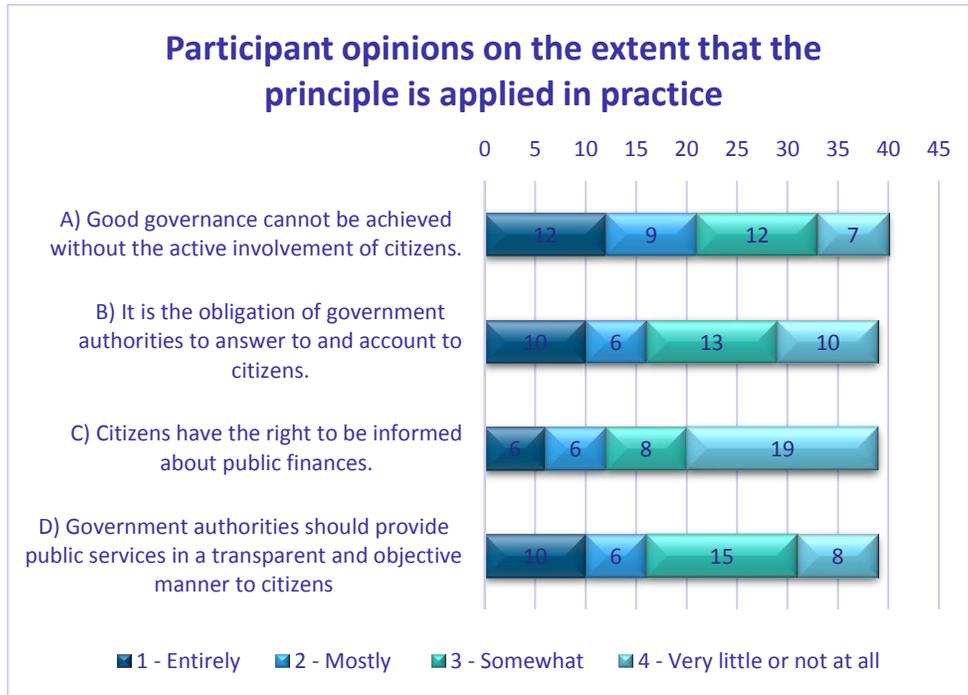
Participants personally selected “Entirely” agree with all four of the listed principles ranging from 61.5% (Principle A) to 74.5% (Principle D). Principle B and C received “Entirely Agree” at 63.5% and 65.4% respectively. Surveys also demonstrate that participants believe that the public at large entirely agrees with these principles ranging from 51.2% (Principle A) to 69.4% (Principle D). 61.5% of participants noted that the public at large “Entirely Agrees” with Principle B, while 60% believe this to be true for Principle C.

Graph 6 – To what extent do participants personally agree with the principles?



According to participant responses, there is a discrepancy between how local municipality authorities embrace these principles and how they are applied in practice. Participants signaled general uniformity in their opinion of whether local municipality authorities agree with the listed principles. Each principle received “Mostly Agree” as the dominant designation. Nonetheless, the surveys demonstrate a clear dissatisfaction with implementation with the exception of Principle 1. 52.5% of surveys expressed that they agreed that Principle A has been put into practice; 47.5% disagreed with this statement.

Graph 9 – To what extend is this principle currently applied in practice?



The survey data reveals an important divergence between what community members want/value, and what the local municipality has accomplished. As previously stated, when prompted with a broad inquiry about the performance of local municipalities, three-quarters of the survey takers responded positively. However, when asked about specific performances, their general dissatisfaction was salient. Participants consistently rated municipal performance poorly while indicating that they highly value increased civilian involvement in public affairs. Though they noted that information is generally shared with citizens, they are displeased with the infrequency of dialogue and financial transparency. This is irrespective of whether the municipality agrees with the four principles, to which participants most ascribed “Mostly agree” to two of the four. Yet, this notion contradicts the data from Principle A where 30% (12) of participants noted that citizens are involved in governance.

Regardless of prior municipal successes or failures, municipalities must keep pursuing new ways to engage citizens. To mitigate discontent from municipal corruption and inefficacy, the continued incorporation of civil society in public discourse will elevate the capacities of the municipality and instill a sense of ownership among its local population

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### ***Focus groups discussions:***

A focus group discussion (**FGD**) is a programmatic method used to bring together stakeholders from similar backgrounds or experiences to **discuss a specific topic of interest**. The theme of the focus groups were the municipality's role and opinions on its performance; the presence and/or need for grievance mechanisms and complaints mechanisms in the municipality; social problems in the community; the need, level of understanding, and potential for using a human-rights based approach to municipality work. FGD objectives therefore focused on introducing key project partners, the program background, and defining collaborative social accountability in the MSSRP framework. Additional objectives were to identify areas for social accountability and to locate existing spaces for promoting social inclusion. Moreover, the FGD aimed to identify spaces to prevent/address conflicts and monitor public services.

Partners-Jordan took steps to ensure a balanced representation including: gender balance, refugees' inclusion, youth inclusion, and marginalized communities. Previously, PJ has made multiple visits to the municipalities' and specifically met with LDU's and staff; PJ also made visits to CBO's in each of the targeted municipalities as a tool for stakeholders mapping in each community, as well as to identify the CBOs that are active and most aware of community needs.

PJ strategically planned the attendees of each focus group:

1. LDU's, their staff, and CBO's
2. Municipal council and community leaders
3. Syrians and other marginalized groups

These groups were structured as a recognition of the power dynamics at hand which, if not planned well, could influence what is expressed during the focus groups. For example, the municipal council needed to be in its own focus group as the council is large, and the members have a sense of ownership and leadership over the municipality and would have overtaken the conversation and other groups would have been influenced to speak less or not at all. Similarly, Syrians and other marginalized groups should be in their own group for the same power dynamic reasons; often there

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is a lack of trust between the different groups.

Questions that informed the FGD's trajectories are as followed:

1. What are the services provided by the municipality in your neighborhood?
2. Of the services provided, what works well and what isn't working well?
3. Do you think the services that aren't working well cause social problems? Are there some services that work well for some people, and don't work well for other people?
4. Are there any other roles the municipality plays in your community?
5. What does the relationship between you and the municipality look like?
6. How should the relationship between you and the municipality look like in your opinion?
7. What problems do you see in your community?
8. How do you respond to the different conflicts you face in your community?
9. What are the spaces for collaboration between you and the municipality on monitoring public services?
10. Has there ever been a collaboration between the community and municipality and CBO's to solve grievances or problems? Can you tell us about it? What worked, and what did not work? Was the communication fair between all parties? How was the problem solved?
11. How can we improve dialogue and inclusiveness at local and national forums? (Keeping in mind social inclusion, specifically Syrians and other marginalized groups)
12. Is there a need for Grievances management at the municipality level, if so, then by who? Under which conditions?
13. Have you used community scorecards before?
14. Are laws, policies and interventions in Jordan consistent with international human rights norms and standards?
15. Are there mechanisms in place to ensure affected communities can be involved in the drafting of policies concerning them?
16. How is participation of women being ensured?
17. How is participation of marginalized groups being ensure? E.g: Syrians?
18. How are marginalized groups recognized?
19. How are religious, cultural leaders, and CSOs, being included in the situation assessment and analysis?

