

**An-Najah National University
Faculty of Graduate Studies**

**A Proposed Model for Multi-Level Strategic
Development Planning in Palestine**

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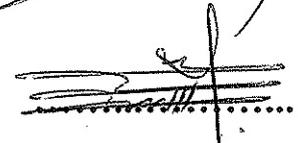
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Dedication

Thanks to all those who supported me to achieve my work successfully.

I dedicate this humble work in particular to:

**My beloved father and mother whose prayers and blessing spurred me to accomplish my work successfully.*

**My dear husband whose help, support, encouragement and constant assistance accompanied me all through my way to bring this work to light.*

**My dear children who had to endure my absence and being busy doing the study.*

**Everyone who helped and supported me.*

**To you all I dedicate my love and gratitude and the outcome of my work.*

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First of all, Praise and thanks to Allah who granted me the power to finish this work, and for all the great blessings and virtues that he bestowed on me and helped me to complete this work and continues to bestow on me.

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Finally, I would like to thank everybody who was important to the successful realization of this thesis, as well as expressing my apology that I could not mention personally one by one.

الإقرار

أنا الموقعة أدناه، مقدمة الرسالة التي تحمل العنوان:

A Proposed Model for Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in Palestine

نموذج مقترح لمستويات التخطيط التنموي الاستراتيجي في فلسطين

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Declaration

The work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CDS	City Development Strategy
CSCC	Cross Sectoral Coordination Center
DPU	District Planning Unit
EU	European Union
IDP	Integrated Development Planning
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JSC	Joint Service Council
LDP	Local Development Plan
LGU	Local Government Unit
MDLF	Municipal Development and Lending Fund
MOEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOLG	Ministry of Local Government
MOPAD	Ministry of Planning and Administration
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NRP	National Reform Program
NWG	National Working Group
PIMSS	Planning and Implementation Management Support System
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PRDP	Palestinian Reform and Development Plan
RDP	Regional Development Plan
SDIP	Strategic Development and Investment Plan
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Table of Contents

No.	Content	Page
	Dedication	iii
	Acknowledgment	iv
	Declaration	v
	Abbreviations	vi
	Table of Contents	vii
	List of Tables	xi
	List of Figures	xii
	Abstract	xiii
	Chapter One: Introduction	1
1.1	General Background	2
1.2	Research Problem	3
1.3	Importance of the Study	4
1.4	Objectives of the Study	4
1.5	Methodology	4
1.6	The Case Study	6
1.7	Study Output	6
1.8	Structure of the Study	7
	Chapter Two: Literature Review	8
2.1	Introduction	9
2.2	The Concept of Strategic Development Planning	10
2.2.1	Planning	10
2.2.2	Strategic Planning	11
2.2.3	Strategic Development Planning	12
2.3	Levels of Strategic Development Planning	14
2.3.1	National Level	15
2.3.2	Regional Level	17
2.3.3	Local Level	19
2.4	Linking Multi-level Strategic Development Plans	21
2.4.1	Linking Principles	22
2.4.2	Linking Approaches	26
2.4.3	Criteria for Selecting a Proper Planning Approach	32
2.5	Summary	32
	Chapter Three: Methodology	34
3.1	Introduction	35
3.2	Research Methodology	35
3.2.1	Reviewing of Literature in Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning	36
3.2.2	Collecting Data on Palestinian Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning System	37

No.	Content	Page
3.2.3	Diagnosing Palestinian Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning System	37
3.2.4	Choosing the Case Study	37
3.2.5	Diagnosing the Strategic Development Plans for the Case Study	38
3.2.6	Developing a model of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning	38
3.3	Methodological Approach	39
3.4	Research Tools	40
	Chapter Four: Case Studies of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning	41
4.1	Introduction	42
4.2	Integrated Development Planning (IDP) in South Africa	42
4.2.1	IDP Guide for Municipalities	43
4.2.2	Legal Basis	45
4.2.3	Planning and Implementation Management Support System (PIMSS)	47
4.2.4	Integrations with Sectors	48
4.3	Cross Sectoral and Multi-Level Coordination in Latvia	50
4.3.1	Cross Sectoral Policy Coordination	52
4.3.2	Multi-level Policy Coordination	55
4.3.3	Cross Sectoral Coordination Center (CSCC)	56
4.3.4	National Development Plan (NDP) for the Years 2014-2020	57
4.4	Unions of Municipalities in Lebanon	62
4.4.1	Concept of Unions of Municipalities	63
4.4.2	Strategic Planning at Unions of Municipalities	64
4.5	Assessment of the Case Studies	66
	Chapter Five: Analysis of Palestinian Strategic Development Planning System	69
5.1	Introduction	70
5.2	The National Level	70
5.2.1	National Planning Approach	71
5.2.2	Participation in National Plans	72
5.2.3	Institutional and Legal Status	75
5.2.4	Link to Regional and Local Plans	77
5.3	The Regional Level	79
5.3.1	Regional Planning Approach	81
5.3.2	Participation in Regional Plans	82
5.3.3	Institutional and Legal Status	83

No.	Content	Page
5.3.4	Link to National and Local Plans	85
5.4	Local Level	87
5.4.1	Local Planning Approach	88
5.4.2	Participation in Local Plans	90
5.4.3	Institutional and Legal Status	92
5.4.4	Link to National and Regional Plans	93
5.5	Linking the Multi-Level Plans	94
5.6	Overall Assessment	99
5.6.1	Strength Points	99
5.6.2	Challenges	100
5.7	Discussion	101
	Chapter Six: Case Study of Nablus Governorate	104
6.1	Introduction	105
6.2	The Relationship between Nablus RDP and PRDP (2008-2010)	105
6.2.1	Development Vision	106
6.2.2	Timeframes	108
6.2.3	Sectors	109
6.2.4	Development Issues	110
6.2.5	Development Objectives	111
6.2.6	Indicators	113
6.3	The Relationship between Nablus RDP and the NDP (2011-2013)	115
6.3.1	Timeframes	115
6.3.2	Sectors	116
6.3.3	Development objectives	116
6.3.4	Indicators	117
6.4	The Relationship between Nablus RDP and Nablus LDP	119
6.4.1	Development Vision	119
6.4.2	Timeframes	120
6.4.3	Sectors	120
6.4.4	Development Issue	122
6.4.5	Development Objectives	122
6.4.6	Development Programs and Projects	123
6.4.7	Budgets	125
6.4.8	Indicators	126
6.5	The Relationship between Nablus RDP and Beita LDP	128
6.5.1	Development vision	128
6.5.2	Timeframes	129
6.5.3	Sectors	129

No.	Content	Page
6.5.4	Development Issues	130
6.5.5	Development Objectives	130
6.5.6	Development Programs and Projects	131
6.5.7	Budgets	133
6.5.8	Indicators	134
6.6	General Assessment	136
	Chapter Seven: The Proposed Model of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in Palestine	139
7.1	Introduction	140
7.2	The Proposed Combined Approach of Top-down and Bottom-up Planning	140
7.3	Roles and Responsibilities	142
7.4	The Proposed Model	143
7.5	Stages	145
7.5.1	Stage One: Evaluation and Forecast	145
7.5.2	Stage Two: Policy and Planning Framework	146
7.5.3	Stage Three: Identification of Projects and Budgets	146
7.5.4	Stage Four: Finalization of Plans and Approvals	147
7.6	Enabling Environment	147
7.6.1	Institutional Framework	148
7.6.2	Legal Framework	150
7.6.3	Financial Framework	152
7.7	General Issues	153
	Chapter Eight: Conclusions and Recommendations	155
8.1	Summary	156
8.2	Conclusions	157
8.3	Recommendations	160
	References	163
	Interviews	171
	الملخص	ب

List of Tables

No.	Table	Page
Table (4.1)	Distribution of Unions of Municipalities in Lebanon	63
Table (6.1)	Sectors of the PRDP and Nablus RDP	109
Table (6.2)	Development Objectives of the PRDP and Nablus RDP	112
Table (6.3)	Development objectives of Nablus RDP and the NDP	117
Table (6.4)	Sectors of Nablus RDP and Nablus LDP	121
Table (6.5)	Development Objectives of Nablus RDP and Nablus LDP	123
Table (6.6)	Development programs and projects of Nablus RDP and Nablus LDP	124
Table (6.7)	Budget of Nablus LDP and Nablus RDP	125
Table (6.8)	Sectors of Nablus RDP and Beita LDP	130
Table (6.9)	Development Objectives of Nablus RDP and Beita LDP	131
Table (6.10)	Development programs and projects of Nablus RDP and Beita LDP	132
Table (6.11)	Budget of Nablus RDP and Beita LDP	133
Table (7.1)	The Proposed Roles and Responsibilities of the Stakeholders	142

List of Figures

No.	Figure	Page
Figure (2.1)	The Three Levels of Strategic Development Planning	15
Figure (3.1)	Research Methodology	36
Figure (4.1)	Roles and Responsibilities of the Three Spheres of the Government in IDP	45
Figure (4.2)	Section 153 of South Africa Constitution	46
Figure (4.3)	South Africa's Municipal System Act Section	47
Figure (4.4)	WASH Development Plan Integration with IDP	49
Figure (4.5)	Integration between WASH Sector Plan and IDP	49
Figure (4.6)	Top Down Approach for Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in Latvia	51
Figure (4.7)	The Latvian level of Policy Coordination	53
Figure (4.8)	The Usefulness of Policy Coordination Instruments	54
Figure (4.9)	The Forms of Policy Coordination that Could be Successfully Implemented in the Coming Years	54
Figure (4.10)	Involvement of Regional and Local Level	55
Figure (4.11)	Policy Planning Hierarchy in Latvia	58
Figure (4.12)	Cross Sectoral Criteria	59
Figure (4.13)	Key Participants in NDP (2014-2020)	60
Figure (4.14)	Three Basic Priorities for NDP (2014-2020)	61
Figure (5.1)	The NDP Approach	73
Figure (5.2)	Regional Development Planning Methodology	81
Figure (7.1)	The Proposed Combined Approach of Top-down and Bottom-up Planning	141
Figure (7.2)	The Proposed Model of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in Palestine	144
Figure (7.3)	Three Areas of Enabling Environment	148

**A Proposed Model for Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in
Palestine**

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Abstract

Multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine is conducted at three levels; the national, the regional, and the local levels. The problem of the research is the lack of systemic planning linkages between these levels. In this study, literature in strategic development planning is reviewed, in order to illustrate and discuss some related concepts, principles, and approaches of linking multi-level strategic development planning. In addition, specific case studies of multi-level strategic development planning systems in different countries are discussed and analyzed to benefit from their experiences.

The three levels of strategic development planning in Palestine are analyzed and assessed regarding planning approach, participation, institutional and legal status, and linkages among the planning levels. Furthermore, a case study of multi-level strategic development planning in Nablus Governorate is studied. First, the relationships between the Governorate plan and two national plans are assessed. These national plans are the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP) for the years 2008-2010, and the National Development Plan (NDP) for the years 2011-2013. Second, the relationships between the Governorate plan and two local plans are assessed. These local plans are Nablus City Local

Development plan (LDP) for the years 2012-2015, and Beita Town Local Development Plan (LDP) for the years 2012-2015.

Depending on literature review, analysis of the three levels, and assessment of the relationships between the plans in the case study, a proposed model of multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine is developed.

The proposed approach is a combined approach of top-down and bottom-up planning. As the strategic and fiscal planning policies are set out by the national level, while the strategic development planning is basically conducted by the local level, except the strategic development projects, which have a national character, such as hospitals, national roads, regional sewage treatment systems, and universities. The responsibility for planning such strategic projects are directed to the sectoral ministries at the national level.

It is proposed that strategic development plans are prepared for two levels, the national and the local. The role of the regional level is proposed to be a coordinating role between the national and local levels, in addition to overseeing the local planning and providing technical support to the municipalities and Joint Service Councils (JSCs). Furthermore, planning time horizon at the national and the local level is proposed to be unified for four years rolling plans, in order to encourage integrated planning.

Furthermore, the proposed roles and responsibilities are identified for all stakeholders, which are involved in strategic development planning at

the three levels. In addition, the relevant institutional, legal, and financial frameworks are developed. These three frameworks constitute the enabling environment that could be essential for adopting and implementing the proposed model effectively.

Chapter One
Introduction

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 General Background

During recent decades, many countries have used strategic development planning approach to improve the life of their communities. Strategic development planning helps countries to conduct better investment and development in their social, economic, and infrastructural aspects simultaneously.

Strategic development planning involves formulating strategic development plans. These plans set out development priorities of community, goals and objectives of development, and proposed programs and projects, which are capable for achieving these goals and objectives during a certain period of time, considering the available resources and potential obstacles in the country.

In most countries, strategic development plans are conducted at all levels of governance. The output is multi-level strategic development plans. These plans should be integrated and coordinated in a systematic linking approach that reflects coherent and consistent planning system in the country.

In Palestine, there are three levels of strategic development planning; the national level, the regional level, and the local level. National Development Plans in Palestine (NDPs) take the form of medium term development plans (MTDPs) that are prepared every three years. At the

regional level, there are several regional development plans that have been prepared by different governorates.

At the local level, large number of Strategic Development and Investment Plans (SDIPs) have been prepared for different cities and towns in West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The experience of strategic development planning in Palestine is considered relatively new. Planning systems at all levels are still scattered, and there is no clear approach for linking the national, the regional, and the local strategic development plans.

A dire need has been emerged for considering integration and coordination among such plans, in order to avoid conflict plans and best allocate technical and financial resources. These multi-level strategic development plans have different timeframes and different approaches, and also there are some contradictories in some objectives, projects, budgets, and objectives' indicators and targets.

1.2 Research Problem

It is envisaged that there is lack of systemic planning linkages between national, regional, and local levels of strategic development planning systems in Palestine. As a result, there is some conflict and inconsistency of some aspects of the three levels of plans, as noticed in their inconsistent timeframes, visions, development issues, objectives, and proposed development programs and projects.

1.3 Importance of the Study

This study derives its importance from the necessity of linking multi-level strategic development plans, that ensures strong planning scheme and avoids conflicts between plans, and in general, from the necessity of conducting such plans as a tool for shaping countries development and investment.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objective of this research is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Palestinian strategic development planning system, through:

- Analyzing and assessing the three levels of strategic development planning in Palestine; the national, the regional, and the local levels regarding planning approach, participation, institutional status, legal status, and linkages among the planning levels.
- Study the consistency of strategic development plans regarding timeframes, visions, objectives, development issues, and proposed development programs and projects.
- Develop a suitable model of linking the three levels of plans in Palestine, considering proper integration and coordination.

1.5 Methodology

This research relied on the descriptive analytical approach. This approach includes collecting data about the current Palestinian multi-level

strategic development planning system, analyzing the current practices, and developing a proposed model of multi-level strategic development plans.

This was performed through the following:

- Conduct research based on desk/internet literature in order to review the concepts and approaches of multi-level strategic development planning, and to gather and study information on the international experiences and models of strategic development planning.
- Investigate the Palestinian related studies, reports, manuals, and plans, and assess the relationships between the three levels of planning.
- Evaluate the current situation of Palestinian strategic development planning system, through studying the three levels of strategic development planning; the national, regional, and local level. In addition, studying the multi-level strategic development plans, which are considered in the case study.
- Study the current approach of Palestinian systemic planning linkages as well as the integration and coordination among the three levels of planning.
- Conduct interviews with key stakeholders and experts participated in preparing strategic development plans at the three levels.
- Conclude the results of strategic analysis for the planning system based on the collected data and conducted interviews.

- Develop a model of multi-level strategic development planning considering coordination and integration among the three levels of planning system in Palestine.

1.6 The Case Study

To evaluate the current situation of Palestinian multi-level strategic development planning system, Nablus Governorate plan has been chosen to analyze and assess the relationships between the governorate plan and four other plans. There are:

- At the national level, the researcher choose two strategic development plans, these are: the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP), for the years 2008-2010, and the National Development Plan (NDP), for the years 2011-2013.
- At the local level, the researcher choose two strategic development plans, these are: Nablus City Local Development plan (LDP), for the years 2012-2015, and Beita Town Local Development Plan (LDP), for the years 2012-2015.

1.7 Study Output

The outcome of the study includes two main outputs:

- Descriptive analysis of the current situation of the strategic development planning system at the three levels of planning in Palestine, at the national, regional, and local levels, and their linkages.

- Development of a proposed model of multi-level strategic development planning system in Palestine, considering coordination and integration.

