



## USAID CITIES Supports Municipal Community Outreach Strategies



*USAID CITIES' Community Engagement Team Leader, Ms. Ban Saraf discusses optimal tools of communications and outreach during Greater Madaba Municipality's MCOG meeting with civil society organizations*



*MCOG members and representatives of civil society organizations vote for the best outreach tools that are planned to make up the municipal strategies*

The successful implementation of any communication campaign between local governments and their communities is highly dependent on a participatory process that ensures inclusion and community engagement. Given the diversity of Jordan today, it has become even more pertinent for municipalities to reach out to all members within their communities, understand their needs, and then to be perceived as responsive to those needs.

To help institute effective channels for community-government dialogue and shared decision-making; the USAID Jordan Cities Implementing Transparent, Innovative, and Effective Solutions (USAID-CITIES) project works with municipalities to draft inclusive outreach roadmaps through the establishment of Municipal Community Outreach Groups (MCOGs) within the project's 33 targeted municipalities. The MCOG's role is to build, and ensure sustainability of, Municipal-Community dialogue and participation.

By supporting the MCOGs to establish positive dialogue between the municipality and the community, the USAID CITIES' community engagement team have so far established 17 MCOGs and conducted a full review of their existing community outreach and communication tools. The team then facilitated MCOG meetings with their respective communities and civil society organizations to identify the most effective communications and outreach tools to be considered for further development and adoption under an official municipal outreach strategy. These customized strategies serve as the overarching guide to support the establishment and further development of communication channels targeting both stakeholders and beneficiaries including, local communities, local councils, the donor community, private-sector organizations, and other municipalities.

The structure of these strategies ensures that the different audiences act as both recipients and generators of ideas, complaints, challenges and priorities stemming from the local communities. Accordingly, these audiences are not only responsible for deciding how they want to be addressed and reached out to by their municipality, but they are also responsible for identifying the best ways to reach and communicate with the municipality.

To date, out of the first 17 established MCOGs, five Municipalities have drafted strategies based on the municipal-community outreach sessions and are in the process of finalizing and endorsing their final versions. Once these municipalities' strategies are finalized, USAID CITIES will propose a set of interventions to enhance and institutionalize municipal-community engagement.