Targeting and inclusive recruitment strategies were crucial to the FGD's successful results. PJ took concerted steps to ensure that participants represented a diverse range of identities and interests. This included: gender diversity, refugees, youth, and other marginalized communities. PJ also strategically planned each focus group so that LDU's and their staff, CBO's, Municipal councils, and community leaders were present. The FGDs were then guided by a moderator (or group facilitator) who introduced topics for discussion and helped the group to participate in a lively and natural

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discussion. The project team conducted three FGDs in each of the three selected municipalities, Zarqa, Sabha-Dafianah, and Dhlail broken down into the following groups:

- Municipal staff and CSO's group discussions
- Municipal council, leadership and community leaders
- Syrians, women, youth

### *Municipalities, organizational issues and decentralization*

It has been shown during the focus groups discussions that there is a great level of ambiguity around the roles of both municipal councils and the governorates council, more particularly at the larger municipalities level, like in Greater Zarqa Municipality. The roles of each council have been discussed over and over during discussions, since many municipal council members and staffers thought that the governorates council are taking a greater role at large projects that can attract investments and generate jobs, which might be a contradicting with the roles of municipalities at their geographical responsibilities. It has been clear that there is a consensus among attendees that the role of municipalities as public entities is compromised through the roles of national institutions within that municipality's vicinities. Their financial independence is also a bit controlled by the regulations and bylaws that govern their expenditures through MoMA. Some of the municipal councils' members have stated that their role needs to be further empowered and that mayors should delegate some of their authorities to the municipal council members, in addition to their role in the municipal council meetings. For example, the local council often cannot make certain rudimentary decisions sometimes related to daily maintenance issues without the approval of the mayor, which contributes to inefficiency.

### *Municipal services:*

Many of the attendees, especially municipal staffers and council members, stated that the main challenges facing the municipal services provision is the lack of proper financial allocations to the drained infrastructure like sewage services, streets pavements and maintenance, lighting, waste collection and regulating markets. This can be also affected by the low rates of collection when it comes to financial fees and penalties.

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Attendees from local communities, CBOs, municipal staffers and council members have stated that great waves of refugees who fled to their localities have created massive pressure on the already strained services and levels of these services.

Attendees have shown an agreement that the current roles of municipalities are still limited to a few services that include waste collection services, infrastructure, commercial licenses and health control within markets. Attendees also shared some of their thoughts on why roles of municipalities are still at short in terms of quality and quantity, these reasons are listed below:

- lack of qualified staffers and cadres in areas of development processes, namely economic development at local level
- The local development experiences that were introduced to municipalities in 2009 were not effective<sup>i</sup>.
- Roles of municipalities in development process are controlled by mayors' personal intentions and electoral considerations, rather than being an institutional pattern.
- LDUs at municipalities lack dedicated financial allocations for their activities.
- Most municipalities lack proper staffers' job descriptions and that creates a misuse of human resources available at the municipality disposal and create a lot of overlapping in roles and functional tasks.
- Diminishing role of neighborhood committees and their limited ability to cooperate with municipal council to address their locality issues.

There was a strong orientation among participants from local communities that the role of municipalities in addressing cultural services is very much below expectations, and can be reflected in a lack of theaters, cultural centers, entertainment facilities and activities targeting youth.

#### *Grievances mechanisms and methods:*

Most municipalities lack an institutional way and methods for filling complaints and following up on them. Complaints are mainly solved through personal connections and nepotism.

Municipal staffers have stated that most citizens are not able to acknowledge the maintenance and operations that are done by the municipality at larger level and their satisfaction is governed only by their personal experience.

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The lack of transparency mechanisms that municipalities follow is a major contributor to mistrust between the municipality and citizens, more particularly when it comes to budgets, allocations and expenditures. The following is a list of current formal and informal channels used for gathering complaints and feedback:

- Radio stations receive complaints calls through their live broadcast shows on local radio stations, and have a high success of receiving a follow up team on these complaints.
- Facebook Pages
- Phone calls with relevant departments
- Filling paper complaints to be discussed during municipal council meetings
- Complaints boxes at the local councils
- Individual connections
- Public meetings and consultations are more abundant in smaller municipalities

#### *Role of Civil Society:*

Civil society representatives stated that there are many ways to work with municipalities in raising their adherence to transparency actions, particularly through using electronic platforms and methods. They also stated that they are working keenly to raise awareness among citizens about their duties and rights, as well as by promoting and anchoring values of positive citizenship and good governance.

#### *Human Rights-Based Approach in municipal work:*

Attendees has stated that the current existing mechanisms don't allocate proper attention to vulnerable groups and most responses are achieved through personal connections and nepotism. The approach of considering the needs of vulnerable groups and communities started to get more importance since the crisis of Syrian refugees.

There is almost an absolute absence of platforms to address women's issues in municipalities; some of them have women committees but they are not active.

#### *Syrian Refugees and Municipal work:*

In the FGDs that were dedicated to Syrian refugees, it was apparent that there is a lack of proper understanding among them regarding municipalities' roles in their localities. Many of them showed that they have very limited interaction with the municipal units and departments, and these

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interactions are limited to licensing of businesses as well as minor issues related to other services like roads maintenance and lighting. Some of them stated that they are a bit intimidated in dealing with governmental authorities. They also felt that there could be more potential spaces for interaction between them as vulnerable groups and municipalities to more carefully address their needs and challenges, and that can be facilitated through CBOs or NGOs.

Syrian refugees in smaller scale municipalities felt that their needs are better addressed than what Syrian refugees felt in larger municipalities like Zarqa. It has been also evident that Syrian refugees in smaller municipalities are more aware of the municipal responsibilities and roles, which can be attributed to the tribal nature of communities in smaller municipalities and what that implies in terms of the ability to address some disputes in a tribal manner. They also stated that the services are distributed more fairly than in larger municipalities, as well as their ability to approach the municipality with comfort and ease.