1.8 Structure of the Study

This study is comprised of eight chapters, as follows:

- Chapter one is an introduction that outlines the whole study.
- Chapter two illustrates some related concepts, definitions, principles, and approaches of multi-level strategic development planning.
- Chapter three presents the methodology followed in this research.
- Chapter four includes three case studies of multi-level strategic development planning systems in different countries.
- Chapter five provides an analysis and assessment of the three levels of Palestinian strategic development planning.
- Chapter six contains an assessment of the relationships between the chosen multi-level strategic development plans at the case study.
- Chapter seven shows the proposed model of multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine.
- Chapter eight summaries the main results and conclusions, and some suggested recommendations.

Chapter Two
Literature Review

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter includes the literature review needed in order to discuss the multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine. The first section discusses the concept of strategic development planning as a proper approach for socio-economic developments in countries.

The second section talks about the levels of strategic development planning. Literature suggests three levels of strategic development planning; the national level, the regional level, and the local level. The concept of linking such levels of strategic development planning is discussed in the third section. The third section presents literature on the importance, principles, and approaches of linking multi-level strategic development plans. There are two base principles that should be considered in linking such plans; integration and coordination. These two principles are briefly discussed and illustrated.

Planning literature suggests three approaches for linking multi-level strategic development planning. These approaches are: top-down approach, bottom-up approach, and a combined approach of top-down and bottom-up planning. These approaches and their advantages and disadvantages are briefly discussed and illustrated.

2.2 The Concept of Strategic Development Planning

2.2.1 Planning

Planning is an appropriate development path to improve the life of common people (Shakya, 2007). It is an organized process, which is required to achieve a desired goal in the future or for a specific time horizon.

Planning has been defined in many ways. Waterson (1971) defines planning as “an organized, conscious, and continual attempt to select the best available alternatives to achieve specific goals”. It is a systematic process of establishing a need and then working out the best way to meet the need (Shapiro, 2001). Mintzberg (1994) defines planning in practice as “a formalized procedure to produce an articulated result, in the form of an integrated system of decisions”. Planning refers to the process of deciding what to do and how to do it (Litman, 2013).

Planning involves the formulation of a plan. A plan is a series of thoughts, processes, and actions, written and agreed in the present, in order to be implemented or carried out in the future (David, 2011). Plans may include schedules, budgets, resources, and actions responsibilities.

Planning occurs at many levels, which vary from day-to-day decisions that are made by individuals, to complex decisions, which are made by businesses and governments. There is no specific form for

planning as it takes many forms. It is just a process to set out activities over a period of time for achieving desired goals.

2.2.2 Strategic Planning

The term strategic planning originated in 1950s and was very popular between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s. After few decades, strategic planning was widely believed to be the answer of all the problems. Nowadays, the process of strategic planning is widely spread and practiced (David, 2011).

Strategic planning is a process of long term planning. It involves a set of procedures for making decisions about the organization's long term goals and objectives. Bryson (2010) defines strategic planning as a deliberative and disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization (or other entity) is (its identity), what it does (its strategies and actions), and why it does it (mandates, mission, goals, and the creation of public value).

Strategic planning involves formulating a strategy (Hill and Jones, 2004). The term strategy is about the determination of long-term goals and objectives, the adoption of courses of action, and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals (Heffron, 1989).

Literature contains many qualitative and quantitative approaches for analysis and choosing strategies. Formulation of strategies contains the following steps (David, 2011):

- Develop vision and mission statements.
- Perform external audit for the surrounding environment in order to exploit opportunities and avoid threats.
- Perform internal audit for the firm to catch strengths and weaknesses
- Establish long term objectives.
- Generate, evaluate, and select strategies.

Studies of strategic planning emphasize the difference between strategic planning and traditional comprehensive planning, as strategic planning presents a proactive process through which the community wants to shape their future, and not just to prepare for it (Vojinovic et al., 2009).

2.2.3 Strategic Development Planning

The term strategic planning does not only refer to planning for firms or business. It could be also used in planning for development in countries. During the past few decades, many countries have used strategic planning process to improve the life of their citizens, through an approach which is named as “strategic development planning”.

Strategic development planning could be defined as a systematic approach, which is used to set out priorities and goals for communities, and then to identify programs and projects, which are capable for achieving these goals during a certain period of time, in the line with the expectations of the citizens, considering the available resources and potential obstacles

(MOLG, 2011). The output of the process is strategic development plans, which are prepared for a fixed period.

The importance of this modern concept in planning comes from being based on principles of management and good governance. Principles of strategic development planning are (Queensland Government, 2009):

- **Community engagement:** Promotion of community engagement, including consultation, participation, and increased community understanding and support for planning processes.
- **Integration and coordination:** Combining and rationalizing structures, functions, policies, and processes under a clear set of rules to produce a coherent and integrated outcome. Integration and coordination could be vertical, including combining and rationalizing higher order and subsidiary systems, or horizontal, including integrating and coordinating of different aspects of a single system.
- **Certainty:** Consistency regarding the conditions under which development will proceed, the rate and scale at which it will take place, and the way planning principles and mechanisms will be applied.
- **Responsiveness:** The flexibility needed to respond to changing or unforeseen circumstances.
- **Equity:** Fairness in planning systems, including equitable distribution of programs and projects throughout territories, and procedures that do not discriminate against individuals or groups.

- **Efficiency and economy:** Efficiency and economy refers to planning systems or governance structures that promote the free flow of resources and information, and to planning outputs that foster the economical use of resources.
- **Transparency, accessibility and accountability:** Clear and appropriate accountability for decisions, organizational structures, and planning instruments, which provide open and legible planning systems that citizens can access and interact with.

2.3 Levels of Strategic Development Planning

In order to achieve sustainable development in countries, strategic development planning should be conducted at all levels of governance, ranging from micro to macro levels that are related to the multi-level governance in the country.

Multi-level governance could be defined as an arrangement for making binding decisions that engages a multiplicity of politically independent but otherwise interdependent actors (private and public), at different levels of territorial aggregation, in more or less continuous negotiation, deliberation, and implementation, and that does not assign exclusively policy competence or assert a stable hierarchy of political authority to any levels (Schmitter, 2004).

In most countries there are three spheres of governance. These levels are: national level (macro level), regional level (meso level), and local level (micro level) as shown in Figure 2.1.

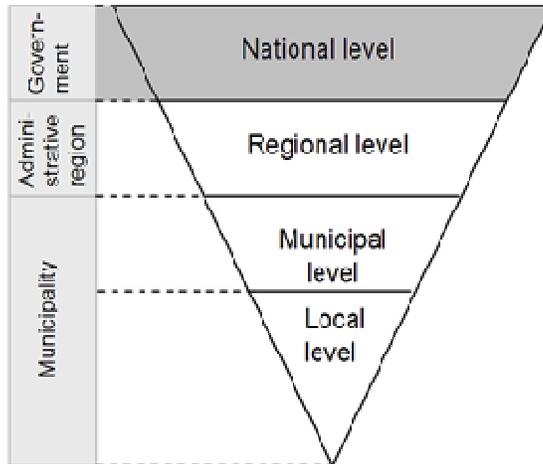


Figure (2.1): The three levels of strategic development planning

Source: DK Ministry of the Environment (2007)

Strategic development planning in most planning systems in countries is conducted at these three levels. Each of these levels is briefly illustrated in the following sections.

2.3.1 National Level

National or central level of strategic development planning in countries is usually led by governments. It involves the formulation of a national program of action for achieving development objectives. The country may have different objectives, which need to be achieved simultaneously such as social, economic, political, cultural, etc.

Governments sets national priorities and objectives to establish consistent minimum standards for planning and decision-making, but it should also allow for variation so that regional and local governments respond to their local circumstances and needs. However, whichever level of the hierarchy predominates in the planning process, integrated planning always needs to take into account the national context and priorities.

Roles and responsibilities of governments in strategic development planning could be summarized as follows (United Nations, 2008):

- Developing a shared strategic vision and establishing national priorities and objectives for development through policy statements.
- Supporting national ministries and departments in developing their strategic plans, and merging the sectoral plans for developing the national strategic development plan.
- Supervising strategic development planning at the regional and local levels to ensure adherence to laws and probity in procedures, as well as promoting conformity of policies and actions.
- Developing a legislative framework that enables the creation of strategic development planning instruments and policy through democratic and participatory procedures.
- Utilizing incentives and sanctions to ensure effective cooperation across sectors and administrative boundaries as well as between levels of government.
- Monitoring development trends and the impact of planning, and making use of indicators and targets.
- Taking the lead in providing the necessary evidence base of data and information on the state of the development and the impact of planning.

- Supporting and advising regional and local governments and helping to build capacity at all levels, both in terms of professional expertise and political leadership.
- Managing and directly regulating issues of national significance in collaboration with regions and local authorities.
- Creating “national agencies” to act as liaisons when working in partnership with regional and local governments on matters needing urgent and special attention.
- Providing an appeals procedure whereby citizens and businesses can object to local and regional decisions, through arbitration, mediation, and if necessary making binding decisions on unresolved local and regional cases.

2.3.2 Regional Level

A region is a territory with common natural, social, economic, and cultural characteristics. It is usually considered to be the basic administrative and economic unit of a country (Kononenko and Shilin, 2004).

The output of planning at regional (provincial) level is regional strategic development plans. These plans are usually undertaken by regional authorities, but may also be undertaken by national government or by local authorities working jointly (United Nations, 2008). Regional authorities could be governorates or states in federal countries.

Regional plans concern with the formulation of a program of action for a specific region that reflect regional objectives and needs. They involve setting out programs and projects that will be applied within the area of the region. These programs and projects should be coordinated and integrated vertically with lower and upper levels of plans (i.e., with local and national plans), and also horizontally with other regional plans in the country.

The main tasks at the regional level are to interpret and adapt national policies and priorities to regional conditions, to provide a strategic development plan, which addresses the functional planning relationships and overall development patterns, and to provide guidance and assistance to local authorities in the creation of local planning instruments (United Nations, 2008).

Roles and responsibilities of regional government in strategic development planning could be summarized as follows (United Nations, 2008):

- Setting out regional strategic development plans by collaborating with regional and local stakeholders.
- Planning and delivery of regionally significant infrastructure that crosses local authority boundaries, like roads, sewage, hospitals, universities, etc.

- Supervising local planning to ensure conformity with national and regional strategies, and to ensure that decision-making procedures are followed.
- Ensuring that local authorities collaborate in their planning so that critical cross-cutting issues are addressed.
- Facilitating coordination between national and local governments.
- Assisting in capacity-building at the local level through guidance, training, and interpretation of legislation.
- Providing a means of appeal on contested matters and mediating disputes between local authorities.

2.3.3 Local Level

This level of planning is characterized by a large participation of local communities, and of the public, private, and voluntary sectors. Usually, the main responsible body for preparing local plans are municipalities and Local Government Units (LGUs).

Local level is the cornerstone of the multi-level strategic development planning system as it reflects the root needs of the citizens. Tasan-Kok and Vranken (2011) have indicated that the main principle of strategic development planning systems is “needs of society should be put first”. Therefore, citizens and their associations “the very bottom of the governance pyramid” should define the priorities of development.

The output of planning at this level are local strategic development plans, which set out a program of action for local community and municipal level. The developed programs and projects are prepared to be implemented in the city, town, or village territories.

Local strategic development plans should be prepared with reference to policies established at national and regional levels, and implemented using detailed plans prepared and adopted at the local level. Furthermore, local strategic development plans should be integrated and coordinated horizontally with other local strategic development plans in the region, in order to avoid conflicts and produce coherence plans.

It should be indicated that in some countries there is a large number of small LGUs. These LGUs collaborate in their resources and skills, and jointly prepare their joint strategic development plan, which includes joint service projects and programs. Example of this approach include strategic development plans, which are prepared by joint service councils, or by unions of municipalities.

The roles and responsibilities of LGUs in strategic development planning, could be summarized as follows (United Nations, 2008):

- Setting out local strategic development plans for the local area in partnership with local stakeholders and regional bodies.
- Engaging with the community on the preparation the strategic development plans, and ensuring that local concerns are voiced in regional planning.

- Creating project partnerships across the public, private and community sectors to deliver specific proposals.
- Preparing regulatory planning instruments and setting out decision rules for the locality (these tasks will often be done in collaboration with other authorities across larger territories).
- Monitoring the implementation of policies, proposals, decision-making, and development trends affecting the locality.

2.4 Linking Multi-level Strategic Development Plans

Whichever level of planning in a country, all developed plans at all levels aim to achieve a shared vision and objectives. These common vision and objectives force planners to significantly link plans in an effective approach that facilitates achieving the desired goals.

Literature suggests that development plans should be linked in both directions; vertically between higher-order and lower-order planning systems (i.e. between national, regional, and local plans), and horizontally within the same level planning system (Queensland Government, 2009, Abadžić et al., 2012, and Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

Based on review of literature of strategic development planning (Queensland Government, 2009, United Nations, 2008, and Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011), it could be concluded that linking multi-level strategic development plans in vertical and horizontal directions has the following benefits:

- Increasing control over the planning process and outputs.
- Ensuring optimal use of scarce resources.
- Ensuring alignment between the proposed strategic development plans.
- Creating complementary and mutually reinforcing programs and projects.
- Avoiding conflicts of plans and programs of different parties.
- Encouraging involvement of participants, because the priorities and objectives of lower levels would be considered.
- Reflecting citizen's needs, especially when linking to local plans that reflect citizen's needs.
- Producing coherent and consistent plans at all levels.
- Ensuring strong planning scheme in the country.

2.4.1 Linking Principles

National, regional, and local plans should be interrelated and linked in a systematic approach based on specific principles. Literature suggests two major principles for linking multi-level plans. These principles are: integration and coordination (Queensland Government, 2009, United Nations, 2008, and Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

1) Integration

Because social, cultural, economic, environmental, and institutional processes have become increasingly intertwined in countries, strategic development planning has become a complex undertaking. Integrated system approach seems to make sense to analyze the complexity of the interrelated problems and developments that today's countries are struggling with (Rotmans et al., 2000).

Integration involves not merely combining structures, policies, or processes, but also rationalizing them to produce coherent and integrated outcomes. It is an effective way to make sense of complex systems. It also imposes a discipline on policymakers to ensure policy outcomes are consistent, and the community is not left to navigate inconsistent and conflicting policy frameworks (Queensland Government, 2009).

Considering integration in linking multi-level strategic development plans involves combining and rationalizing visions, priorities, goals, timeframes, and proposed development programs and projects of national, regional, and local plans, in a flexible system of evaluation, decision-making, and action. Multi-level strategic development plans should be integrated in both directions; vertically between the three levels of planning and horizontally within the same level.

Vertical integration is the meshing of planning both up and down the various levels of government (Queensland Government, 2009). It involves

integration of national, regional, and local plans, in a systematic approach that ensure alignment of the three level plans.

Horizontal integration involves integration of plans within the same level. At the national level, sectors and ministers should follow a linking approach to formulate integrated plans (Hadingham and Wilson, 2003). At the regional level, regional authorities or governorates should ensure integrated programs and projects that reflect the mutual national vision.

At the local level, local strategic development plans should consider integration in their proposed programs and projects. For example, joint service projects and programs, which could be proposed by local plans could be a result of integrated plans at the local level.

2) Coordination

Unlike integration, which involves combining like aspects of systems, coordination involves relationships between structures, policies, and processes that are different, yet interdependent (Queensland Government, 2009).

Alexander (2000) has illustrated coordinative planning as a one type of planning paradigms that deals with heterogeneous collectives. It aims at organizing effective action to achieve mutual goals. It is useful to be used in large and complex organizations to deal with different roles and interests. The need for coordinative planning is the result of the relevant participants' interdependence, where none of the actors can accomplish their particular objectives without the others.

As with integration, coordination may be either vertical or horizontal. Considering coordination in linking strategic development plans in vertical direction, involves purposeful deliberation among the three levels, in order to prioritize programs and projects, allocate resources, avoid conflict, and align plans that reflect the different needs of the different levels (Queensland Government, 2009).

Horizontal coordination between the strategic development plans involves considering coordination between plans within the same level of planning. At the national level coordination among sectors should be considered to formulate coordinated sectoral programs. Sectoral ministries should take into account other proposed sectoral programs and projects while preparing their plans. A coordinated channel could be developed to facilitate coordination in a timely manner.

At the regional level, considering horizontal coordination between regions is necessary to ensure different regional programs are proposed, but at the same time interrelated. At the local level, considering horizontal coordination between LGUs in preparing their local strategic development plans help to avoid duplication of service projects for the same area like schools, and avoid conflict in the proposed programs and projects.

Sometimes coordination seems to be difficult, because it seeks to find mutual goals. To deal with this difficulty, planners should be more strategically goal-focused, and more communicatively consensus-oriented (Alexander, 2000).

