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SUCCESS STORY

Drawing a Roadmap for Local Government's Gender Advocacy

Governorates' New Equal Opportunity Departments Empowering Women, Promoting Gender Equity



With the support of CITIES, Equal Opportunity Departments Specialists develop an annual plan that reflects gender equality practices.

Providing a voice to all members of society is a global challenge for political leaders. In Jordan, as the new decentralization law is being implemented, local governments are seeking opportunities to better integrate gender perspectives, adopting the needs and priorities of both men and women to promote inclusive, friendly, and sustainable towns and cities.

The USAID Cities Implementing Transparent, Innovative and Effective Solutions (CITIES) project is working with the Government of Jordan to achieve sustainable gender inclusivity by establishing Equal Opportunities Departments (EOD) within all 12 governorates. The purpose of the EODs is to work with the other governorate departments to ensure they include a system that enforces gender equity. The EODs do this by standardizing and promoting shared control over resources and decision-making, while ensuring that women's empowerment is central to any intervention.

Leading up to the August 2017 elections, CITIES worked with all 12 governorates to establish an EOD at each and built their capacity by conducting workshops to raise their awareness of equal opportunities and gender mainstreaming. As a result of the workshops, the 12 EODs jointly develop a two-month action plan for the period that preceded the decentralization elections.

Following the elections, CITIES hosted all EOD specialists for a two-day intensive session to identify achievements and lessons learned from the implementation of their short-term action plan. The second part of the session provided the participants with the know how to prepare a tailored long-term action plan.

After the sessions, CITIES Senior Gender and Youth Advisor, Ms. Rand Hindawi commented, "I was impressed by the enthusiasm of the Equal Opportunity Specialists. They showed they are eager to start communicating and building relationships with the community members, in particular women, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, to identify their needs and priorities within the context of decentralization."

After a year of hard work, the USAID-supported EODs have successfully designed a gender transformative annual plan that will serve as a roadmap for all of their activities. In doing so, they are transforming gender relations by promoting shared power, control of resources, decision making, and support for gender equity.