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## **Activity 4: Capacity building series for municipalities and local CBOs/CSOs**

In this activity, a series of trainings were implemented with 26 municipalities participating in MSSRP's interventions as well as CBOs/CSOs from these municipalities involved directly with social accountability mechanisms or have worked closely on local governance and service delivery [monitoring](#). Three municipalities were selected by the MSSRP and project partners to pilot collaborative social accountability activities: Dhlail, Zarqa, and Sabha-Dafianah. These three selected municipalities received a 2-day training with the additional implementation of the community scorecards tool.

These training sessions contributed to achieve the below specific objectives:

- (a) identifying existing spaces for collaboration to promote social inclusion through collaborative social accountability and Human Rights Based Approach;
- (b) building the capacities of participating municipalities and CSO/CBO based there on collaborative social accountability and specifically on Community scorecards and public consultations;
- (c) assessing collaborative social accountability capacities and gaps at the local level in the targeted municipalities, including capacities of civil society, public sector and international cooperation, as well as supporting the development of projects proposals of the three targeted municipalities.

*A complete report on the trainings implemented can be found in the Annex 2.*

### ***Training Workshops Design:***

The overall objective of the trainings is to provide knowledge and skills on Social Accountability tools, Community Score Cards (CSC), Conflict Management, Grievance Mechanisms and Public Consultations to local stakeholders. The project supports the selected municipalities of Dhlail, Zarqa and Sabha-Dafianah to develop inclusive and collaborative approaches to local governance processes. This was conducted through a workshop that was interactive and designed using the KSA approach (Knowledge, Skills, Attitude), in order to address the needs of different participants.

The methodology used provided more detailed knowledge about a variety of social accountability tools. Facilitators tried to present interesting cases of participatory planning and budgeting, participatory expenditure tracking, and community-based performance monitoring tools such as community scorecards.

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The training style adopted an interactive approach; covering the topics thoroughly and relaying the information based on participant's experiences and reality to ensure they relate and are actively engaged in the sessions. The workshops provided an effective platform to engage civil society and municipality workers on social accountability issues. It also enabled them to share experiences as well as acquired skills that have different methods and tools including:

- Brainstorming
- Interactive discussions amongst the group
- Involving participants in group work
- Allowing for constructive engagement and dialogue between rights-holders (citizens and civil society) and duty-bearers (municipal leadership).

The modules that were given throughout the two days [for the three targeted municipalities \(Zarqa, Dlayel and Sabha\)](#) included:

**A- Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)**

This module outlined different human rights and how they can be integrated into the operations and planning of the municipality, and much of the material was adapted from a presentation the NTF had previously offered on HRBA. The design of the training module aimed to bring human rights and collaborative social accountability together, in order to enhance social cohesion in the communities and build trust in municipalities and in civil society. The training material was designed to provide participants with a foundation and theoretical understanding of human rights, the human rights-based approach, and how municipalities and civil society can understand the practical application of HRBA in the work they do. The exercises in the module allowed participants to read and engage with the articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The module was deliberately placed as the first module in the training in order to set the tone that HRBA values apply to all of the subsequent training modules that participants were to receive; and trainers also emphasized this point during their sessions and exercises, for example the exercises in the SA module and the CSC module. Finally, the module sought to contribute to “process legitimacy” which a legitimacy that is derived from a perception of fairness in the way policies and rules are designed and implemented. This concept was reinforced as a benefit for the municipality to integrate the collaborative SA approach. The module concluded by presenting several ways that municipalities can mainstream HRBA in their work. The participants discussed and

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brainstormed on various social accountability tools and mechanisms and then carried out a group exercise which was designed to put the social accountability principles into practice with emphasis on the findings of the focus groups.

### **B- Social Accountability**

This module was designed to promote the use of social accountability methods and tools in order to raise the level of service delivery in municipalities and increase the social cohesion amongst society. The workshop provided an ideal forum for engaging civil society and municipality workers on social accountability issues.

### **C- Grievance Mechanisms and Conflict Management**

Trainings aimed towards improving participant proficiency in the following areas: conflict management, threats to cohesion in their communities, and the important components of effective dialogue facilitation. They also discussed how to apply grievances mechanisms in order to provide a transparent framework to deal with individual issues and bureaucratic complaints.

Trainings have highlighted that grievance procedures work only if they present no or low barriers to be accessed by locals, it also aimed to highlight that accessibility and feasibility of grievance mechanisms are imperative.

### **D- Community Scorecards**

This module introduced a tool that will enable participants to assess their individual needs with the use of community scorecard. It should be noted that throughout the two-day trainings, the participants were able to fill in a scorecard as an exercise. Participants needed further elaboration to sufficiently understand the tool, how it works, the different steps and practical examples.

Below are the main parts of the training session on community scorecards:

- 1- Trainings started with explaining the community scorecards concept, importance and qualities that are very suitable for assessing the level of services provided by municipalities, then participants have viewed a video about the phases of designing and introducing the tool for implementation.

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- 2- Main parts of the session have been concerned with anchoring knowledge among attendees for the need to assign only one kind of services to be addressed through a community scorecard exercise.
  - 3- Later, the trainings concentrated on developing quantified criteria for evaluating these services as per the nature of that service, its resources and inputs.
  - 4- The participants then were asked to split into two groups, one of them represent service providers (municipalities and other governmental entities) the other one was composed of CBOs representatives and activists or local community in general. Each of the groups was asked to score their evaluation following a certain set of criteria (agreed upon in the previous step) on a certain scale.
  - 5- The two groups gather in a plenary that has allowed each of the groups to present their group work results and then to be discussed by all attendees.
  - 6- Finally, the two groups are asked to develop an action plan that addresses opportunities and actions to be implemented by several stakeholders in response to the plenary discussions. The plans have defined short term actions, their suggested activities, responsible stakeholders and time frames.

### **Recommendations and findings from the trainings implemented:**

- 1- In Dhlail and Sabha-Dafianah, civil society highlighted the need for a non-partial invitation mechanism and stressed that it cannot be selective in inviting people to public meetings. (Public Participation)
- 2- There was a high interest in the smart phone application *Baladiyati* or 'My Municipality' which provides greater accountability and community participation as a grievance mechanism, used by a couple of municipalities in northern Jordan and developed in cooperation with a USAID project; The participants wanted to seek opportunities of using it in their municipalities. (Grievance Mechanisms)
- 3- Participants expressed their interest in more participatory practices especially on the municipality side. The municipalities have requested help in development of participatory budgeting. They have later sent messages to Partners-Jordan to request the training and support. (Public Participation)