However, considering integration and coordination in linking multi-level strategic development plans is a difficult challenge, it requires policy makers and planners to dispense with common notions of hierarchical and compartmentalized policy and governance systems, and focus on planning systems and outputs (Queensland Government, 2009).

2.4.2 Linking Approaches

During recent decades, two dominant planning approaches have been used in conducting multi-level strategic development planning. These approaches are: top-down planning approach, and bottom-up planning approach. Recently, literature has suggested a third approach, which is a result of a combination of these two planning approaches (Mohammadi, 2010, Amdam, 2010, and Cooksey and Kikula, 2005).

It should be indicated that these three approaches have been used in literature with different terms, but the concept is the same. The following is a description of these three planning approaches:

1) Top-Down Planning Approach

This approach was the dominant in planning literature and practice until 1990s, and is still the dominant one in some countries (Mohammadi, 2010). It implies that planning is developed by a top level of structural hierarchy or by a professional staff, with no or limited involvement of lower levels.

In linking strategic development plans this approach implies that planning process flows from top to bottom level. Planning process begins with national plans with no or limited involvement of regional and local levels. Regional plans could be built on national plans and programs, with also no or limited involvement of local level. Finally, local plans are developed depending on the regional and national plans.

Advantages or Justification for using this approach are:

- This approach is characterized by a high level planning. Plans are conducted by the central or national level officials who have high level of experience, or by professional staff who have high level skills (Mohammadi, 2010). Therefore, this approach could be used in countries that are less experienced or have a weak capacity in strategic development planning, especially at the local level. Moreover, this approach could be used in planning for sensitive, large scale, and large investment projects. Examples of these projects are: infrastructure projects like roads, hospitals, and universities.
- This approach allows rapid and early planning. It could be used for pre-established and fixed timeframes. It is suitable for countries, which are basically donors funded, as the country in some cases should prepare its strategic development plan in a short time to solicit fund from donors (Cooksey and Kikula, 2005). This fund is given to the country based on its proposed programs and projects. This makes involvement of local level difficult as it is time consuming and impractical.

On the other hand, there are disadvantages associated with this approach; these are (Mohammadi, 2010):

- This approach puts poor assumptions about lower levels needs for development. It in most cases represents what the central or national level thinks that the local or regional level need. This may make development goes to the wrong direction that does not satisfy communities needs for development.
- This approach produces a poor feeling of ownership by the communities and local level. Literature suggests that planning should be conducted at the same level of implementation, as this encourages them for effective and effectively implementation of their strategic development plans (Fogg, 1999, and Abadžić et al., 2012).

2) Bottom-Up Planning Approach

This approach is the inverse of the previous one; it implies that lower level of planning hierarchy are the cornerstone in planning process. The direction of planning goes from the bottom to the top, and the local communities are the main actors.

Sometimes, this approach is named as “participative approach” because it is characterized by active participation of the stakeholders and citizens from local level. Priorities and needs of local communities are reflected at the beginning of the planning process throughout local plans (Cooksey and Kikula, 2005).

After developing local plans, the process of planning continues to regional and then to national plans, and reflects the real citizen's needs, as citizens needs are included in local plans.

Advantages of this approach could be summarized as follows (Roy and Ganguly, 2009):

- This approach provides real citizens' needs. As the local level and communities proposes their priorities and projects for development by themselves.
- This approach encourages local level and communities to create and effectively implement their strategic development plans. As a feeling of ownership is produced by this approach.

On the other hand, this approach has the following disadvantages (Roy and Ganguly, 2009):

- This approach takes a long time as compared to the top-down approach; it is difficult to be used for short and fixed timetables.
- Sometimes local planners have no or little expertise and capacity regarding the skills of strategic development planning. In these countries it's difficult to delegate planning to the local level.

3) A Combined Approach of Top-Down and Bottom-Up Planning

In planning literature there is a tendency to bottom-up planning more than top-down model because communities are the best to identify the local

priorities and needs. Therefore, the idea that bottom-up can replace top-down approach has been emerged. However, in planning practice, there seems to be a need for combination more than replacement (Amdam, 2010).

This approach can be considered as the combination of the two previously mentioned approaches. Amdam (2010) has called the integration of top-down and bottom-up approaches as “empowerment approach”. It implies “helping people to help themselves” or “leading people to learn to lead themselves”. In multi-level planning this implies “helping the levels to help themselves” (Amdam, 2010).

However, to follow this approach in linking strategic development plans, this means to follow a top-down policy and bottom-up planning (Mohammadi, 2010). Top-down policy implies that national or regional level can support local planning with resources, guidelines, acceptance, and technical assistance. On the other hand, bottom-up planning allows local level and communities to lead themselves and to reflect their needs.

Advantages of this approach could be summarized as follows:

- This approach helps in building capacity of lower levels, as these levels work with partnership with top level (Amdam, 2010).
- This approach provides real citizens’ needs, as planning are conducted by the local level.

- Top down policy could be a directive and control tool for monitoring planning.

On the other hand, this approach has the following disadvantages:

- Sometimes, it is difficult to make better balance between top and bottom levels. Duplication or absence of roles and responsibilities may result.
- Over emphasis on top down policy may affect the autonomy of local level in planning and decision making.

This approach could combine the advantages of the two previously mentioned approaches, and could also minimize their disadvantages. For example, this approach may allow citizens' needs to be reflected in strategic development plans, as the approach is based on bottom up planning. However, at the same time, policies and planning guidelines that monitor local planning could be set out by top level.

In other examples, countries could allow bottom up planning that is basically conducted by the local level, however, at the same time, they could direct planning for sensitive and large projects for the top level.

Based on review of planning literature, it could be concluded that this approach is the preferable one for strategic development planning. Friedman (1992) has an in-depth discussion of this approach in the perspective of modernization of the society where the instrumental top-down policy dominates the communicative bottom-up policy. Friedman's

solution is a better balance between instrumental and communicative rationality.

2.4.3 Criteria for Selection a Proper Planning Approach

Selection of an appropriate approach of linking the multi-level strategic development plans necessitates taking into account different factors. Based on previous presentation of the three approaches, it could be concluded that there are three major factors that affect the selection of the appropriate approach. These criteria are:

1. The experience of planners at all levels.
2. The environment that surrounds the planning process.
3. Timing, type of plans, and proposed projects.

2.5 Summary

Strategic development planning is an approach used to achieve social and economic development. It involves setting out strategic development plans at the three levels of planning; national, regional, and local levels. Reviewed literature indicates that countries follow three different approaches in linking and aligning such multi-level plans.

However, selecting an appropriate approach for conducting multi-level strategic development planning necessitates considering the planning surrounding conditions in each country. Therefore, countries vary in selecting their own planning approach, which they believe is more

appropriate. In Palestine, planning environment and conditions are changing rapidly. Palestine is under occupation, this limits the autonomy of planners and increases the uncertainty of planning. Therefore, selecting an appropriate approach may be considered as a difficult challenge.

Furthermore, the United Nations (2008) proposes the roles and responsibilities for the three levels of governments in multi-level strategic development planning. It should be indicated that such roles and responsibilities could be also differ in planning systems throughout countries. Palestinian planning system is conducted by multiple political parties, in addition, capacities of planners at the three levels are different and weak in some cases. These could make some difficulties in identifying such roles and responsibilities.

Literature sets the basic principles and approaches for conducting such planning, however, Palestinian decision makers and planners should consider the planning environment, carefully adopt and implement the proper approach, and continuously upgrade the planning approach and capacities of planners, in order to deal with the large uncertainty and planning obstacles.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes how the study is being conducted. It describes what approaches are followed in collecting data and information, in diagnosing and analyzing the Palestinian multi-level strategic development planning system, and in developing the model of multi-level strategic development planing.

The methodology, which is followed in the research is illustrated and connected in a sequential way. The main steps, which are followed in the study are briefly illustrated and connected with each other.

Furthermore, this chapter illustrates the methodological approaches which are used in the research. In addition, the qualitative and quantitative research tools, which are used in conducting this study are also addressed and illustrated.

3.2 Research Methodology

The methodology, which was followed in this research is summarized in Figure 4.1.

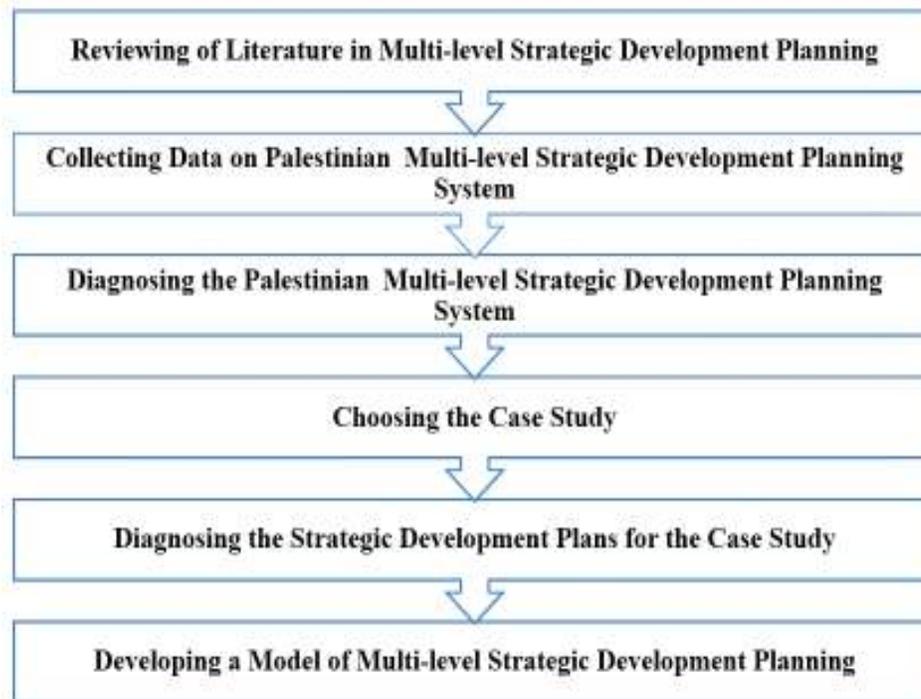


Figure (3.1): Research Methodology

Research methodology, which is summarized in Figure 3.1, will be illustrated in the following sections.

3.2.1 Reviewing of Literature in Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning

Some related concepts and definitions in strategic development planning were reviewed and illustrated. In addition, the concept, principles, and approaches of linking multi-level strategic development plans were briefly illustrated.

Furthermore, three case studies of multi-level strategic development planning systems in different countries were analyzed and assessed.

3.2.2 Collecting Data on Palestinian Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning System

In order to collect related data and information, interviews have been conducted with some key stakeholders who have participated in preparing strategic development plans at the national, the regional, and the local levels.

Furthermore, some related studies, reports, and manuals, which are collected from the relevant ministries, municipalities, and other agencies are investigated.

3.2.3 Diagnosing Palestinian Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning System

The three levels of strategic development planning in Palestine were analyzed and assessed in terms of planning approach, participation, institutional and legal status, and linkages among the planning levels.

An overall assessment has also been conducted to conclude the strong points, which need to be strengthened, and the challenges, which need to be reduced in effect.

3.2.4 Choosing the Case Study

A case study of the multi-level strategic development planning in Nablus Governorate, Palestine, had been chosen. The objective was to analyze and assess the relationships between Nablus Regional Development Plan and four other plans. These are:

- At the national level, two strategic development plans were chosen, these are: the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP), for the years 2008-2010, and the National Development Plan (NDP), for the years 2011-2013.
- At the local level, two strategic development plans were chosen, these are: Nablus City Local Development plan (LDP), for the years 2012-2015, and Beita Town Local Development Plan (LDP), for the years 2012-2015.

3.2.5 Diagnosing the Strategic Development Plans for the Case Study

An assessment was conducted for the relationships between Nablus RDP and the four multi-level strategic development plans, which were chosen in the case study.

The assessment is conducted regarding development visions, timeframes, sectors, development issues, development objectives, proposed programs and projects, budgets, and indicators.

3.2.6 Developing a Model of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning

Based on previous steps, the proposed model of multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine had been developed. This includes choosing the proper approach, identifying roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders, and proposing the enabling environment.

In addition, three proposed frameworks were developed in this regard. These are the legal framework, the institutional framework, and the financial framework. These three frameworks constitute the proposed environment that could facilitate best applying the proposed model.

3.3 Methodological Approach

Both approaches the qualitative and the quantitative have been utilized in this study. The qualitative approach is utilized for describing the present multi-level strategic development planning system in Palestine. The quantitative approach is utilized to assess the relationships among the multi-level plans, which had been chosen in the case study.

Furthermore, the research utilized the following approaches:

- **Analytical approach** for analyzing the current institutional, legal, and procedural status of the three levels of strategic development planning in Palestinian planning system.
- **Descriptive approach** for describing the relationships among the three levels of strategic development planning based on quantitative and qualitative measurements.
- **Comparative approach** for comparing the three levels of Palestinian strategic development planning and the multi-level plans at the case study, regarding: development visions, timeframes, sectors, development issues, development objectives, proposed programs and projects, budgets, and indicators.

- **Deductive approach** for developing a proposed model of multi-level strategic development planning and for developing the proposed legal, institutional, and financial frameworks that constitute the enabling environment that facilitate applying the proposed model.

3.4 Research Tools

Tools, which were used in this research are summarized as follows:

- Internet/desk research for reviewing the related literature in multi-level strategic development planning.
- Investigation of the related studies, reports, and manuals, which were collected from the relevant ministries, municipalities, and other agencies.
- Analysis of the multi-level plans, which were chosen in the case study.
- Several interviews have been conducted with some planning experts and key stakeholders who have participated in preparing strategic development plans at the national, regional, and local levels.

Chapter Four

**Case Studies of Multi-Level
Strategic Development Planning**

Chapter Four

Case Studies of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning

4.1 Introduction

This chapter includes three case studies of multi-level strategic development planning in different countries. The first case is about the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) in South Africa. The integration approach, which is used to involve the national, the regional, and the local levels, for conducting the multi-level strategic development planning in the country is illustrated.

The second case is about the cross sectoral and multi-level coordination in Latvia. The case illustrates the horizontal and vertical coordination in strategic development planning, which is conducted among levels and sectors. The approach of multi-level of strategic development planning in the country could be considered as a top down approach, which is being gradually replaced by a more bottom up approach that supports local initiatives. The efforts, which are spent by Latvia country to shift towards bottom up planning are summarized.

The third case is about the unions of municipalities in Lebanon. The case illustrates how this formulation of unions could facilitate conducting multi-level strategic development planning.

4.2 Integrated Development Planning (IDP) in South Africa

South Africa is a post-conflict society. Its transition from conflict to peace during the 1990s was marked by unrivalled levels of political and

social reconciliation. However, during that critical time, Government institutions were quickly transformed to promote ‘true’ development and democracy (Gueli et al., 2007).

One of the basic pillars that South Africa depends to peruse its true development is using its self-styled ‘integrated development planning’ approach that had been implemented after 1994. However, this approach emphasizes on how different spheres of the Government and other sectors can work together to promote socio-economic development.

In South Africa there are three levels of strategic development planning. These levels are: the national level, the provincial (regional) level, and the local level. In this case, the research emphasis is put upon the relations between these three levels of strategic development planning, and how South Africa’s integrated approach is reinforcing the multi-level strategic development planning.

Based on studying and examining the IDP approach for local level planning in South Africa, the relations between planning levels are discussed as presented below.

4.2.1 IDP Guide for Municipalities

In order to enhance strategic development planning at the local level, the country prepared this guide not only to provide municipalities with assistance, but also to enforce all municipalities to pursue it. This is considered as a mandatory planning form for municipalities by law (BUS, 2008).

IDP is a participatory approach; it requires the involvement of all three spheres of Government. Municipalities take a leader role in IDP, with large participation from the other two levels. IDP guide has identified the roles and responsibilities of the three levels as key participants in IDP. Roles and responsibilities are shown in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the role of each level of the Government in IDP as it is addressed in the guide. These roles and responsibilities could be considered as a control tool for vertical integration among the three levels.

On the other hand, it could be noticed that the main responsibility of preparing and adopting the IDP is only directed to the local level. Regional and national levels take the role of supervision, coordination, and financial and training assistance.

