

## Amman: Using a City Development Strategy Framework to Improve City Services & Competitiveness

*In 2004, the World Bank received a \$200,000 grant from the Cities Alliance to support the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) in implementing its City Development Strategy. The specific focus of GAM's CDS is on strengthening municipal management and governance, while upgrading its urban planning capacities, including adoption of a city-wide upgrading strategy for squatter settlements and refugee camps. Ultimately, city officials see GAM's future success and competitiveness hinging on the city's effectiveness, inclusiveness and responsiveness in planning and delivering services to all city residents, including the urban poor.*

*Background.* As the Capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Amman is home to more than 2 million people, representing just under 40 percent of the total population. Its rapid expansion in population and area over the past decade, however, has placed extraordinary new pressures on the city to plan and deliver municipal services, particularly following the first Gulf War when there was an immediate influx of some 300,000 refugees. In a region marred by instability and conflict, Amman has become for many a safe haven and refuge, which, at the same time makes city planning and management a particularly vexing challenge.



Development of the city of Amman follows a guiding framework that was prepared as a Development Plan for the period 2002-2005 with specific objectives and programs targeting a wide range of sectors, among which are *institutional development, including improvement of the system of local revenue collection and management, and urban planning*. After three years of implementation, Amman's Development Plan revealed an urgent need to refine and further detail two programs within the existing strategy, namely the *municipal management and governance* program and the *urban planning and development* program.

**Why develop a CDS for Amman?**

Traditionally, the World Bank has focused on single sector urban infrastructure projects addressing urban water, wastewater, roads, and other infrastructure needs in isolation from the broader urban context. Increasingly, however, the Bank has moved away from these “single sector” approaches and adopted a more integrated approach that is more responsive to city needs. There are several reasons for this shift in approach, among which are: (i) **The**

**What is a City Development Strategy?**

A City Development Strategy (CDS) is a vehicle for building a **Vision** for an city or economic region, a **Strategy** for its implementation and an **Implementation Plan** for its realization.

A CDS is built around the following elements:

- ⌘ Assessment: A good CDS starts with a sound understanding of the city’s existing situation and potential. Stakeholders would review and determine the comparative and competitive advantages of the city; values and preferences of its residents; relationship to global and domestic economies and physical and locational characteristics, among other factors
- ⌘ Vision: Asks the question “Where do we want to be in 10 years time?” Should include broad participation to build a “shared vision” of the city, while being realistic and achievable.
- ⌘ Strategy: Focuses on results and accountability; should be realistic but challenging; clearly identifies institutional responsibilities, resource requirements and incentives for performance.
- ⌘ Implementation Plan: Assigns responsibilities, establishes a monitoring and assessment system; sets clear milestones and a realistic timeframe.

(i) **The Economic Role of Cities.** Cities play a major role in the national economy representing in most cases well over 50% of the contribution to GDP based on an existing manufacturing base and expanding service sectors -- infrastructure services needed to attract investment are thus key; (ii) **Long-term Investment Planning.** Effective investment planning depends on identification of broad resource needs over a multiyear timeframe, addressing a range of infrastructure service requirements requiring O&M budgeting that needs to be addressed in an integrated and consolidated manner; (iii) **The City Development Strategy (CDS) Tool.** In many ways, the CDS provides a tested approach for integrated planning purposes and a set of tools that help guide cities in preparing their development strategies and investment plans. As such, cities have become more effective development partners and are less dependent on central government-designed investment programs; and (iv) **Impact & Results.** CDSs help establish a strategic framework for investments, reforms, and capacity building measures designed around a results orientation that is responsive to city residents and businesses.

**Partnering with Cities Alliance and the Arab Urban Development Institute.** There are over 96 countries globally that have undertaken a CDS in one form or another with the support of the Cities Alliance (CA), and Amman was only the second to do so in the Middle East. In the case of Amman, the CDS proved to be just the approach and set of tools that city officials were looking for. With financial support from CA in the amount of \$200,000, technical support from World Bank consultants, and an effective partnership established with the Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI), Amman has made serious strides in thinking through and reshaping its city vision and strategy to guide it over the coming years.