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- 4- The municipality of Dhlail is very interested in more transparency approaches but think that civil society needs enabling activities to raise the level of awareness. (Social Accountability)
  - 5- Sabha-Dafianah and Dhlail municipalities are favorable to considering a citizen version of a simplified budget to allow easy understanding of the budget by citizens. (Public Participation)
  - 6- Participants would like to see more social accountability practices but are concerned regarding the guarantee of impartial representation, about who will represent civil society. They want the selection process to be impartial, transparent, and up to civil society and not the municipality. (Public Participation)
  - 7- Many of the participants expressed that they were not aware of the 89 services offered and none of them had visited the municipality website. Based on this, it is recommended that municipalities increase the public's awareness of the services they need to offer. Some municipalities have posted large signs at the entrance of the municipality hall, listing the services they are obligated to offer. It's also recommended for the municipality to increase visibility of its website. (Social Accountability)
  - 8- In Irbid, civil society organizations felt that they should act as the main point of contact between the municipality and the local community. (Public Participation)
  - 9- Capacity building is needed around social accountability implementation mechanisms through a more extensive training on social accountability techniques, methodologies and tools. (Social Accountability)
  - 10- A representative from a Community Based Organization shared that there are many unclear policies that citizens aren't aware of, and due to this, they can't properly undertake social accountability. For example, the majority of CBOs cannot understand the difference between budgets and plans. Participants in Dhlail overwhelmingly agreed that brochures or summaries of the programs and reports, plans, and budgets from the municipalities would be highly beneficial. One woman explained that the citizens have a right to know and share priorities that the budget should address. (Social Accountability)
  - 11- One of the participants presented a recommendation around the need for capacity building for community members in terms of social accountability which would enable citizens to know how to be accountable and how to hold government accountable. The fact that civil society faces difficulties in being able to hold the government accountable, and that sometimes civil society

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in Jordan is too influenced by government was also raised by participants as a challenge. (Social Accountability)

12- There is a dire need for accountability and as a potential solution, participants proposed that holding a monthly meeting could be a good starting point in this direction. (Public Participation)

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### The 3 targeted Municipalities Proposals:

Partners-Jordan mentored the three selected municipalities to improve their ability to develop project proposals which integrate HRBA and Social Accountability principles. The Social Accountability experts and PJ team worked with the heads of LDU's to provide toolkits and develop their own project proposals that ensure the integration of HRBA, the piloted Community Scorecards mechanism, and other Collaborative Social Accountability concepts. In order to integrate best practices into project proposals, the following steps should be taken:

1. The project should respond to requests made by citizens through public consultations that were conducted (if the public consultations were already conducted on the ground) and mention this in these proposals.
2. The project should apply the concept of HRBA and include it in these proposals through the following:
  - a. Achieve inclusiveness and sustainability.
  - b. Ensure non-marginalization and service of *all* segments of society.
  - c. Employ qualified personnel and encourage the participation of vulnerable groups, including women, youth, disabled persons...
  - d. Achieve permanent and temporary employment opportunities for Syrians.
  - e. Provide social and economic services.
3. The project should partner with civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector by forming community committees. These committees should be overseen collaboratively by municipalities and the local community during the initial project implementation phases and post finalization.
4. The project should be mindful of gender and promote initiatives that will benefit men and women inclusively along social, economic, and cultural lines.
5. If the community scorecards are applied, this should be included in the proposal. Early results in the Zarqa municipality have demonstrated that using scorecards helped identify the needs of citizens and incorporate them into projects.
6. The project should provide solutions to existing challenges that the municipality faces and should respond to the needs of civil society using innovative tools and methods such as encouraging self-entrepreneurship.

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7. The project should improve the service delivery and planning mechanisms to reflect HRBA and SA best practices.
  8. The project should promote economic development at a local level.
  9. The project proposal should clarify how the project will use local resources and reduce the cost of service delivery.
    - a. The proposal should also specify how the project capitalizes on the comparative advantage of each municipality and how this investment is employed in these projects.
  10. The project proposal should explicitly identify how it promotes social cohesion.

### **CBO's Implementing Social Accountability Activities Through Small Subgrants**

In Activity 2, Partners-Jordan conducted a simplified stakeholder mapping of CBO's in each municipality to determine which organizations were the best fit to participate in the pilot project activities. Partners-Jordan developed and implemented a filtering process, context validation workshop, a series of focus group discussions, and an evaluation based on a developed selection criterion. Through this process the following three CBO's were selected as focal points for the pilot project:

- Zarqa Municipality: NAYA
- Dhlail Municipality: Dhlail Volunteers
- Sabha-Dafianah: The Association of Dafianah

Focal points served as key points of contact for ensuring deep outreach into the community to ensure inclusive representation of the community. CBOs could also potentially qualify for subgrants to allow them to implement activities which will support establishing social accountability mechanisms grounded in HRBA and the core concepts offered during the trainings given. Two of the CBOs, NAYA and Dhlail Volunteers, showed a strong capacity and qualified for the subgrants. However, the CBO in Sabha-Dafianah did not qualify for the subgrants. Partners-Jordan attributes this to the smaller staff size and capacity of this CBO in comparison to the other two CBOs. This CBO mainly functions as a charitable organization and has not previously received foreign funds from a donor. Partners-Jordan offered support and mentoring to the CBO but ultimately subgrants could not be implemented for this CBO.

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For the remaining two CBOs, below is a summary of the social accountability mechanisms implemented, which integrated HRBA into their activities. Partners-Jordan mentored the CBO's and offered guidance in planning the project scope and target, created technical and financial guidelines to support successful activity implementation, observed several activities, and offered other support as needed.

***NAYA Zarqa CBO Activity Summary:***

The "Access to All" project implemented by the CBO NAYA located in Zarqa Municipality targeted people with disabilities, women, Syrian refugees, and youth in the Zarqa governorate led by NAYA, the Zarqa governorate, and Partners-Jordan. It spanned from February 2nd, 2019 until February 20th, 2019. The total value of the project was 2,000 Jordanian Dinar (1,400 JD from Partners-Jordan, 600JD in-kind from NAYA). The project had 25 direct participants and 100 indirect participants. Indirect members included non-profit organizations, local authorities, municipal and local councils, youth centers, social groups, and women.

The general goals of the project were to improve channels of communication between the target groups and the Zarqa municipality by ensuring that public complaints are being correctly received by decision-makers. The specific goals were as follows:

1. Better integrate individuals with disabilities into society by providing services that suit their respective needs.
2. Raise awareness of 25 Jordanian and Syrian individuals between the ages of 18-50 on their civil rights and social responsibilities within the services provided by the Zarqa municipality.
3. Raise the group's proficiency high enough so they can serve as educators to their peers on the subject.
4. Raise awareness among municipal workers about citizens' rights and access to services.
5. The project saw the following activities take place in order to reach the established goals:
6. 2/5/19: A training with the Zarqa municipality on their ability to prepare and issue official approvals.