GOVERNMENT SPHERE	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
LOCAL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Local municipality ■ District municipality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and adopt an IDP • Provide support to poorly capacitated local municipalities • Facilitate the compilation of a district framework which will ensure co-ordination and alignment between local municipalities and the district municipality • Prepare and adopt an IDP • Prepare and adopt an IDP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Metropolitan municipality 	
PROVINCIAL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Department of Local Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate training • Provide financial support • Provide general IDP guidance • Monitor the process in the Province • Facilitate co-ordination and alignment between district municipalities • Facilitate resolution of disputes between municipalities • Facilitate alignment of IDP's with Provincial sector department policies and programmes • Assess IDP's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sector Departments 	
NATIONAL	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Department of Provincial and Local Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue legislation and policies in support of IDP's • Issue Integrated Development Planning Guidelines • Provide financial assistance • Provide a National Training Framework • Establish a Planning and Implementation Management Support System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sector Departments 	

Figure (4.1): Roles and Responsibilities of the Three Spheres of the Government in IDP

Source: Local Government of South Africa (2000)

4.2.2 Legal Basis

Strategic development planning in South Africa has a strong legal basis (Local Government of South Africa, 2000). Laws, regulations, and policies have been set to control the IDP process. Moreover, the issue of

integration among the levels of planning is also clearly identified in the Constitution. Figure 4.2 illustrates section 153 of the country's constitution.

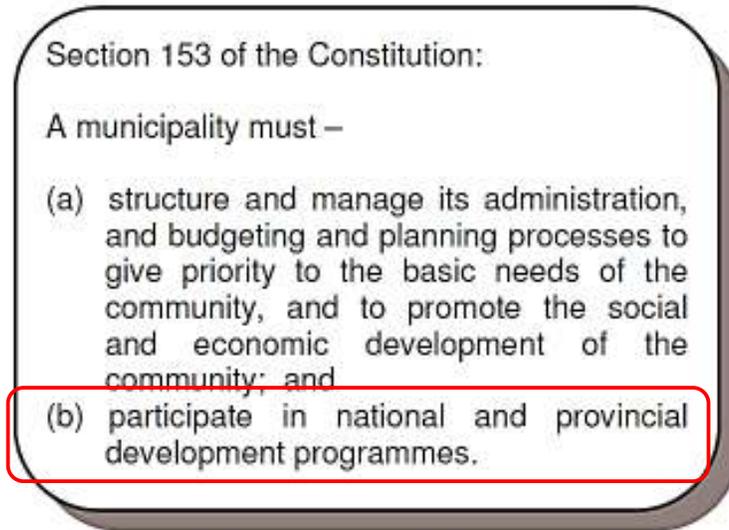


Figure (4.2): Section 153 of South Africa's Constitution
Source: Local Government of South Africa (2000)

In section 153 of the country's constitution, it is indicated that a municipality must participate in national and provincial (regional) development programs. This means not only considering local needs, but also a real and vital participation of local level in higher level planning programs is necessary.

On the other hand, a municipality should be compatible with national and provincial plans as mentioned in "Municipal Systems Act". This is illustrated in Figure 4.3.

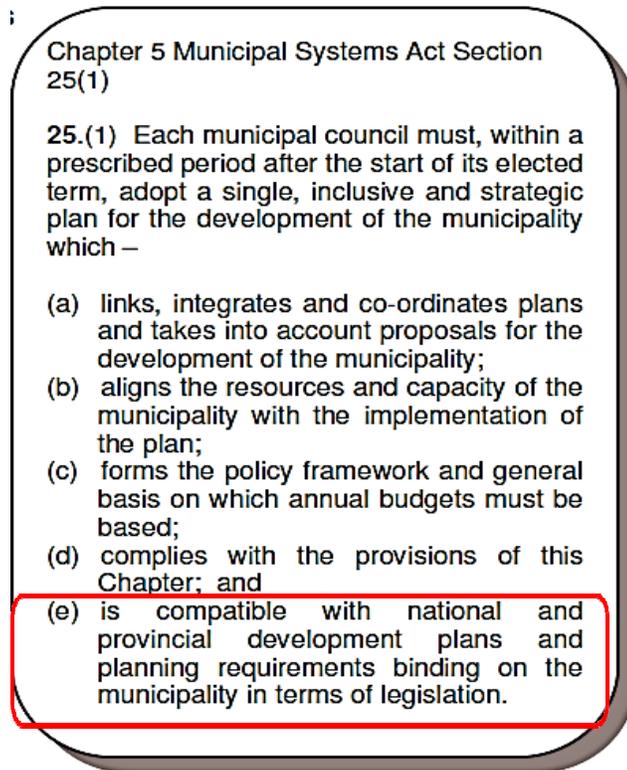


Figure (4.3): South Africa's Municipal System Act Section

Source: Local Government of South Africa (2000)

These two directions of integration among the three planning levels, and also reinforcement them by laws, would be considered as a control tool for IDP approach, and may provide support for the process as a whole.

4.2.3 Planning and Implementation Management Support System (PIMSS)

PIMSS is a national IDP support system, which has been established to provide support to municipalities in preparation and implementation of IDPs. The core element of PIMSS is the PIMSS-Centers, which are established at district council level, and their mandate is to assist local municipalities, which have limited capacity with the IDP process. The PIMSS-Centers are staffed by experienced professionals who would

provide the assistance directly or refer a role-player to relevant service providers who has the necessary expertise.

4.2.4 Integrations with Sectors

Beside vertical integration through levels, IDP approach considers another direction of integration named as the horizontal integration with sectors.

The IDP approach necessitates all sectors to contribute to local priority issues. Planning at national and provincial (regional) levels is primarily sectoral based. Specific sectoral requirements in national and provincial (regional) programs need to be met by the local government. However, the implementation of these programs invariably happens in local governments' area of jurisdiction. To ensure that local government priorities are addressed, the planning process of all spheres of the Government must be aligned and inform each other. This requires that local government planning processes take into account the legislative, policy, and strategy approaches of the various sector departments of national government (Harpe, 2012).

In the IDP guide, the issue of alignment between local planning level and sectors planning is addressed. Harpe (2012) has summarized this issue of alignments through an example of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Sector (WASH Sector). Figure 4.4 clarifies that two directions of horizontal integration and coordination should be addressed between WASH development plan and IDP.

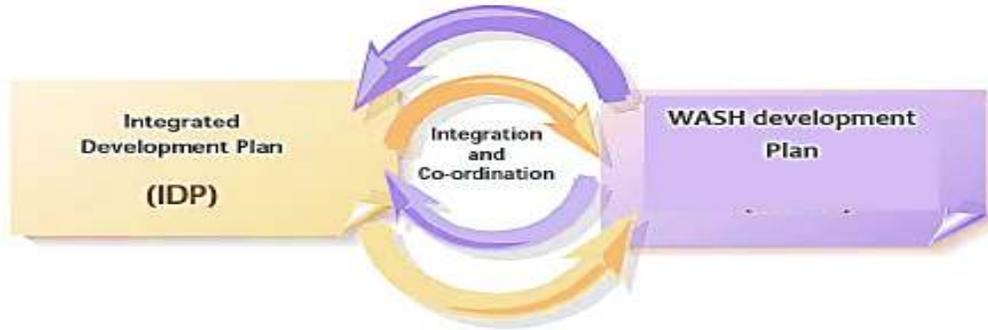


Figure (4.4): WASH Development Plan Integration with IDP

Source: Harpe (2012)

Figure 4.5 illustrates the five phases of alignment between the IDP and WASH plan.

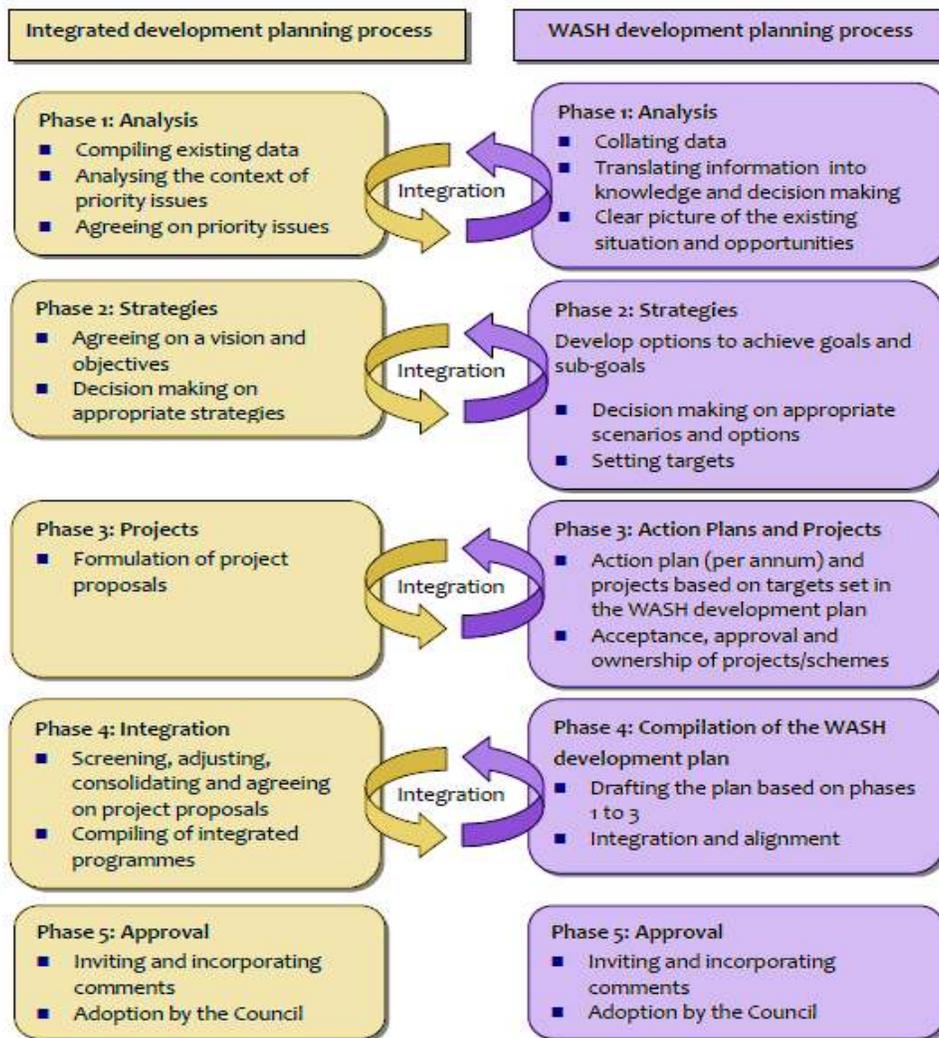


Figure (4.5): Integration between WASH Sector Plan and IDP

Source: Harpe (2012)

It could be observed that the process of alignment between IDP and WASH necessitates two directions of integration at each phase of planning. These two directions of integration could be considered as an instrument to ensure that local priorities and needs are considered in sectoral planning, and also local plans are aligned from sectoral perspective.

From the previous discussion it could be concluded that South Africa's development planning system has achieved a pilot experience in IDP, especially in the issue of integration and coordination in the vertical (among multi levels) and horizontal (with sectors) directions, which is lacked in multiple planning systems in many countries.

On the other hand, there is some criticism associated to the involvement of the national level, that in some cases national departments have not always managed to participate in municipal integrated development planning processes in meaningful and sustainable ways. This issue may limit the impact of IDPs (Gueli et al., 2007).

4.3 Cross Sectoral and Multi-Level Coordination in Latvia

Latvia is a country in the Baltic region of North Europe, which joined the EU in 2004. This had introduced new trends, especially in strategic development planning.

The Latvian planning system is constituted from three levels; the national level, the regional level, and the local level. The current approach of multi-level planning in the country could be considered as a top down

approach, which is being gradually replaced by a more bottom up approach that supports local initiatives (Vitola and Senfelde, 2012).

Figure 4.6 illustrates the top down approach for multi-level strategic development planning in Latvia.

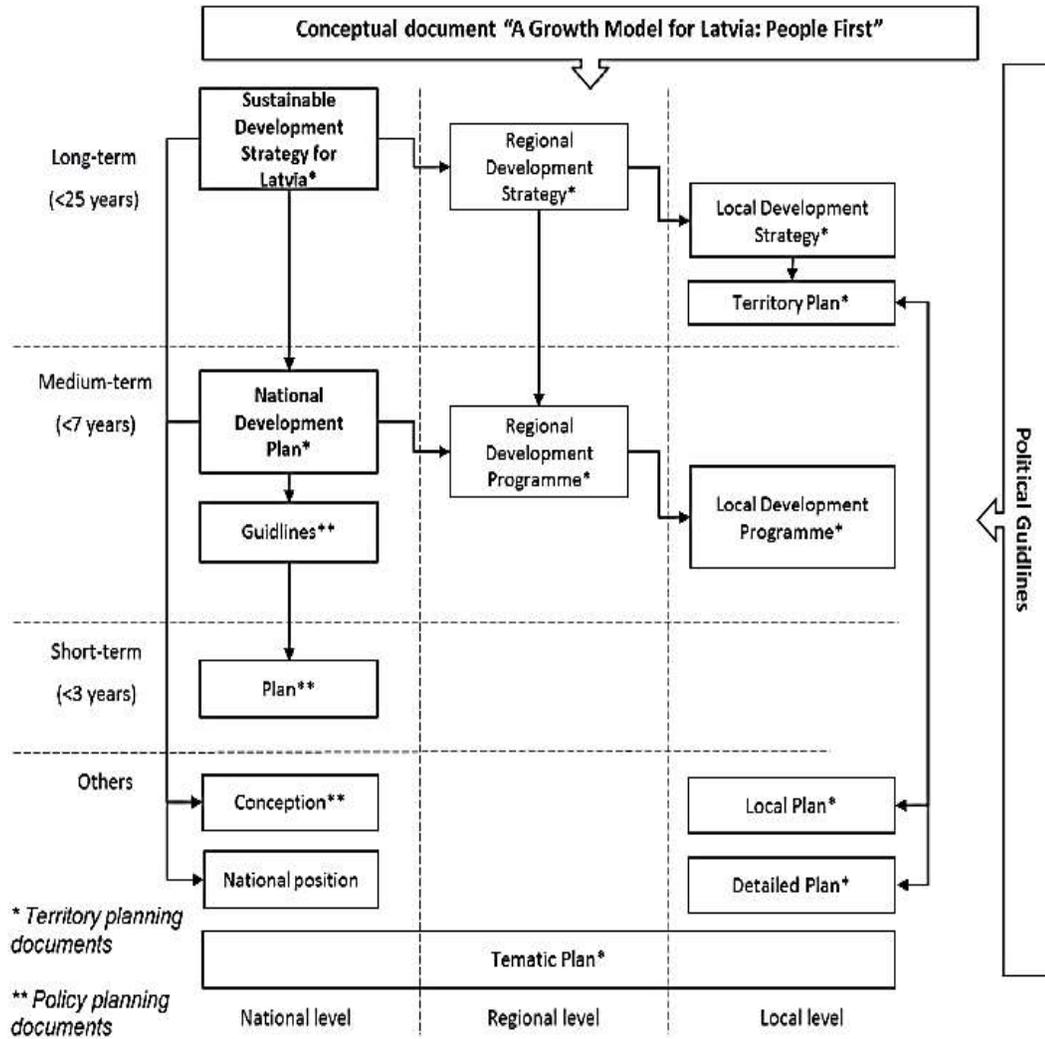


Figure (4.6): Top Down Approach for Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in Latvia

Source: Vitola and Senfelde (2012)

Considerable efforts are spent by the Latvian government to progress toward bottom up planning and decentralization. However, in 2011 an

essential survey was conducted to study the current status of multi-level strategic development planning in the country. The survey focused on policy coordination (strategic planning coordination) in both directions vertically and horizontally. Vertical coordination is represented by “multi-level policy” coordination and horizontal coordination is represented by “cross sectoral policy coordination”.

4.3.1 Cross Sectoral Policy Coordination

The survey is conducted with 40 experienced officials in sectoral ministries in order to find out their views on cross-sectoral and multi-level policy. Initially, the importance of policy coordination is studied. The result showed that the majority of the respondents agree that policy coordination is important to improve the situation in their sector (75% very important and 25% fairly important) and to improve the state in general (85% very important and 15% fairly important).

The survey also studied the current level of policy coordination, through the frequency of different coordination activities, as illustrated in Figure 4.7. Results show that most often officials exchange information and consult with each other. Sometimes they also voluntarily search for an agreement, but the likelihood of the arbitration by the third side (e.g., the Prime Minister) or an integration of sectoral policies is low. This means that the current level of policy coordination is still low.

