

**Center for Legislative Development (CLD)
University at Albany SUNY**

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The Assistance to Sustain Local Democratic Practices in Lebanon is a three-year governance reform initiative focused on the further enhancement of municipal productivity and performance through specialized technical assistance to municipalities, municipal associations (known as municipal unions), regional governments, executive agencies, and the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MOIM).

Active in Lebanon since 1994, CLD has implemented—with the continued support of the US Agency for International Development (USAID)—a series of successful programs on improving democratic practices and the overall quality of governance. Since 2004, the **Municipal Governance Assistance Program** has provided technical assistance for more than 750 local and regional government institutions in Lebanon with complementary support extended to supporting entities such as municipal unions and executive agencies and ministries.

Despite the instability in Lebanon and in the region, CLD program efforts have made it possible for the beneficiaries to become more effective, democratic, and responsive through activities to modernize and reengineer overall work processes; to standardize, automate, and institutionalize financial and administrative procedures; to increase municipal revenues through the implementation of tax and fee laws; and to broaden citizen access to government in particular through the use of the Internet and technology.

This initiative will address several key issues facing Lebanese municipalities including, most significantly, sustaining the existing modernization achievements. Activities will center on establishing a multi-faceted “network” of institutional sources to provide legal, technical, and training support to municipalities. This program will also focus on developing an advanced performance model to be implemented across all municipal departments within several of the largest municipalities that, collectively, serve nearly 60% of the Lebanese population. And in response to the forthcoming opportunities and potential challenges posed by the municipal elections slated for 2010, this program will work to promote improved relations between citizens and representative institutions and to develop specific activities to facilitate a smooth transition to the newly-elected councils.