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7. 2/10/19: A workshop with 30 participants working to improve the integration of citizens into society by providing dynamic services that suit their needs. The training developed a field survey, focus group session, and needs identification form to work towards this goal.
  8. 2/11/19: Brought 25 individuals between the ages of 18-50 into a citizen training workshop to boost their understanding of their rights and duties as citizens.
  9. 2/12/19: Organized a group of parents to develop and eventually publish information on the citizens' rights and offered services that serve public needs.
  10. 2/14/19: Meeting between decision makers in the Zarqa municipality and members of the Council of Decentralization in the province. The goal of this project was to facilitate the collaborative transfer of knowledge and duties from one entity to another.
  11. 2/17/19: Training for the 25 individuals on issues of public accountability, transparency, integrity, and quality control.
  12. 2/18/19-2/20/19: This activity featured all project participants and focused on post-project evaluation questionnaires and accumulating information for the final report.

Complicating the administration of these activities, the project encountered several **challenges**. The first of these obstacles was maintaining total participation from target groups. It was identified that hesitant participants might hinder the ongoing success of the project. To mitigate this difficulty, the project's leaders heightened publicity and public awareness of the project so as to improve participant turnout. A second difficulty was the degree to which a lack of continuity would inhibit the project's development. Identifying that instability would reduce the positive impact and sustained interest in the project, the project's directors worked to build partnerships with relevant institutions that are actively working on similar projects. The project also sought additional funding to ensure the sustainability of the project and its scope. A third challenge pertained to infrastructural issues and their potential to obstruct activities. To this challenge, project leaders identified training sites that allowed participants to move freely and comfortably.

To conduct project evaluations, the program's leaders drafted evaluative mechanisms with respect to the following three objectives:

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1. To integrate individuals with disabilities into society by providing services that suit their respective needs: To gauge the success of this objective, the project developed an online Q&A survey and called for direct site visits to study how effective efforts were to strengthen disabled persons' knowledge of their rights and access to public services.
  2. To raise awareness of 25 Jordanian and Syrian individuals between the ages of 18-50 on their civil rights and social duties within the services provided by the Zarqa municipality: Successful implementation of this objective was and continues to be contingent on participants' own proficiency with public information. Leaders will implement applied sessions and tests to ensure that acquired knowledge was sustainable and pertinent.
  3. To raise the group's proficiency high enough so they can serve as educators to their peers on the subject: Evaluating the completion of this objective will concentrate on the focus group's gained skills and its impact on their subsequent navigation of public affairs. This evaluation will analyze the participants' actions according to the community development standards and criteria.

***Dhlail Volunteers CBO Activity Summary:***

The "Your Right to Know" project implemented by Dhlail Volunteers, a CBO in Dhlail municipality, spanned from February 26th, 2019 to March 23rd, 2019. Focusing on social accountability, the project worked towards merging the capacities of the Al-Dhlail Volunteer Foundation and the Al-Dhlail municipality to create an accountability mechanism for the municipality's services and administration. Furthermore, the two bodies rose public awareness of the working mechanism in addition to the feasibility of social accountability. The project primarily focused on youth and young adults in the Al-Dhlail region and saw a total of 40 participants (20 men, 20 women). As such, the project outlined three specific goals:

1. To empower young men and women with knowledge on social accountability, human rights-based approach, and challenges that marginalized populations face.
2. To activate youth in the social accountability process in order to increase and refine municipal services.

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3. To involve youth in the decision-making process and providing them a sense of ownership over community affairs.

This project was predicated on three theories of social change that operate on an “if we do...then...it will change because...” module. The first theory engages the notion that if young people are allowed to know, and are acquainted with their rights, they will be able and better prepared to effectuate them. The second theory is that if young people can work to achieve results through social accountability, healthy public behavior and community accountability will ensue. The third theory dictates that wrongful and irresponsible municipal practices are greatly reduced when there exists an approachable, sound communication channel between the municipality and the public that it serves.

Noting that the project had an educational focus, it outlined three general messages that it sought to convey. These messages were that (1) social accountability is a right of citizens; (2) accountability can improve the services that municipalities provide; (3) knowing one’s rights is the first step in bringing them to realization.

Accordingly, the project was broken down into a sequence of nine steps. They are as follows:

1. A pre-initiative meeting with the Al-Dhlail Municipality Council, the Zarqa Governorate Council, and local community activists to inform them of the initiative. This step forged early alliances between participating civil society actors.
2. Inviting the local community, civil society organizations, and decision-makers to a meeting on the “Your Right to Know” initiative in the Al-Dhlail Municipality Hall.
3. Making a short film with the Al-Dhlail municipality about the existing approach to human rights and social accountability. The film was produced by the Al-Dhlail Film Club and tells the stories of marginalized groups in the community. A link to the film is provided here: [https://www.facebook.com/plugins/video.php?href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FH8akTe3raf%2Fvideos%2F349639302559381%2F&show\\_text=0&width=560](https://www.facebook.com/plugins/video.php?href=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FH8akTe3raf%2Fvideos%2F349639302559381%2F&show_text=0&width=560)
4. Developing a short 15-minute play/presentation on the existing approach to human rights at the Al-Dhlail municipality stage.
5. Signing a memorandum of understanding between the Al-Dhlail municipality and the Al-Dhlail Volunteer Foundation. The memorandum established a Facebook page to be managed by the Al-Dhlail Volunteer foundation in coordination with the municipality

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[https://www.facebook.com/Ha8akTe3raf/?modal=admin\\_todo\\_tour&notif\\_t=page\\_invite&ref=notif](https://www.facebook.com/Ha8akTe3raf/?modal=admin_todo_tour&notif_t=page_invite&ref=notif)

6. Receiving an array of public complaints but especially those pertaining to the municipal council.
7. Receiving suggestions from the local community.
8. Evaluating the municipal council's performance with monthly assessments. The assessments focus on notes that citizens offer and the council's subsequent response.
9. A sequence of videos about the problems that existed in the municipality and how they were solved.

The following is a timeline for the events that ensued:

1. 2/26/19-3/3/19: Drafting the script for the theater performance
2. 2/26/19-3/12/19: Filming videos to gain support for the initiative
3. 2/26/19-3/17/19: Shooting video for theater activity
4. 3/4/19-3/17/19: Training in the theater
5. 3/14/19-3/21/19: Designing brochures and invitations for the activity day
6. 3/23/19: Theater performance
7. 3/23/19: Viewing the video
8. 3/23/19: Signing Memorandum of Understanding between the Al-Dhlail Volunteers Foundation, the Municipal Council, and the Governorate Council
9. 3/23/19: Work started on Facebook page ("Your Right to Know")

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## **Activity 5: Roundtable workshop on collaborative social accountability and social inclusion**

Following the end of most project activities, Partners-Jordan organized a multi-stakeholder round table discussion on Monday February 11th, 2019. The discussion reflected on the preliminary outcomes and progress of the social accountability pilot project exploring the importance of a participatory and HRBA as a means to improve municipal services—specifically pertaining to social cohesion and dispute settlement. It also strived to develop a series of tools as a guide for future interventions. The meeting elucidated stakeholder perspectives, early results, and lessons learned from the project’s implementation.