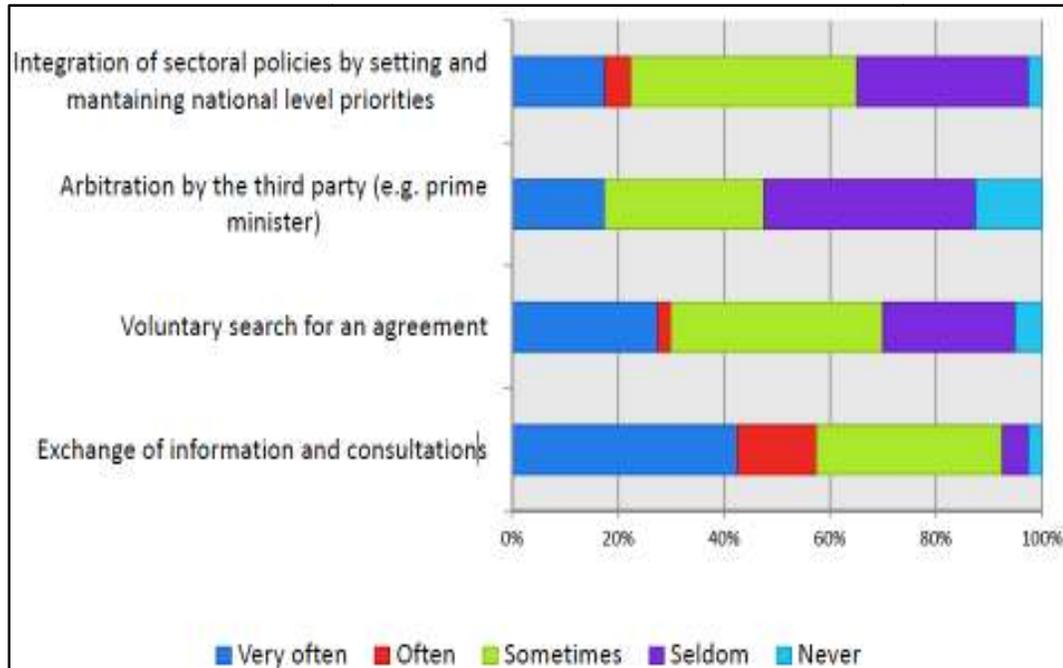


Figure (4.7): The Latvian Level of Policy Coordination

Source: Vitola and Senfelde (2012)

Informal policy coordination instruments seem to be more useful than policy papers and formal procedures. Interestingly, common policy papers are evaluated as more useful than the declaration of the Government as seen in Figure 4.8.

The forms of policy coordination that could be successfully implemented in the coming years are also studied. The results showed that more than a half of the respondents (54%) thought that cross-sectoral and multi-level policy coordination should be facilitated by special projects or programs in particular fields rather than by implementing a comprehensive whole-government strategy (15%). At the same time considerable part of the respondents (25%) believed that consultations with other ministries could be successfully implemented in the coming years as seen in Figure 4.9.

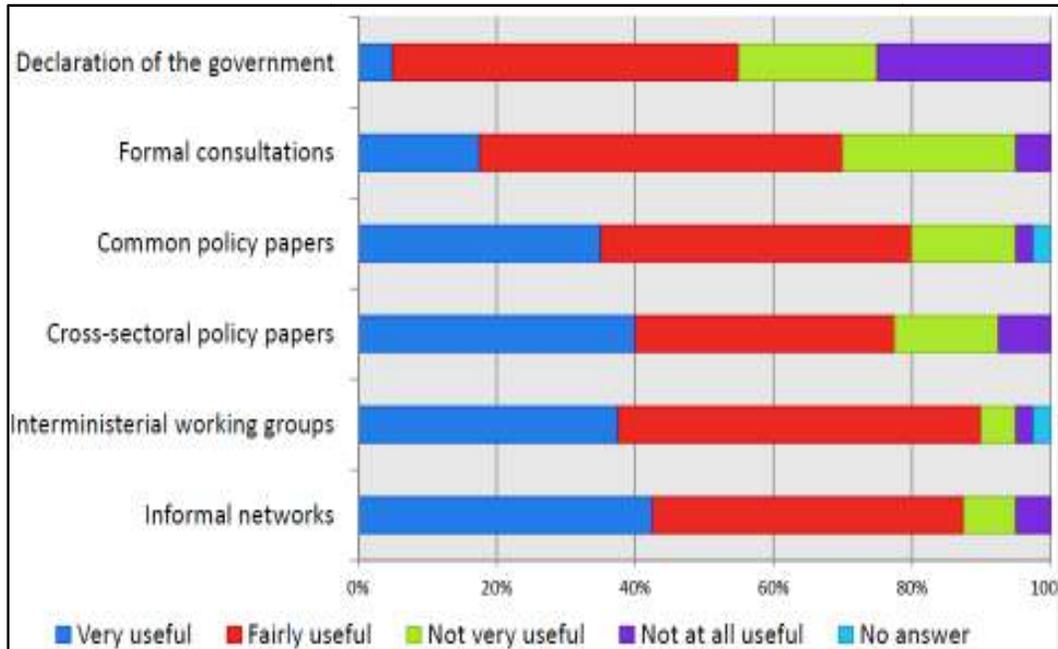


Figure (4.8): The Usefulness of Policy Coordination Instruments

Source: Vitola and Senfelde (2012)

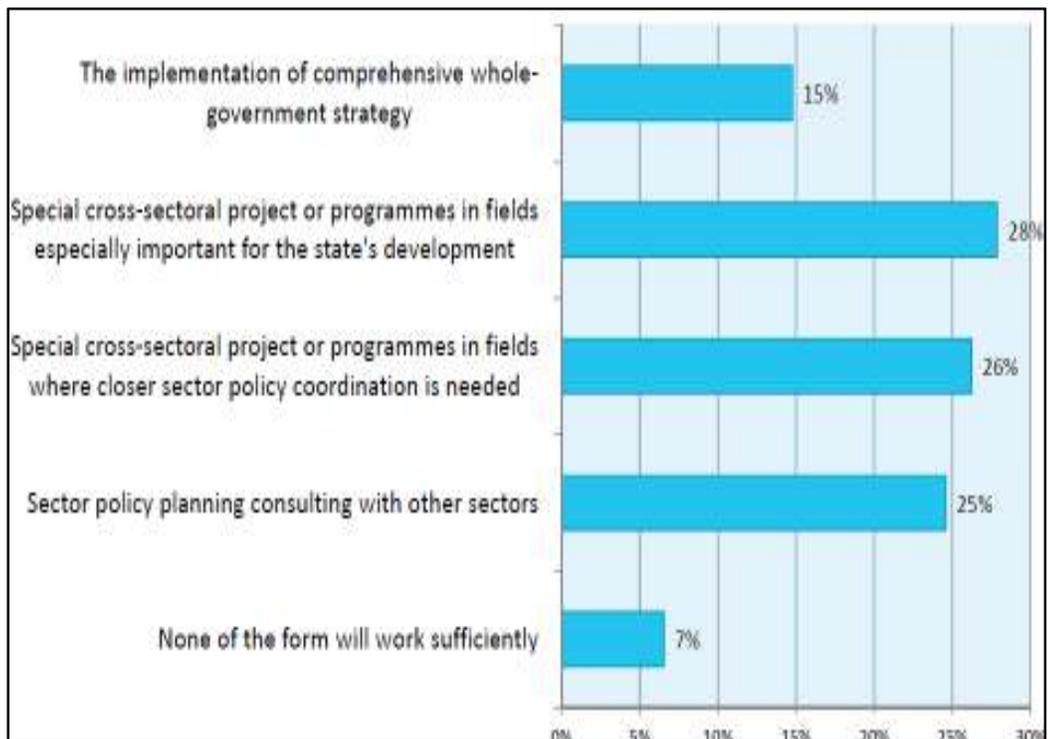


Figure (4.9): The Forms of Policy Coordination that Could be Successfully Implemented in the Coming Years

Source: Vitola and Senfelde (2012)

4.3.2 Multi-Level Policy Coordination

The survey also studied the second direction of coordination; vertical coordination among multi-level planning. The result is illustrated in Figure 4.10.

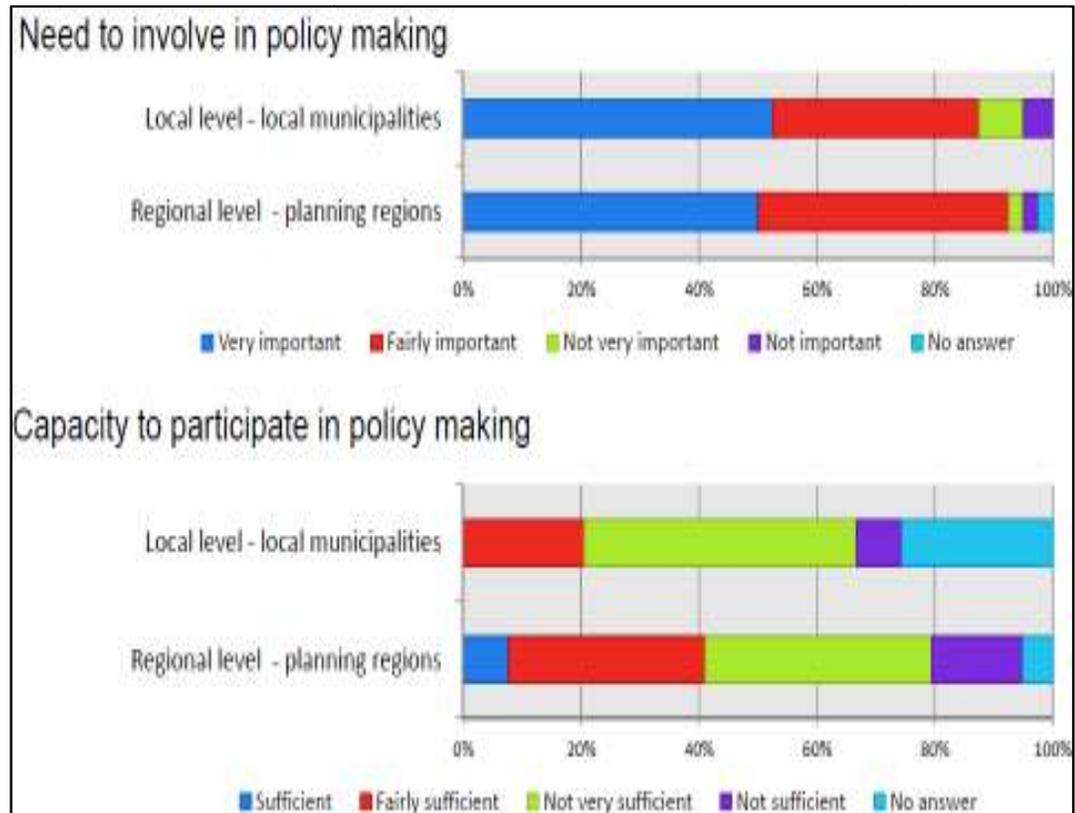


Figure (4.10): Involvement of Regional and Local Level

Source: Vitola and Senfelde (2012)

The majority of the officials agreed that the involvement of the regional and local levels in sector policy planning is very or fairly important. However, there is a sceptical attitude towards the capacity of regions and municipalities to make the right decisions for their development. Only 21% of the respondents assessed the capacity of local municipalities to participate in sector policy planning as fairly sufficient.

The capacity of planning regions was assessed to be higher compared with that for local municipalities; 8% evaluated it as sufficient and 33% as fairly sufficient.

Still the majority of the officials (72%) agreed that the decentralization of policy making to regional level would increase the level of cross-sectoral policy coordination. At the same time the decentralization to local level is perceived sceptically, as the majority of the respondents (69%) did not agree that it would increase the level of sector policy integration.

Based on the previous results of the survey, it could be concluded that the Latvian planning system needs a new approach that considers formal integration and coordination vertically and horizontally. However, to deal with the previous problems and others, the Latvian Government in 2011 established a new institution named as Cross Sectoral Coordination Center (CSCC) to be the responsible body for national plans. The following paragraphs describe the roles and responsibilities of the CSCC.

4.3.3 Cross Sectoral Coordination Center (CSCC)

CSCC is a new institution, which has a role of leading national development planning and coordination in Latvia. It is responsible for preparation of National Development Plans and Sustainable Development Strategy. Also, it is responsible for supervising and coordinating the implementation of national development planning documents related to participation in the EU (Vilks, 2014).

CSCC performs analytical tasks assigned by the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister's Office. Its contribution lies in initiating cooperation at all levels of the decision-making process, as well as planning and assessment.

It began its operations in 2011 in direct subordination to the Prime Minister. Recently, it has prepared the new National Development Plan (NDP) for the years 2014-2020, and the Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030 (Vilks, 2014).

Since CSCC is constituted from professional experts; it could set high quality outputs and standards. Also, a centralized policy coordination may ensure more coherent and non-biased plans, and may increase the probability of dilution of action and resources.

4.3.4 National Development Plan (NDP) for the Years 2014-2020

NDP (2014-2020) is hierarchically the highest national-level medium-term planning document. It sets the most important medium-term objectives, priorities and performance indicators, as well as directions of activity within each priority, outcomes and responsible institutions, and indicative financial resources.

NDP (2014-2020) is closely related to the Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030, which is considered the highest long-term policy planning document, and related to the National Reform Programme for the Implementation of the EU2020 Strategy (NRP). Policy Planning Hierarchy in Latvia is illustrated in Figure 4.11.



Figure (4.11): Policy Planning Hierarchy in Latvia

Source: Cross Sectoral Coordination Center (2013)

The main responsibility for the preparation of the document was placed on the new institution; the CSCC. The plan was developed in cooperation of the experts at the CSCC with the social and cooperation partners of the government, government ministries, planning regions, and local governments (Cross-Sectoral Coordination Center, 2012).

A comparison between NDP (2014-2020) and the previous one (NDP 2007-2013) is conducted in order to define the benefits that could be generated after shifting the responsibility of planning from central government to CSCC. It could be concluded that:

- NDP (2014-2020) involves participants from all levels; national, regional, and local, in addition to the involvement of sectoral ministers. This comprehensive involvement may contribute to increase the integration and coordination vertically and horizontally. However,

although NDP (2007-2020) was focused on local and regional issues, it does not involve real participation as the new one, which has been developed in accordance with the requirements of Cabinet Regulation No. 816 in 2011 “Procedures for the Development, Implementation, Monitoring and Public Discussion of the National Development Plan for 2014-2020”.

- CSCC sets a clear criteria to identify actions that would be cross-sectoral. This would bring the highest value added and would create substantial impact, and change in different policy areas were set. These criteria are summarized in Figure 4.12.

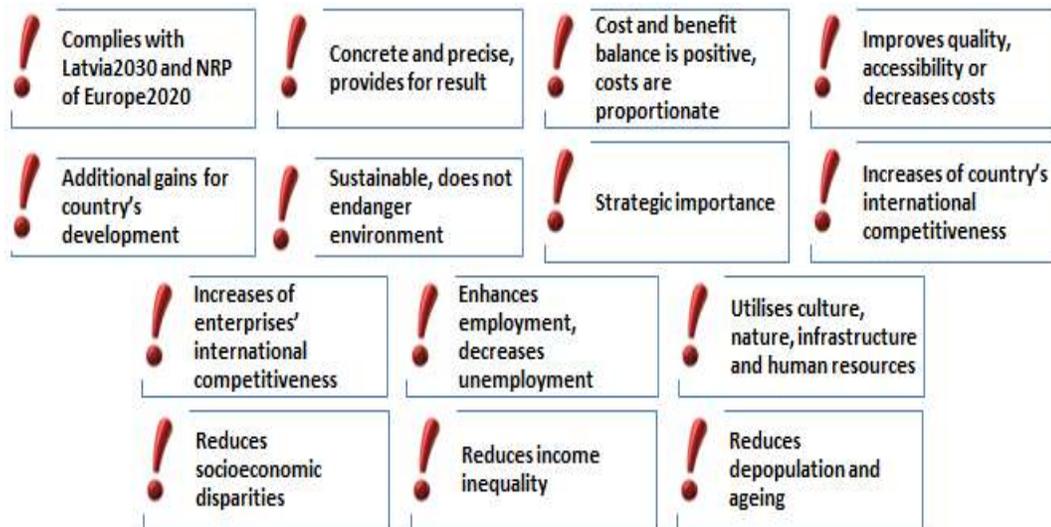


Figure (4.12): Latvia's Cross Sectoral Criteria

Source: Cross-Sectoral Coordination Center (2013)

- NDP (2014-2020) recognizes the territorial issue, as all of the five regions, which constitute Latvia are involved in the planning process, and are addressed in the plan document by names, as illustrated in Figure 4.13.

Public Sector Institutions

- Cross-Sectoral Coordination Centre
- Prime Minister's Office
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Economics
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Education and Science
- Ministry of Culture
- Ministry of Welfare
- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Justice
- State Chancellery
- Ministry of Environmental Planning and Regional Development
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Agriculture

Social Partners and NGO's

- Employers' Confederation of Latvia
- Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia
- Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments
- Latvian Association of Big Cities
- Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Latvian Academy of Sciences
- Latvian Rectors' Council
- Student Union of Latvia
- Centre for Public Policy "Providus"
- Latvian Rural Forum
- European Movement – Latvia!
- Riga Planning Region
- Kurzeme Planning Region
- Zemgale Planning Region
- Latgale Planning Region
- Vidzeme Planning Region

Figure (4.13): Key Participants in Latvia's NDP (2014-2020)

Source: Cross-Sectoral Coordination Center (2013)

Since Latvia involves all regions in planning process, this may contribute to produce a non-biased planning programs and projects.