***Focusing on Municipal Management.***

Under the Municipal Management and Governance theme of the CDS, GAM officials have recruited a Municipal Management Specialist, with CA funding, to carry out a broad stocktaking exercise aimed at assessing weaknesses, gaps, overlapping mandates and functions within the municipality, with the aim of streamlining GAM's organizational structure, while realigning newly reorganized functional departments with defined service delivery targets and standards. A communications strategy for the city and measures to enhance performance of GAM's "Citizen Services Center" are also under preparation.



One particular area of weakness is GAM's existing array of ICT and management information systems (MIS). GAM has more than 15 legacy systems with different platforms and database engines, each working as a separate island with significant breakdowns in communications. In parallel with CA assistance, the World Bank has provided support in assessing system weaknesses and in mobilizing a GAM team to map out business processes as a first step toward a major overhaul of GAM's MIS, including a proposal for implementing a completely integrated enterprise system.



***Improving Urban Planning.*** The second component of the grant focuses on urban planning improvements. In addition to advising on the approach to update its masterplan, the CA-funded Urban Planner is providing GAM with guidance regarding how it will implement a participatory planning process, paying particular attention to urgent urban upgrading needs. Strengthening land use planning, zoning and building regulations are intended to increase efficiency by reducing low density areas and minimizing urban

sprawl, thus enabling the city to better accommodate and service the recent influx of new city residents.

Following launch of the CDS process in 2004, a series of CDS workshops have taken place, including one in February 2006 when the final recommendations of the consultants were presented to over 400 participants for discussion. The workshop succeeded in

promoting vibrant discussion and debate about city planning activities, citizen participation and soliciting feedback and ideas from city residents as to how GAM can improve its services and responsiveness to resident needs. Among the adopted recommendations was the need to establish a performance-based management system at GAM to improve performance (which is already recognized as a regional model for citizen engagement through its city feedback and complaint monitoring and resolution system). The workshop also confirmed the need to update urban planning guidelines and regulations and initiate a process of updating Amman's masterplan. All of these initiatives are geared toward increasing participation and citizen engagement in shaping the city in which they live and work.



**Amman's Vision of the City's Future:  
Effective Urban Planning Seen As a Vital Ingredient**

*City planners and residents alike agree that Amman's future competitiveness will depend greatly on how it plans its future development. Using a participatory CDS process helped to elaborate a framework for citizen participation and contributed in identifying some key objectives and characteristics of the city to be profiled in the coming years:*

- ④ Improved public transport and integrated regional transport
- ④ Reduced and better managed traffic
- ④ Better housing opportunities for low income communities
- ④ Upgraded informal settlements integrated within the urban fabric
- ④ Clear, regulated and favorable environment for private sector investments
- ④ Conserved agricultural land
- ④ Preserved quantity and quality of water resources
- ④ Improved control over urban sprawl
- ④ Stronger identity and preservation of the city's cultural heritage
- ④ Increased green areas
- ④ Increased public safety

The success of Amman's CDS process thus far has prompted other cities in Jordan to seek World Bank and Cities Alliance assistance in developing their own city development strategies, including Irbid, Zarqa and Tafila. In support of the Government's regional initiative in which greater autonomy and authority is being granted to the Kingdom's newly defined regions as a means of empowering communities to pursue local development, the World Bank, Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD) and AUDI are working together in partnership with the Ministry of Planning's Local Development Department, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and selected cities in

setting up a Programmatic CDS Facility. This approach will not only support the Government's broader objective of decreasing regional disparities in access to services and economic opportunities, but would also help secondary cities to elaborate their strategies and implementation plans as a means of improving their ability to plan and deliver municipal services. As with any other CDS initiative, this process would be driven by the cities themselves and participation of city residents through workshops and other consultative means will remain the hallmark of the approach. The proposed facility would also underpin and provide a vital city to central government link within the framework of the proposed Regional and Local Development Project (RLDP) which is being prepared by the Government of Jordan with support from the World Bank and AFD.