One of the strengths of the round table event was its multi-stakeholder composition. The 34 participants represented an array of unique entities such as the World Bank, the Cities and Villages Development Bank (CVDB), NAYA, the Municipal Services and Social Resilience Project, Dhlail Municipality (MSSRP), Sabha-Dafianah Municipality, and Zarqa Municipality. The event also saw the attendance of community members and other project partners. Accordingly, the discussion incorporated an important balance of donors and local actors, bringing a diverse group of stakeholders into one room.

The event was divided into three major parts. This included:

1. An opening session with remarks from MSSRP, GPSA, and Partners-Jordan representatives. This was followed by a presentation of the project’s rationale and activities, then accompanied by project outcomes, findings and suggestions.
2. The second session allowed representatives from participating municipalities to present their reflections and lessons learned.
3. The third session designated time for an open discussion on future project activities as well as any other issues of social accountability in municipalities.

The roundtable discussion generated a multitude of findings. One of the focal points was the importance of the municipality working with local communities to strengthen operations and

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services. Initial reports from the project show that the Municipal Council and mayoral staff were prepared to handle these roles. However, one obstacle is the Ministry of Municipal Affairs' (MoMA) reported lack of political will to advance the role of municipalities in local development. There was a noted frustration among participants that MoMA will occasionally prevent the effectuation of municipal projects despite considerable work on the municipality's end. Thus, because the targeted municipalities operate at different capacities, members noted that practical tools to engage local communities must be dynamic, placing precedence on the urgency of cooperation between all levels of local government and its constituents.

For this reason, the discussion bore a multitude of recommendations. Members brainstormed ways to strengthen representation so as to ensure total transparency in governmental affairs. This would require increased investment in active local community institutions. Furthermore, members emphasized that improving inter-municipality communication would enhance the project as an educational experience for local communities—one of the most important factors for sustaining positive results. Moreover, inter-municipality communication would have added benefits on service efficiency. Participants identified that service redundancy and a general lack of specificity was concerning. Members therefore recommended that steps be taken to refine the legislation of bylaws and regulations that define the role of local councils and governing bodies. Assuring an enhanced coordination between service providers within the same geographical vicinity will curb consequences of program duplication.

Similarly, the discussion outlined the need for improved municipal autonomy especially with regards to private sector contracting, PPP's, attracting investments, and procuring goods and services. Participants theorized that improved autonomy and communication between service providers and municipal bodies would help clarify areas of pressing need. Lastly, the group articulated the importance of using the pilot project's results to inform the future social adjustment project. This is of particular importance when considering the municipalities' role in improving services for Syrian refugees. There was a shared opinion that municipalities must create an apparatus that is actively conscious of marginalized communities' difficulties in navigating

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government services. To this extent, municipalities must cater to all persons within their jurisdiction irrespective of an individual’s personal connections.

This discussion was part of a pilot project led by Partners-Jordan under the “the Indirect Effects of the Syrian Crisis Through Strengthening the Participatory Approach in Municipalities,” project. The project was supported and funded by the World Bank, the Global Partnership for Social Accountability, the Scandinavian Fund and in partnership with Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and the Cities and Villages Development Bank.



*A photograph of the LDU from Sabha-Dafiana speaking at the multi-stakeholder discussion*



*A photograph of the LDU from Zarqa speaking at the multi-stakeholder discussion*



*Event participants gather for a group photograph.*

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## Activity 6: Contribution to Knowledge and Learning

### Tools Developed

Throughout the implementation of this project several tools were developed based on the Project Development Objectives as a guide for the MSSRP and project partners in future activities. The following tools were developed, which are included in the Annexes:

- 1- CSO Capacity Assessment Tool
- 2- Grievance Mechanism Guidelines for Municipalities
- 3- HRBA Checklist
- 4- Step-by-Step guideline for conducting Community Scorecards (CSC)

### ***Messages to the World Bank and NTF: Overall Project Findings, Recommendations, and Lessons Learned:***

#### *Social Accountability and Grievances Mechanisms:*

##### Findings:

1. Social Accountability as a concept is not naturally integrated into the day-to-day activities of municipalities, especially at the first-grade municipality level. Smaller municipalities have more effective informal practices of SA due to their limited geography, tribal affiliations, and local commitments.
2. There were many good initiatives witnessed by the implementing team, but they aren't very structured. They are mainly based on personal initiatives or the political will of the mayor. For example, in the municipality of Juneid, the municipality receives complaints on their Facebook page related to service-provision aspects. However, there is no sustained momentum that can reflect their political will to respond to grievance mechanisms.
3. There is a need for structuring grievance mechanisms on an institutional level. Following institutionalization, an awareness campaign is needed for the community to be able to understand and use it, rather than sticking to their traditional mode of registering complaints (which is usually through acquaintances or through speaking directly with the mayor).
4. There are no legal statements that mandate or support SA practices. All initiatives implemented are based on personal initiatives or initiatives from international NGOs. Also, the success of

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aforementioned initiatives is largely dependent on the presence of political will among leadership.

5. All mayors had expressed political will as well as municipal administrations and municipal councils' members, they have tried to make a positive change in social issues to raise the level of service and raise the level of citizen satisfaction
6. It has been evident that there was some apprehension shown towards social accountability and there was a kind of interest in using social accountability to serve agendas, especially in the areas that have a tribal nature.
7. Second and Third grade municipalities have shown interest in improving the economic situation in their vicinities given that they are the main and official destinations for development, while first grade municipalities have wanted to invest in social accountability issues to raise the level of citizens' satisfaction.
8. Another supporting pillar for SA is the transparency of municipalities, which is absent in municipalities. There is little transparency in service provision, hiring, procurement, and expenditures. CBOs and local communities have little access to information, regardless of service provision. Some of the municipalities took some measures to grant access to information about their operations and budgets to citizens. However, only one municipality published its budget on the web, but it was briefly published and then withdrawn. On the other hand, most municipalities have shown interest in transparent bids, tenders and procurement processes.
9. Civil Society's role is not very apparent in promoting such SA values and practices.
10. Levels of public participation in the municipalities is high, especially within public meetings and general consultations. Unfortunately, the results of public consultations are not published. Additionally, the representation of the local community was not based on clear methods, specifically the way to invite the local community to public hearings.
11. Civic participation is apparent, there is a great effort, but it did not have a large and apparent participation of non-Jordanian residents. When the Syrians came to these meetings, we observed that their voices were low, as was the voice of women in several smaller municipalities and some young people.