- Based on the major national priorities, which are addressed in NDP (2014-2020), it could be noticed that this new plan has focused on development of the regions, one of the basic three priorities of the program is the "Growth for Regions". The three basic priorities is illustrated in Figure 4.14.



Figure (4.14): Three Basic Priorities for Latvia's NDP (2014-2020)

Source: Cross-Sectoral Coordination Center (2012)

Priority "Growth for Regions" aims to create preconditions for sustainable and balanced economic development in the cities and regions. However, Latvia is still suffering from non-utilization of diversity skills and resources. The plan suggests that this priority "Growth for Region" would combine diverse skills and entrepreneurial abilities with available resources, and using regions advantages and resources as effectively as possible. On the other hand, the plan suggests that this priority may enforce the minimization of inequality in both among and within regions, and strengthening the capacity of regions.

It could be concluded that Latvia has spent a considerable effort to integrate and coordinate multi-level plans in the country. However,

Establishing a new institution, giving it a main responsibility for NDP, stipulation of involvement of all levels and sectors in the process, and finally application the process on NDP (2014-2020). All of these could be really described as a considerable effort to take into account the integration and coordination among and within levels and sectors.

On the other hand, Latvia should spend additional effort to develop its strategic development planning system, and reinforce the process a whole by laws and regulations.

4.4 Unions of Municipalities in Lebanon

Lebanon is a state with four administrative levels. These levels are: central level, regional level, district level, and local (municipal) level. In Lebanon there are six administrative regions, these regions are further divided into districts. There are 24 districts in Lebanon.

At the local level, Lebanon includes very large number of municipalities compared to its geographical area and population (Sader, 2002). The number of municipalities reaches 981 according to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities statistics until late 2011.

Lebanon includes a large number municipalities, which are very small and uneconomic (Watt, 2001). Therefore, during the last two decades, municipalities in Lebanon had created a new administrative structure in the form of unions of municipalities. These unions of municipalities are created to deal with the small size of municipalities and with the weakness of their human, technical and financial capabilities.

The content of this case study highlights these unions of municipalities, and how these unions could be useful to facilitate multi-level strategic development planning.

4.4.1 Concept of Unions of Municipalities

Union of municipalities is a combination of separate municipalities within a discrete geographic area. These municipalities are voluntarily joining together in response to the relatively large number of small and un-economic municipalities, and to provide a mechanism for inter-municipal coordination. Individual municipalities are represented in a Union governing committee by their respective Presidents. These unions have been formed under the Municipality Law 118 (1977) (Office of the Minister of State for Administrative, 2001).

The majority of Lebanese large cities and central districts are included in unions of municipalities. These unions include 600 municipalities. This is about 62% of the total number of municipalities. In Lebanon, there are 47 Unions of Municipalities. These unions are distributed in regions as seen in Table 4.1.

Table (4.1): Distribution of Unions of Municipalities in Lebanon

Region	Number of Unions
Beirut	-
Mount Lebanon	11
North Lebanon	13
Bika	12
Nabatiyyeh	6
South Lebanon	5
Total	47

Source: United Nations (2011)

Unions are composed from different municipalities that have decided to formally work together to resolve common public problems. Entering into such unions would enable municipalities to leverage their scarce resources by allowing them to work together to promote and implement public projects outside their capabilities (Haase and Antoun, 2014).

4.4.2 Strategic Planning at Unions of Municipalities

Small individual municipalities in Lebanon are not capable to prepare their own local plans. It's difficult and uneconomical to prepare a strategic plan for each municipality with the exception of large municipalities in the big cities.

Therefore, entering of these small municipalities into unions assist them to prepare their strategic plans or to conduct a jointly strategic plans. However, unions of municipalities are varying in their size. Therefore, the process of conducting strategic plans are also varying according to the unions' size and convergence, as follows (United Nations, 2011):

- Large Unions of Municipalities

These unions cover large land areas, and sometimes they cover a whole district. In this situation, it is difficult to set a joint strategic plan. Therefore, these unions are divided into multiple areas to facilitate conducting strategic plans. These areas are divided according to the geographical convergence or to the harmonization between these municipalities.

- **Union of Non-Contiguous Municipalities**

Planning for this form of unions could be challenging. This union should take care the different interests of these municipalities, and the strategic planning should be flexible enough to consider these differences.

- **Union of Contiguous Municipalities**

In this situation a joint strategic plan is prepared for these municipalities. These plans include joint proposed projects, which serve all/some of these municipalities.

Municipalities in Lebanon benefit from these unions regarding strategic planning. These benefits could be summarized as follows (Sader, 2002):

- Unions' offices could assist the weaker municipalities in conducting their strategic plans.
- Unions could plan for large scale and capital projects, which couldn't be handled by small municipalities.
- Conducting a joint strategic plan for municipalities.
- Jointing financial, technical, and human resources between municipalities.
- Facilitate coordination between these municipalities.
- Municipalities could benefit from government financial grants, which are directed to the unions to promote capital projects.

Multi-level strategic development planning approach usually suffers from large number of institutionalizations that may exist at the local level. Large number of small and weak municipalities and large number of local strategic development plans, makes difficulties in coordination and integration with upper level plans. Formulation of these unions represent a channel to facilitate coordination with upper levels.

On the other hand, formulating joint strategic development plans decreases the number of developed plans and increases the quality of such plans. This may facilitate integration and coordination of local plans with upper level plans.

4.5 Assessment of the case studies

IDP in South Africa represents a case of considering integration vertically and horizontally between and across levels of planning. These two directions of integration are reinforced in the country through the following:

- The integrated planning process is clearly illustrated through the IDP Guide.
- Roles and responsibilities of national, regional, and local levels are clearly identified in the IDP Guide.
- The integration issue has a legal basis as it addressed in the Constitution.

- PIMSS-centers are established at the district level to support local level and encourage integration.
- The two directions of horizontal integration and alignment between the IDPs and sectoral plans exist at each phase of developing such plans.

The second case study of Latvia, which represents a case of considering coordination horizontally; across sectors, and vertically; between levels. This is achieved through the following:

- The country established a new institution named as CSCC, which is represented by all sectors and responsible for preparing the NDPs. This could encourage coordination between sectors and develop a more coherent and non-biased NDPs.
- The latest NDP for the years 2014-2020 included participants from the three levels of planning in addition to sectoral ministries, and it identified the five regions as key stakeholders in national planning.

The third case of Lebanon may give a solution for large number of very small and uneconomic municipalities that could be one of the problems which are associated with delegating planning to the local level. Therefore, establishing unions of municipalities could be a solution for such problems.

On the other hand, establishing these clusters or unions may cause some problems, due to lack of harmonization between the jointed municipalities. Therefore, careful selection of municipalities and

consideration for some criteria in selection are found to be essential, such as the geographic contiguity, social and economic relations, and the jointed services between the municipalities.

Furthermore, it could be suggested in some cases that these municipalities may prepare a joint strategic development plan without jointing. These municipalities could cooperate and share their skills and resources in preparing their joint strategic development plan and each municipality could keep its independence.

Chapter Five

Analysis of Palestinian Strategic Development Planning System

Chapter Five

Analysis of Palestinian Strategic Development Planning System

5.1 Introduction

Planning in Palestine is an extremely difficult challenge. Palestine is under occupation and has limited autonomy. It is heavily dependent on resources coming from outside. This makes it very difficult, but at the same time, very necessary to plan (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

Multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine is conducted at three levels; the national level, the regional level, and the local level. This chapter includes an analysis and assessment of these three levels of strategic development planning system.

The analysis of these three levels of planning is conducted regarding planning approach, participation, institutional and legal status, and linkages among the planning levels. In addition, an assessment of the current relationship and linkages between these three levels is conducted.

The objective of this analysis and assessment is to conclude the strength points of the strategic development planning system, which need to be strengthened, and the challenges, which need to be dealt with.

5.2 The National Level

The national level is the top level of the strategic development planning hierarchy in Palestine. It involves preparing national plans, which set out the national programs and actions for development.

The National Development Plans (NDPs) in Palestine take the form of Medium-Term Development Plans (MTDPs) that are prepared every three years and updated annually. The NDPs are sectorally based, the Ministry Of Planning And Administration (MOPAD) takes the leader role in preparing such plans, as the ministry incorporates the sectoral development programs in order to set out the national plan, and sends it to the cabinet for approval.

5.2.1 National Planning Approach

The MOPAD has described the approach of preparing the NDPs as a combination of top-down and bottom-up planning approach.¹ The start point begins at preparing “Palestinian National Policy Agenda” that gives a guiding framework for ministers in preparing their sectoral plans and budgets. This agenda is prepared by the MOPAD. It reflects what the government seeks to achieve for the benefit of the Palestinian people during the next three years (MOPAD, 2007).

On the other hand, sectoral ministers prepare their plans and budgets based on this Policy Agenda, and then submit their sectoral plans to the MOPAD. The MOPAD reviews these sectoral plans, debates with sectoral ministries, and coordinates between sectoral programs, in order to include modifications that ensure the quality of these plans, the consistency with national policies, and to ensure that such sectoral plans don't conflict with

¹ This information is based on the interview with Mashhour Hassan, Head of the Follow-up and Evaluation of Infrastructure Department, MOPAD.

each other (MOPAD, 2009). Thereafter, the MOPAD incorporates sectoral plans into the national plan and submits it to the cabinet for approval.

Figure 5.1 illustrates the steps for preparing the NDP, which was followed in preparing the NDP for the years 2014-2016.

However, the combined approach of top-down and bottom-up planning, which the MOPAD selects to follow, does not exceed the linking to the sectoral ministries, a real bottom up planning approach that basically starts at local needs and priorities, and a counter stream feedback have not been really existing. However, this issue will be discussed later in the following sections.

5.2.2. Participation in National Plans

The NDPs are based on the sectoral strategies. Therefore, the community participation in the NDPs is associated with the community participation in the sectoral plans.

There are different perspectives associated the participation in the NDPs. Based on the interviews, which had been conducted with some relevant ministries, and based on related studies, these different perspectives could be summarized as follows:

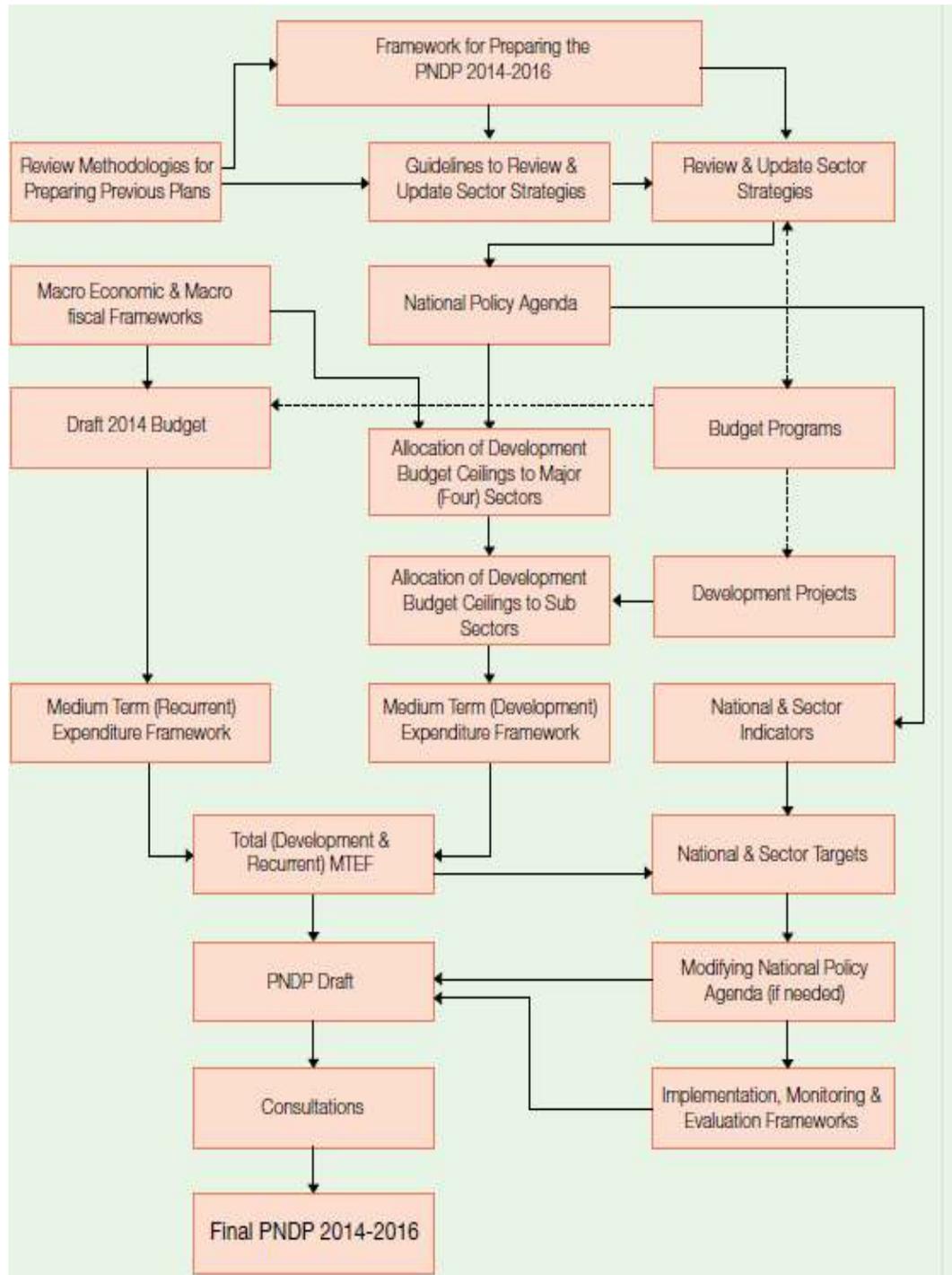


Figure (5.1): The NDP approach

Source: MOPAD (2014)

- Al-Sahili and Davidson (2011) had considered the process as participatory, that ministries participate in their sector plans, and each

ministry obtains information about needed developments from its districts offices. Nevertheless, they had considered the level of participation as limited.

- Ministry Of Local Government (MOLG) has described the NDP approach as a collective approach rather than a participatory approach, because the MOPAD only collects and combines sectoral plans, and this makes the process as a whole inaccurate.²
- MOPAD has claimed that there are indirect relation between the NDP and other plans (regional and local) through sectors, therefore, the needs of local communities is included through their participation in the local and the regional plans.³
- Daoud (2009) had indicated that current practice says that sectoral line ministries are responsible for defining and compiling the sector priorities, while the approach of how is this being done is not clear and is described usually based on the ministries perspectives of the priorities.

However, whichever the level of participation is described, it could vary from sector to another. For example, the Ministry of Health (MOH), prepares its sector plan in a centralized system, as it hasn't believed on the capacity of its district offices. While the Ministry of Education and Higher

² This information is based on the interview with Dr. Azzam Hjouj, General Director of the Department of Planning, MOLG.

³ This information is based on interview with Fadwa Azem, the Head of the Research and Developmental Policies Department, MOPAD.

Education (MOEHE) prepares its strategic development plans in a more participation, but this is still through indirect participation.

The MOEHE has a strong point as it could know the number, location, and problems of all schools. Therefore, this could help the ministry in identifying the needs of the community, which are provided by each school. Nevertheless, this identification of the needs does not mean that a community participation is conducted.

Based on the previous discussion, it could be concluded that the NDPs are characterized by a limited indirect participation of the community through sectoral planning, but this indirect participation couldn't be consider a real participation that should be built on community priorities and needs.

5.2.3 Institutional and Legal Status

The current PNA laws and regulations clearly allow for the MOPAD to be the main responsible body for preparing the NDPs (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011). It could be said that the NDPs preparing process is somewhat institutionalized. The main responsible body is the MOPAD, and the responsibility for preparing sectoral programs and actions is directed to the sectoral ministries.

The MOPAD contains four general directorates associated with planning, and each directorate is responsible for coordinating with different sector. These directorates are: infrastructure sector planning, economic

sector planning, social sector planning, and administrative development and governance sector planning.

Moreover, there is a monitoring and evaluation directorate in the MOPAD, which is responsible for updating the NDPs based on evaluating the progress of implementing projects and programs. However, the NDP is updated annually based on annual and semi-annual reports submitted from the sectoral ministers to the MOPAD.

Sectoral ministers also contain a monitoring and evaluating unit at each ministry. This unit is responsible for updating the sectoral plan, preparing the reports, and submitting them to the MOPAD. These reports and plans are uploaded on the MOPAD website at the link www.mopad.pna.ps.

On the other hand, there is a need for developing some regulations, policies, and by-laws that illustrate the approach and procedures of preparing integrated NDPs. This will enforce all sectoral ministries to prepare their sectoral plans in an integrated approach that involves lower levels of strategic development planning. Existence of such regulations that clearly identify the roles and responsibilities could enhance the elements of accountability and transparency as each party will be responsible for its role. Therefore, this will reduce the probability of weak implementation of the NDPs (Kassis, 2014).

5.2.4 Link to Regional and Local Plans

National level linkage to lower levels could be described as an indirect relation through sectors. The MOPAD exercises planning through sectors, and believes that this indirect relation to lower level plans could be achieved through sectoral ministries, as each sectoral ministry obtains information about needed developments from its directorates at the regional level.

However, the question is to what extent the ministries allow participation of their directorates, and if the directorates themselves involve local units to obtain their needs. Answers to all of these are not clear, not regulated, and not institutionalized. These also vary from a sector to another. As indicated before, MOH prepares its sectoral plans centrally, and does not believe on the capacity of its directorate staff. Therefore, health district offices have not been engaged in the preparing process of health sector plan, even in Nablus at which the ministry is located (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

Therefore, this indirect relation through sectors is not a guarantee to include LGUs needs and priorities, and in some cases it is based on the ministries perspectives of the priorities (Daoud, 2009). Furthermore, there is a lack of coordination between sectoral directorates and the LGUs, in order to ensure alignment of sectoral plans and local development plans.

In the Palestinian planning system, the only way to link sectoral with regional and local plans is through sectoral committees, which are

formulated for involvement in regional and local planning. Even if these committees are involved the process, this is still considered on the individual level rather than being officially nominated by the ministries. The members of these committees attempted to reflect integration during the discussions in these committees' workshops. It is important to the local and regional planning manuals to include tools for ensuring integration and coordination with sectoral and national plans (Musleh, 2012). Moreover, this involvement has been observed weak in many cases.⁴

On the other hand, absence of a systematic mechanism for monitoring the reflection of NDPs on lower level plans has made it difficult to ensure that the proposed national objectives and programs are reflected on lower level objectives and programs. However, the only linkage is addressed through the implementation plan matrix. This tool indicates that local and regional projects should be linked to national objectives to be approved. This link is implemented through a matrix at which any proposed project from the local and the regional plans should have a national number code, and each number code is related to a different national objective.

This linking matrix through the national number code gives some integration between plans, but on the other hand it has some limitations, as follows (Musleh, 2012):

⁴ This information is based on the interview with Ibraheem Al-Hamouz, Strategic Planning Coordinator in Nablus Directorate of the MOLG.

- This matrix is coming at a very late stage, where the local and regional planning should be in lieu with the national program.
- Linking only through a national number is not sufficient, it should be more described how the local objectives contribute to the national objectives, or at least indicate that it is not contradictory to the national objectives.
- The integration is not meant to increase centralization, rather to ensure consistency and support. If regional or local proposed project or objective is contradicting with the national plans, justification and needs for such proposals should be explained, to ensure that the national government will take regional and local justification into consideration in the next national plans.

Furthermore, the NDPs are not spatially distributed, as they don't contain the geographical location of the proposed projects, and the national budgets are not spatially distributed. Therefore, governorates don't know if their sectors offices have benefited from the budgets.

5.3 The Regional Level

In Palestine, several regional development plans (RDPs) have been prepared. Four RDPs have been prepared for Jenin Governorate, Nablus Governorate, Jericho Governorate and Jordan Rift Valley, and Salfit Governorate. In addition, Tulkarm Governorate started preparing its regional plan, while other governorates are seeking to prepare their strategic development plans such as Tubas and Hebron.

This level of strategic development planning in Palestine is suffering from many problems, as it is described as the weakest level. The main issue facing this type of planning is the lack of legal, institutional, and procedural frameworks (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011). However, a draft manual was developed to set the procedures for planning at the regional level (MOPAD and MOLG, 2008).

Furthermore, the definition of “region” is not well defined among various PNA institutions (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011). Usually, it is understood as governorate, but sometimes the word “region” is used in different ways, such as “Ramallah, Al Bireh, and Beitunia” are described as a region; this issue may cause a conflict.

There is an objection related to the existence of regional planning, and if Palestine really needs this level. Palestine area is smaller than having an intermediate level “regions” or governorates, and it is questionable whether an intermediate form of planning at governorate or district level makes a sense in a small country like Palestine, and whether it would be more appropriate, and resource-saving to only work with two planning levels; national and local (BUS, 2008).

On the other hand, the existence of regional plans may be considered essential for many purposes. For example, regional plans may include large scale projects, high cost programs, and projects implemented outside the city limits, such as national or regional (external) roads, regional sewage projects, and large hospitals that could not be addressed in local plans. The

regional plans, which have been prepared, haven't always set out such projects, and most of the regional programs that have been proposed are actually local programs, as the regions did not always use their potentials in preparing their plans.

5.3.1 Regional Planning Approach

At the regional level, there is no officially adopted approach that could be relied on in preparing such plans. Various types of approaches had been followed (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011). Although the MOLG and MOPAD had prepared a manual for regional strategic development planning in 2008, but to date it is still in draft form. Furthermore, there is nothing officially forcing commitment to this manual (MOPAD and MOLG, 2008). However, the manual suggested the steps, which are illustrated in Figure 5.2.



Figure (5.2): Regional Development Planning Methodology

Source: MOPAD and MOLG (2008)

The regional plans in Palestine are prepared for five or ten years. The main output of such plans is: a diagnostic report of existing conditions in all development areas, identification of development issues, formulation of a vision, development of objectives, development of proposed projects and programs, preparation of an action plan, and preparation of monitoring and evaluation plan.

The regional level doesn't have an adequate monitoring and evaluation mechanism. This would cause difficulties to follow-up and update the plan, and to ensure the achievement of its declared objectives (Daoud, 2009).

5.3.2 Participation in Regional Plans

Most of the regional plans are self-motivated, led by the regions themselves. These self-initiatives have encouraged the participation of the community in preparing these regional plans. Therefore, the regional plans are characterized by more participation from the local community than the national plans.

The preparing process of regional plans involves participatory strategic planning workshops attended by different stakeholders' representatives (Daoud, 2009). Main stakeholders in regional planning and their roles have been addressed in the district strategic development planning manual.

The manual has indicated : "Participatory Development Planning also aims to include a broad range of stakeholders from the public sector

(local, regional, national governments, education institutions), private sector (corporations, small business, informal sector, banks, credit unions), labor (trade unions, labor unions), community and non-governmental organizations (community leaders, neighbourhood groups, religious organizations, women's groups, poor and disadvantaged groups, environmental groups) and the general public (informal leaders)" (MOPAD and MOLG, 2008).

5.3.3 Institutional and Legal Status

Regional strategic development planning in Palestine is not institutionalized. There is no specific responsible body for preparing these plans, no identified institution, and no institutionalized process is taken place within the current planning system.

Several agencies have prepared RDPs, as follows:

- Jenin RDP was prepared for the MOLG by An-Najah National University.
- Nablus RDP was prepared for Nablus Governorate by An-Najah National University.
- Salfit RDP was prepared for Salfit Governorate by a consortium of consultants.
- Jericho (Jordan Valley) RDP was prepared for Jericho Governorate jointly by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the MOPAD, and the MOLG.

As mentioned before, there are no clear indications to identification of the responsible body for RDPs. However, the problem is not about lack of institutions, as the institutions actually exist, but the mandates for the parties involved in regional planning at specific are not clearly identified. These unclear and unidentified responsibilities may create duplication, overlapping, absence, or competition of roles and responsibilities among related institutions.

Currently, RDPs are led by both the MOLG and respective governorates. The MOLG is present in every regional capital via its directorate offices. These directorate offices contain District Planning Units (DPUs) that are established in a number of governorates to be the main bodies to administer the process of regional planning and the follow up. Furthermore, “steering committees” have been formed in order to oversee the process of preparing RDPs. However, this procedure was not closely followed in all the regional plans prepared in Palestine since 2006 (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

On the other hand, there is criticism against mandating governorates institutions to prepare RDPs. The Governorates institutions don’t have adequate qualified staff suitable to conduct RDPs. Furthermore, if the governorates institutions would use the MOLG staff of its regional offices, there is no clear coordination process that has been established. For example, in the case of Nablus Governorate, there isn’t any employee mandated to follow up the RDP, while the previous administrator who followed up the preparation of the plan was turned to another task.

Laws and regulations that should govern regional strategic development planning do not exist within the Palestinians legal system. There are no clear statements in the existing laws and regulations regarding the responsibility for these plans. Furthermore, the definition of “region” is not clearly defined in Palestinian legal system.

Moreover, there are no laws or regulations that oblige any party to prepare these plans. Most of regional plans that have been prepared are self-initiatives, and led by the regions themselves as mentioned before. Indeed, the region who can get a financial support has initiated to prepare its plan. For example, Hebron Governorate hasn't got any financial support, therefore, it hasn't prepared its plan yet.⁵

Although the manual for this level exist, but several procedures have been followed. This could be attributed to the absence of laws and regulations that should oblige all regions to follow the manual. In addition, the manual hasn't been finalized or approved yet.

5.3.4 Link to National and Local Plans

Regional level planning is suffering from many problems. Therefore, it is difficult to incorporate and integrate this level with the other forms of planning; local and national, especially in the case of lacking of legal and procedural framework, which is not well defined and has not been adopted yet (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

⁵ This information is based on interview with Fadwa Azem, the Head of the Research and Developmental Policies Department, MOPAD.

Furthermore, according to the interviews with the MOLG, it has been observed that the MOLG effort to link strategic development plans have put emphasis on linking national and local plans only, without considering the regional level, as they believe that the regional level still needs some time to better evolve and develop.

Regional plans linkages to local and national plans are only addressed through national number codes for the suggested projects. However, illustration and limitations of this tool have been addressed in Section 5.2.5.

Participation of regional level in national planning has not been existing. The national level does not consider representations of governorates through the preparation process of the NDP. Instead, the MOPAD suggests that such representation and regions priorities are already included in sectoral planning, as each ministry obtains priorities from its district offices. However, and as mentioned before, this process has not been followed in all sectoral ministries. Furthermore, the national plans hasn't considered distribution of national budget and projects by regions, as indicated before.

The preparation process of the RDP includes formulation of committees from the local level to involve them in the process. Through this involvement, the needs of local communities are included. However, as indicated before, this involvement in many cases hasn't covered all localities.

Regional plans are more coherent with local plans than with national plans, this could be attributed to the participating of the LGUs in the regional planning, but this participation is still personal through committees, and not institutionalized.

5.4 Local Level

Following the local government elections in 2005, many newly elected local authorities, in their own initiative, have embarked on developing strategic plans for improving their performance and providing better services to their constituencies. However, this experience remains scattered, with diverse approaches to purpose, scope, and content of such strategic plans, and largely undocumented (BUS, 2008).

Therefore, in order to enhance local planning and encourage municipalities to prepare their plans, the MOLG in cooperation with various developmental partners and the MDLF has introduced a Policy Note for the strategic development and investment planning (SDIP) for Palestinian cities and towns, in the year 2009 (MOLG, 2009). This Policy Note was followed by a guiding manual in 2009, which was later modified in 2011 (MOLG, 2011).

The first of these experiences was the City Development Strategy (CDS) for Ramallah, Al-Bireh, and Beitunia cities in 2005. After introducing the concept of the SDIP, four pilot local plans have been prepared according to the manual. At the end of the year 2011, about 66

municipalities had prepared their plans according to the methodology suggested by the manual.

At the end of the year 2014, all of all of the 137 municipalities finished preparing their strategic development plans. The next step for the period 2014-2016, as addressed in the MOLG agenda, is to transfer the experience of municipalities local planning to the village councils.⁶

It should be indicated that all of the local plans that have been prepared are led by LGUs, either through their own staff and resources without any external support, such as Beita, Meithaloon, and Hebron, or technically supported by consultants (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

5.4.1 Local Planning Approach

The SDIP approach has been adopted by a Policy Note in the year 2009, and clearly defined in the SDIP manual for Palestinian cities and towns. This manual has been followed in all SDIPs (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

The SDIP manual defines clearly the methodology for preparing, implementing, monitoring, updating, and evaluating the whole process of conducting the SDIPs. The manual also identifies clearly the participants that should be involved in local planning through committees, with their roles and procedures. Furthermore, the procedure manual is followed by other complementary publications, such as: tools and examples booklet, the

⁶ This information is based on the interview with Dr. Azzam Hjouj, General Director of the Department of Planning, MOLG.

guidelines for awareness raising for the SDIP, and the terms of reference for contracting consultancy companies.

The process of preparing the SDIPs is being promoted by the MOLG and the MDLF, as the LGUs are encouraged by these agencies to prepare their SDIPs to attract funds for projects. Since any suggested project by LGUs will not be funded and adopted by the MOLG without being addressed in the SDIP. However, this strategy has an important influence on smaller LGUs where the MDLF funding is a significant part of their total, but it is less of an influence for larger municipalities (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011). Moreover, the rank of the municipality as adopted by the MDLF, is influenced by the presence of the SDIP, which should be updated annually.

According to the policy and SDIP manual, the SDIPs are prepared for four years to align with the lifecycle of LGU council. The main output of the SDIP is similar to the regional plans, involve preparing a diagnostic report of existing conditions in all development areas, identification of development issues, formulation of a vision, development of objectives, development of proposed projects and programs, preparation of an action plan, and preparation of monitoring and evaluation plan.

It should be indicated that the SDIP manual is mainly prepared for cities and towns, but it is considered to be in a higher level, which the villages and small towns will find difficulties to follow. The manual was later simplified, where a specific version was prepared aiming to be more suitable for small towns and joint service councils (MOLG, 2013).

5.4.2 Participation in Local Plans

The process of conducting SDIP could be considered participatory through stakeholders' and thematic working groups' participation, where community representatives are the main stakeholders (Al-Sahili and Davidson, 2011).

The Policy Note identifies the core stakeholders and their role in the SDIP. These are the LGUs, MDLF, MOLG, MOPAD, MOF, sectoral ministries, Governorates, private sector, NGOs, and Donor Agencies (MOLG, 2009).

The manual clearly defines the participatory process for preparing SDIPs. This process involves formulation of several committees and teams. The roles and the responsibilities of these several committees and teams are also identified by the manual. Moreover, the manual illustrates the committees' meetings, the workshops, and the public meetings.

On the other hand, it is important to understand that this is the first generation of the strategic planning in local authorities, and it is the first time where the local planning is designed to be participatory in Palestine. Therefore, there are some limitations in the SDIP manual related to SDIP participatory process, as follows (Musleh, 2012):

- General public participation in the manual is limited to the level of informing the community on what is happening. To achieve this, only two public meetings are conducted. The first public meeting is utilized

to launch the start of the SDIP process, and the second is to announce the completion of the preparation of the SDIP and obtain approval on it.

- There are some limitations related to the formation of committees and teams. For example, the manual recommends that the core planning team members, which are chosen should know each other. This limits the inclusion of people from various social groups.
- Some committees don't include any citizens such as "Institutional Building Committee", therefore, it limits the ability of the committee to see how citizens would like the municipality to develop to better serve them.
- Participation in some committees and teams such as the core planning team, and specialized working groups is limited to professionals.

However, all of the previous points have been resolved in the updated version of the manual (MOLG, 2013), but to date it is still in draft form.

Practically, participation in the process of preparing the SDIPs varies from LGU to another. This depends on several points, such as the relationship and trust between LGU and citizens, socio-political context, and citizens capabilities (Musleh, 2012). However, the MDLF and the MOLG are taking the responsibility for promoting the participatory process and increase the decentralization.

5.4.3 Institutional and Legal Status

Local level is somewhat institutionalized. The main responsible body that oversees these plans is the MOLG. The SDIP manual clearly defines the process, and identifies the roles and the responsibilities. However, it should be noticed that this level is institutionalized through a policy and not by laws, as there are no clear regulations or laws covering this level.

Local Council Law No. (1) for the year 1997 has indicated that LGUs in Palestine are responsible for planning and organizing the cities and the public services. Therefore, it can be concluded that the LGUs are responsible for preparing SDIPs for their citizens by law.