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12. Based on the former finding, we conducted sessions for the Syrians on one side and the Jordanians on their own to see the difference between their presence with the rest of the citizens and their individual presence to understand how marginalized they were. Both during the trainings and during the community scorecards pilot, trainers and consultants emphasized and continually re-iterated the importance of amplifying the voices of marginalized groups, particularly Syrians. Language adding to this point was strategically integrated throughout the transfer of knowledge. Accordingly, while conducting the training activities participants then reflected these principles in their presentations and discussions.
  13. There was a great deal of interest in complaints and grievances mechanisms, especially within smaller municipalities. Smaller municipalities showed interest and urgent need to find procedures for functional complaints mechanisms. Most complaints are solved in a simple way or through direct personal communication with the mayor or municipal officials. The CBO Dhilail dedicated its activity to establishing a permanent mechanism for accountability managed by the municipality and the CBO as partners in the form of a Facebook page which the mayor will address complaints and the municipality's approach to solving them, as a way of upholding a HRBA.
  14. There were a set of common grievance tools mentioned in many municipalities, but many also stated that they are struggling with the follow-up procedures. 4 of 26 participating municipalities have a smart phone application and took 40% of the complaints through the application and 60% via Facebook, but the follow-up procedures were not good. There is a lack of investment in Complaints' Unit mechanisms and staff. One instance of digitizing grievance mechanisms is an application that was created called *Baladiyati*, which was funded through a previous USAID project.
  15. LDU staff members and other municipality staff members besides the Mayor do not always have the capacity or leverage to make decisions or implement change.
  16. The MSSRP showed interest in the training topics, implementation of the pilot, and the multi-stakeholder round-table to discuss project findings and lessons learned. Furthermore, the MSSRP expressed a high level of interest and engagement to scale-up the efforts launched by the pilot. MSSRP representatives favorably noted the positive reaction of municipalities and

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high level of engagement in the project objective and pilot activities, particularly the high level of interest in the community scorecards.

**Recommendations:**

- To overcome the fear of political will to work on social accountability partnerships in Jordan we recommend institutionalizing dialogue and partnership in order to overcome the challenges.
  - For example, this mechanism can serve to establish a municipal dialogue forum that can be initially attended voluntarily by municipalities interested in the subject(s). The forum would consist of sessions starting with panel discussions hosting experts and practitioners to present their ideas and recommendations to be followed by group discussions as reflections on the panel and composing position papers. It can be held on a quarterly basis and can be attended by mayors, municipal council members, municipal staffers and representatives of local communities as well as community-based organizations.
- Municipalities should work to publish and operate within the guidelines of a citizen budget which should be shared with public on the web.
- More investment is needed in building partnerships between CBOs and municipalities on SA; particularly due to the fact that CBOs are in many ways responsible for directly implementing aid programs for local refugees and host communities in need.
- Municipalities should be able to share all plans and information regarding residential, commercial and future planning online on its social media and/or digital platforms including official website to increase the citizen satisfaction level. Some examples include:
  - Complaints filing system
  - Buildings licensing fees calculation and payment
  - Commercial facilities licensing, renewal and payment
  - Financial penalties payment system, etc.
- Digitizing most of municipal electronic services based on what is practical, as implemented in Greater Amman Municipality. As of 2017, mideastmedia.org Times reports that internet penetration in the country had reached 80%. Noting that Jordan's internet penetration climbed 33% since 2013, there is a demonstrable and increasing need for digitization.

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- Municipalities should conduct dedicated meetings with marginalized groups, like refugees, women or youth as per the context to make sure that they are not intimidated in public meetings as well as recognizing the importance of publishing public meetings or consultations results.
  - More effort should be done to formalize clear mechanisms for grievance and making it electronic, especially follow-up procedures.
  - Concerning the current grievances mechanisms design, municipalities should assess their accessibility to communities from the following angles: physical locations of surrounding communities and access to transportation and roads, improving the availability of places and persons that are designated for receiving complaints, and increasing staffing capacity in order to put a human face on the community's relationship with the municipality.
  - Transparency tools are needed in order to be able to establish the grounds for implementing SA's tools effectively, for example:
    - Publishing municipal annual accounts and budgets online.
    - Publishing procurements procedures and orders online
    - Publishing bids procedures and winning bids qualifiers.
    - Publishing hiring procedures and hiring process outcomes.
    - Mapping allocations of budgets per area or region.
  - More work is needed to establish a legal framework that governs accountability and transparency practices among municipal staff and municipal councils. Current legislation does not reflect the importance of good governance practices regarding accountability and transparency.
  - Municipalities should work more to anchor their good governance practices that aim to raise the level of services and rationalize spending. Some of the recommended tools at the current phase to be piloted in municipalities are:
    - Municipal council should have a clear working plan that is publicly shared and have clear performance indicators.
    - Municipal Councils should develop a time plan to follow up on major issues.
    - More commitment to proactive disclosure of information and transparency as well as public participation.

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## ***Human rights-based approach (HRBA)***

### **Findings:**

- Many CBO representatives, municipality representatives, and municipal council representatives felt that HRBA is largely theoretical.
- Most of the municipalities had a practical perspective toward the HRBA approach as a tool rather than as a value system, because they felt that this approach will increase the level of citizens satisfaction, especially as it enhances the participation of marginalized groups.
- Trainers and project implementers felt there is a certain level of perception that HRBA is a Westernized style of thinking which affected their ability to work with the material and absorb it from their first interaction with the concept.
- HRBA was much more easily and programmatically perceived by representatives of CBOs due to their previous exposure to work with INGOs and development organizations, whereas municipalities have less exposure and experience working with these value-oriented approaches.
- It has been evident that role of civil society was great role at the beginning of using these concepts by taking responsibility to convince municipalities in applying these tools and methods in the planning and budgeting processes. More particularly, youth oriented CSOs or CBOs.
- The public in general has questioned the approach and accused the whole concept of human rights to be a Western agenda, which might be related to the way of presenting the concept and not relating the approach to values within the value system of Jordanian, Arab and Islamic cultures.
- HRBA has been welcomed by LDUs, but it seems that they believe that the practical application of HRBA is not feasible given their resources and the on the ground situation which prevents the municipality from having the mandate required to oversee the implementation of HRBA in all issues which concern citizens.
- Throughout the training implementation and exercises, Partners-Jordan emphasized the importance of inclusion of underrepresented groups including Syrians, people with disabilities, and other marginalized communities.

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### Recommendations:

- To apply Human Rights-Based Approach through an appropriate legislation (law, bylaw, regulations) following a more comprehensive piloting space, for at least one or two years in an independent initiative.
- The universal concept of HRBA can be better rolled out if linked to pillars within the value system of social values that stems from Islamic customs, traditions and respecting diversity is one of the most important elements of the promotion of municipalities wishing to apply this approach.
- LDUs must work in partnership with CSOs and CBOs who have respect, legitimacy, access and outreach to better apply HRBA in more participatory manner.
- CSCs should be applied at level of local councils especially in the large municipalities - at a small geographical level, which helps in addressing real challenges as well as providing smart solutions that do not require large resources.
- CBOs and CSOs should have a role in promoting and creating innovative low-cost solutions to convince citizens that on the results derived from the application of CSCs should be based on innovative solutions and low costs and do not necessarily require increased resources.
- There should be more extensive research on the existing policies that can lead to the integration of a new set of accountability tools, which must be carefully selected to comply with economic and social considerations. There might be also a set of different tools to be used for each grade of municipalities.
  - Following that and after taking into consideration demographic differences among different societies, within two to three years of experimental work in using these tools based on the initial design, there may be national legislation passed to incorporate these tools in a more legal framework at the national level.
- A more practical technical aspect is required to using the approach into planning, budgeting, and actual day-to-day activities of municipalities.
- There is a need to re-structure the theoretical framework that governs the understanding of the HRBA approach and training material in a way that reflects Arab heritage and towards a tradition of Islamic (moderate) thinking and understanding of Islam which welcomes diversity, inclusion, and acceptance and a communal-approach. This framework will be more

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programmatically able to touch on the Jordanian identity and will be easier to communicate to stakeholders.

- There is a need to develop material for members of the municipal council and municipal staff that is different from the material developed for CBOs. Material for municipal staff needs to be more practical and less theoretical. Through PJ activities, a tool was developed to be used and applied by the other municipalities under MSSRP that can be examined and modified.
- HRBA needs to be tied to any policy or legal framework that governs municipal work. Without a legal framework or some type of legal mandate, the chances of municipalities mainstreaming HRBA is very minimal.
- There is a need for legislation that actually states that there is room for flexibility, for addressing citizen needs, and for supporting rights-holders. This can be added as an addendum and support documentation can be provided to secure the buy-in and action from municipalities.
- If it is not realistic for a legal framework to be instilled; a campaign by CSOs can be introduced with the goals of mainstreaming HRBA into the work and services of the municipalities.
- CBOs with national exposure, such as Partners-Jordan, should take the lead on educating members of municipal councils and staffers of LDU's, and to work directly with mayors on conceptualizing HRBA and other themes of the pilot. Based on these subjects, CBOs should take the lead in designing the materials and tools that municipalities can use. The resources should be tested and validated to ensure their effectiveness.
- HRBA is much more needed in the municipalities that are of the first-grade (f.e. Zarqa Greater Municipality). They are more in need of applying HRBA in their planning, implementation, and services because: they are more diverse, more people are affected by their operations, they have more resources and have greater leverage to work with these approaches. They are responsible for service-provision to a greater number of people, and they can serve as role models and hubs of expertise for smaller municipalities.

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## **Community Scorecards**

### Findings:

- The Community Scorecards (CSC) were the most attractive tool shared with the municipalities and CBOs. The CSC was received very well due to its relatively low cost, ease of implementation, flexibility afforded in addressing the issue at several levels as well as providing a platform for the municipality to present a participatory approach that can raise their popularity and appeal among citizens.
- Municipalities have looked into the CSC as a tool to raise their legitimacy and acceptance as well as a tool to assess services and consult with locals when taking major decisions as well as a platform to lessen stresses and complaints on certain issues raised by locals. This specifically applies to cases in which municipalities seek to apply for funding and want to consult citizen opinions on the proposals they will be developing.
- Different municipalities and citizens and CBOs have different capacities in their ability to implement the CSC. We found that Zarqa municipality, which had a higher rate of educated participants, was able to implement CSC with ease and engage in deeper discussions with the municipality related to policy issues. Much of the discussion during the CSC exercise in Zarqa was specific and related to policy development and the need for coordination between the municipality and national utility services.
- Selection of criteria for assessing the services as well as identifying people to attend the sessions of the CSC are the most sensitive issues that municipalities should pursue carefully and very professionally to ensure that their process is programmatic, comprehensive, and inclusive. This will allow the process and products to be a base that can be built on.
- The municipal council has a great importance in legitimizing the use of such tools and this may be of interest to the members of the Municipal Council as individuals who represent citizens of local communities. These tools can enhance the trust between them and the citizens and lead to their re-election due to improvements of performance and improved relationship between them and the local communities. CSCs can improve the quality of relationships between citizens and different councils and may reduce the current level of dissatisfaction with the performance of municipalities.

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- There was a clear understanding of the ability of scorecards to identify a set of information that can be used later in redesigning programs and projects that are directed towards citizens in different areas in relation to services and development projects.
  - Citizens, municipal staff and leadership usually believe that the solutions should be based on increasing resources and funds through grants and funds.
  - In smaller municipalities, tribal nature played a slightly positive role in ensuring the sustainability of the municipal councils. The presence of a group of respected tribal leaders within the municipal council can contribute to ensuring respect and necessary stability through overseeing and responding to municipal work.

#### Recommendations:

- CSC can be very easily used by the municipalities in 3rd and sometimes 2nd grade in cooperation with CBOs due to stakeholders' outreach abilities and acting as a non-biased actor in managing the process of implementing the CSC.
- CSC can be used in municipalities as a tool of M&E for a certain service provision in order to measure improvements or plans within a certain timeframe.
- More thorough capacity building solutions are needed for instilling these skills and knowledge in municipalities.
- If the CSC tool is to be implemented by CBOs, then CBOs have to be selected carefully as mediators and should have a municipality presence to avoid any nepotism, and to ensure factors like legitimacy, coverage and neutrality.

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<sup>i</sup> In 2009, the municipalities' regulations had been amended to allow for more room for municipalities' enrollment in local economic development including their ability to attract investments, enter into PPPs or other forms of contracts that enable them to sublet some their services to the private sector or investors. Unfortunately, these kinds of contracts were also still subject to MoMA approval at the end of the process to be validated or cleared, which has also been tied to a lengthy process of approvals that was described by them to be very bureaucratic and not clear enough, also which according to them depended very much on personal opinions and understandings.