The existing laws that are related to local government sector institutions are: the local government Law No. (1) Of 1997, the Local Elections Law of 1996, and the “Law through Decree” No. (9) for 2008, and lately amended to “Local Authorities Law No. (1) for 1997”. This is in addition to other related laws and regulations inherited from various historical periods, which in total comprise different legal frameworks between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (MOLG, 2010).

Local Government Law (1997) provides the basic legal framework for the development of Municipal and Village Councils. It describes how local government is to be managed under elected councils, the functions and responsibilities of local councils, relative responsibilities between central and local government, and auditing and regulatory arrangements.

However, this law may be criticized for a lack of clarity and comprehensiveness, and several improvements should be adopted (ARD, 2000).

On the other hand, the Law has several strengths. The assignment of function to local councils at the local government level is clear in most instances. The Joint Service Council concept allows municipalities a great flexibility in co-operating to provide services (ARD, 2000).

However, this is the first generation of the SDIPs, which are prepared by local authorities. Therefore, the institutionalization aspects need further development, to be reinforced by laws and regulations, and to be linked to other upper levels; regional and national, in an integrated institutionalized planning system that includes the three levels.

5.4.4 Link to National and Regional Plans

Although the Policy Note (2009) has addressed that local plans should be linked and integrated with upper level plans; regional and national, but this does not take place in the manual, nor on the ground. The only way by which local plans are linked to upper level plans, is through a matrix implementation plan, which has been mentioned before.

The local level and the local plans take an essential importance, since they identify the local priorities and needs. National planning suggests that these needs and priorities have been already included in the sectoral plans, however, this process is not followed in all sectoral plans, as mentioned before.

The MDLF, which assists the LGUs in preparing their SDIPs, also encourages linking such plans to the upper level plans, throughout the SDIP preparation process. For example, in any public meeting, the MDLF requests representation of all sectoral ministries through their decentralized offices, and it requests from the LGUs to send invitations to all directorates. Nevertheless, this linking does not exceed focusing through the process, without any control tool, nor being addressed in the manual. Therefore, the participation of upper levels in local planning is considered weak in most cases.

5.5 Linking the Multi-Level Plans

Since the experience of strategic development planning in Palestine is considered relatively new, planning systems at all levels are still scattered, and there is no clear approach for linking the national, the regional, and the local plans in the Palestinian planning system.

This issue has emerged while practicing the planning process at all levels. A dire need has been emerged for considering integration and coordination among such plans, in order to avoid conflict plans and to best allocate technical and financial resources. It has been observed, that these plans have different timeframes and different approaches, and also there are some contradictories in some objectives, projects, budgets, and targets of these plans. Some of these contradictories are addressed below:

- Timeframes are different for each level, as follows:

- The National plans are prepared for three years because they are linked to the financial aids coming from the World Bank.
- The Local plans are prepared for four years according to the lifecycle of the local councils.
- The regional plans are different in their timeframes, ranges from five years as in Nablus Governorate plan to ten years as in Jenin and Salfit Governorates plans.

These different timeframes could affect the linking of the three level plans, and cause difficulties.

- Budgets of lower level plans are not coherent with national budgets. Musleh (2012) had conducted a comparison between 65 SDIPs in different sectors, the result has shown that in many sectors; the budget of the SDIP of 63 municipalities is higher than the national budget for the sector. Furthermore, the expenditure of the 65 SDIPs in the educational sector is 32 times higher than the PNDP. However, this will definitely reflect on inability of implementation of these plans (Musleh, 2012).
- Major sectors and sub-sector categories are different from level plan to another. The PRDP has identified four major sectors with 23 sub-sectors. This is contradicting with some regional plans. For example, Nablus RDP suggested five major sectors, while Salfit RDP identified six. At the local level, this problem has been resolved. The updated

version of the manual has identified four major sector, rather than seven as in the previous version. However, this difference in sector categories may affect the linking matrix, as the linkage is addressed under sectors.

- Some contradictions have been observed in some objectives, projects, and targets, among the three levels of planning. For example, national strategy for solid waste management includes very clearly the number of sanitary landfills, and the closure of the random dumpsites as part of the plan. When addressing solid waste aspects, it was observed that some municipalities are considering re-allocating the dumpsites (Musleh, 2012).

To date, an integrated approach for linking the three levels of the strategic development planning, following with legal and institutional base, has not been established yet. Instead, the current situation reflects weak or no linkage among such plans. This conscious view has been addressed by all planning stakeholders that have been interviewed, and also in most related studies and reports.

The phase of introducing the concept of strategic development planning into Palestinians government levels have been conducted. The next phase as being addressed in the National Working Group (NWG) agenda, will embed development and improvement of the approaches, and will embed the alignment and linking of the three levels; national, regional, and local. It should be noticed that Palestinian planning agencies, especially MOLG, MOPAD, and MDLF, currently are focusing their

efforts on developing a proper approach for linking and alignment of the three levels of development plans.

These efforts could be summarized as follows:

- Recently, the NWG has been expanded to include sectoral ministries, as well as the MOPAD and the MOLG. The objective of this expansion is to develop an integrated planning approach.
- Some tools have been developed, in order to reinforce linkages, these are:
 - 1) An integrated information system: This system is a computer based system. It is developed to provide sectoral ministries with local priorities for each governorate, and also for each locality inside the governorate. Therefore, each sectoral ministry could obtain local priorities before it embarks to prepare its sectoral plan. The objective of developing this tool is to enhance sectoral planning and eventually to build national planning upon local priorities, and to encourage feedback from LGUs to be considered in the next plans. However, this tool has been developed recently, but it is not adopted yet.
 - 2) Tools for keeping local plans up to date:
 - MDLF has adopted a control policy for financing local development plans, as no project will be financed without being addressed in a strategic plan.

- MOLG has not approved any suggested project, which is not addressed in a strategic plan.
 - MOLG by its “General Administration for Monitoring and Auditing” is operating annual audits on all LGUs, in order to check if their local plans have been updated or not.
 - Each LGU is responsible for updating its plan, and this updated plan should be uploaded on a web based system monitoring by the MOLG.
- 3) Discussions are now being conducted by technical NWG with line ministries. The objective of these discussions is to adopt a common understudying of strategic development planning approach among all parties, and to adopt an integrated planning approach for linking the three levels of strategic development planning considering integration and coordination.

However, these efforts and tools could be considered useful and necessary to accelerate progress towards integration, but this is still lacking engagement of local and regional level entities. National level still focuses on dealing with sectoral ministries, rather than dealing with regional and local levels. In conclusion, a clear approach to link the three levels of strategic development planning in Palestine does not actually exist. Instead, the current situation includes scattered systems with unclear link.

5.6 Overall Assessment

An overall assessment is conducted based on the previous analysis of the national, the regional, and the local levels. The objective is to illustrate the strength points, which need to be strengthened, and the challenges, which need to be addressed to reduce their effects, so as a proper approach for conducting the multi-level strategic development planning could be developed.

5.6.1 Strength Points

The existing strategic development planning system has the following strength points:

1. The existence of some experienced and motivated staff working at all levels of the government with consultant support as needed.
2. The MDLF as a strong institution, which has built up good experience in relation to strategic development planning at the local municipal level.
3. The limited size of Palestine that could facilitate integrated planning.
4. The existence of well-established institutions.
5. The existence of the Joint Service Council mechanism that facilitates coordination with small LGUs in preparing the SDIPs.

5.6.2 Challenges

Challenges that affects the existing strategic development planning system in Palestine could be summarized as follows:

1. The occupation and the overall situation in Palestine that makes planning, and especially implementation, very difficult and time consuming.
2. Different donors approaches for development and investment.
3. Over-dependence on donor funding.
4. Different planning timeframes of the national, regional, and local plans.
5. Absence of supportive legal and institutional frameworks.
6. Weak capacities of the planning staff in all levels in relation to strategic development and fiscal planning.
7. Centralized fiscal planning and absence of spatial budget distribution in national plans.
8. Weakness of the regional level in terms of institutional and legal basis.
9. Lack of vertical linkages and coordination between the three levels, and lack of horizontal linkages and coordination among ministries.
10. Unclear roles and responsibilities, which cause some overlaps and duplications, and also the absence of supportive regulation that should clearly identify them.

11. The large number of municipalities, with the small size and limited revenue-raising potential for many of them makes them inefficient.

5.7 Discussion

Strategic development planning in Palestine is relatively new. Therefore, the multi-level planning approaches are still in need of more development in terms of institutional, legal, and financial issues. Furthermore, a proper approach for linking the three planning levels hasn't been developed yet.

However, based on the previous analysis of the three levels, a proper approach that needs to be developed for linking the multi-level strategic development plans should consider the following issues:

- Palestine is a small country. Therefore, conducting a strategic plan for each level is unreasonable and costly. This needs financial and human resources. Therefore, thinking of alternative approaches should be considered. In this regard two scenarios could be proposed, as follows:

1) Planning based on regions: This implies that planning is basically conducted by regions, and the LGUs could participate in the regional planning. Therefore, their needs could be already included. In this scenario, two types of plans are to be prepared, for the national and for the regional level.

Advantage: The main advantage for this approach is saving cost, time, and effort, which come from large number of institutionalizations at the local level.

Disadvantage: This approach is difficult to be adopted in Palestine, due to the isolation that comes from the occupation. This isolation may affect the participation of the LGUs in the planning process, and this what already has been seen in most regional planning.

2) Planning based on LGUs: This implies that planning is basically conducted by the LGUs, and directly incorporated in the sectoral programs to institute the national plan.

Advantage: This approach could deal with the occupation and isolation challenge, and reinforce decentralization, as planning is to be conducted at the same level of the implementation.

Disadvantage: Large number of plans may be developed, which is considered costly. The quality of planning could be affected due to the poor capacity of some LGUs.

It could be concluded that the second approach, which implies that planning will be based on LGUs is more suitable to be adopted in Palestine compared with the first one. The effects of the approach disadvantages could be minimized. To deal with the large number and small size of the LGUs, some amalgamations or clustering could be established for preparing joint strategic development plans. Villages could prepare joint strategic development plans for the joint service councils (JSCs), and the small municipalities could prepare joint strategic development plans for large municipalities. Thereafter, local plans are conducted for only municipalities and JSCs.

On the other hand, to deal with the poor capacity of some LGUs, the regional level capacity which need to be strengthened, could provide technical assistance, and the planning process at the LGU level could be overseen by the regional level.

- Benefits should be maximized both nationally and locally. There should be a harmonization between the need of strong overall strategic planning at the national level and the need to encourage decentralization and conducting planning by the local level. To deal with this issue, a combined approach of top-down and bottom-up planning could be pursued. As decentralization may be reinforced by allowing planning to be conducted at the local level, the resulting plans can therefore be incorporated into the national plan.

On the other hand, to achieve strong overall strategic planning, planning policies could be set by the national level before local planning is conducted. The resulting approach could be described as a bottom-up planning, and a top-down policies.

- An enabling environment should be created to reinforce the implementation of the linking approach. This enabling environment should take into account the institutional, the financial, and the legal issues that are relevant to the strategic development planning in Palestine.

Chapter Six
Case Study of Nablus
Governorate

Chapter Six

Case Study of Nablus Governorate

6.1 Introduction

This chapter includes an analysis of the case study of the multi-level strategic development planning, which involves Nablus Governorate, Palestine. An assessment is conducted for the relationships between Nablus Regional Development Plan (RDP) for the years 2011-2015, and two national development plans. Plans, which are chosen for the study at the national level are: the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP) for the years 2008-2010, and the National Development Plan (NDP) for the years 2011-2013.

On the other hand, an assessment is conducted for the relationships between Nablus RDP and two local development plans. Plans, which are chosen for the study at the local level; Nablus City Local Development plan (Nablus LDP) for the years 2012-2015, and Beita Town Local Development Plan (Beita LDP) for the years 2012-2015.

6.2 The Relationship between Nablus RDP and PRDP (2008-2010)

Nablus Regional Development Plan (RDP) for the years 2011-2015 (Nablus Governorate, 2010) was prepared considering the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP) for the years 2008-2010 (MOPAD, 2007). This section includes an assessment of the relationship between Nablus RDP and the PRDP. The objective of this assessment is to examine the degree at which Nablus RDP had considered the PRDP.

The assessment is conducted regarding development visions, timeframes, sectors, development issues, development objectives, and indicators.

6.2.1 Development Vision

- The Development Vision of the PRDP is:

“Palestine is an independent Arab State with sovereignty over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on the pre-June 1967 occupation borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. Palestine is a stable democratic state that respects human rights and guarantees equal rights and duties for all citizens. Its people live in a safe and secure environment under the rule of law and it promotes equality between men and women. It is a state, which values highly its social capital, social coherence and solidarity, and identifies itself with Arab Palestinian culture, humanistic values and religious tolerance. It is a progressive state that values cordial relationships with other states and people in the global community.

The Palestinian government is open, inclusive, transparent and accountable. It is responsive to citizens’ needs, delivers basic services effectively, and creates an enabling environment for a thriving private sector. Palestine’s human resources are the driving force for national development. The Palestinian economy is open to other markets around the world and strives to produce high value-added, competitive goods and services, and, over the long term, to be a knowledge-based economy”.

This vision shapes the future of the Palestinian State, and it involves the following issues:

- 1) Independence.
- 2) Democracy and equality.
- 3) Safety and security.
- 4) Rule of laws.
- 5) Social coherence.
- 6) Relationships with other states.
- 7) Responsiveness to citizens' needs.
- 8) Human resources.
- 9) Economic development.

- The Development Vision of Nablus RDP is:

“Together to reinforce the status of the governorate of Nablus as a leading economic attraction and prestigious knowledge center, which enjoys good infrastructure and provides high quality of services and has efficient institutions, in which social justice prevails, and which preserves the governorate’s cultural, national, and value system heritage”.

Nablus RDP vision aims to reinforce the status of the governorate through the following issues:

- 1) Economic attraction.
- 2) Culture and knowledge.
- 3) Good infrastructure.
- 4) High quality of services.
- 5) Efficiency of institutions.
- 6) Social justice.

It could be said that the governorate vision for development is somewhat related to the vision of the state, as it has emphasized on the economic attraction, which would affect and be affected by the macro economy of the state, and it has focused on the social justice that achieves both issues of equality and social coherence, which have been addressed in the state's vision.

Furthermore, the governorate vision seeks to provide high quality of services, good infrastructure, and efficient institutions; this could be considered a responsiveness to citizen's needs.

6.2.2 Timeframes

The PRDP is prepared for three years; for the years 2008-2010, while Nablus RDP is prepared for five years; for the years 2011-2015. This difference in timeframes of both plans could make difficulties in linking objectives, projects, and budgets of these plans.

Furthermore, national plans are prepared every three years with Policy Agenda, objectives, and budgets, which could differ. Moreover, donors fund has different directions at each national plan to fund specific sectors; making difficulties in implementing the national and the regional programs and projects, especially in the case that most of Palestinian developmental projects are basically donors funded.

6.2.3 Sectors

Development sectors as suggested by each plan are listed in Table 6.1. It is observed that there is a slight difference in sectors in both plans in terms of numbers and names. The PRDP has suggested four major sectors, while Nablus RDP has suggested five. Moreover, there is also a difference in the name for the Infrastructure Sector, as it has been named by the governorate plan as the Infrastructure and Environment Sector.

Table (6.1): Sectors of the PRDP and Nablus RDP

No.	The PRDP Sectors	Nablus RDP Sectors
1	Governance Sector	Good Governance Sector
2	Social Sector	Social Aspects Sector
3	Economy Sector	Economy Sector
4	Infrastructure Sector	Infrastructure and Environment Sector
5	-	Land use, Urban Planning, and Housing Sector

The additional sector, which is suggested by the governorate plan is the Land Use, Urban Planning, and Housing Sector. This sector is already included in the PRDP as sub-sectors under the Economy Sector. These sub-sectors are: Housing Sub-Sector and Trade/Investment Promotion/Enterprise Development Sub-Sector.

This difference in sectors categories may cause conflict in linking the governorate proposed projects with the national programs. As indicated before, the current process of linking such plans is addressed only through a linking matrix. This matrix involves linking proposed projects to the national programs through a national code, and this national code is derived from the sector name.

It is observed that the programs and projects, which are proposed by the governorate plan under the sector “land use, urban planning, and housing” are put in the matrix under the Governance Sector and take “GO” codes. On the other hand, in the national plan, such programs and projects are addressed under the Economic Sector and take “EC” codes.

6.2.4 Development Issues

Development issues summarize the highest priority issues that need development in the area of planning. They are sectorally based, as each sector includes the major development issues that are identified to be developed in the timeframe of the development plan. Moreover, objectives and projects are derived from these development issues, to get their credibility.

Nablus RDP identified these development issues under each sector, and a matrix was developed in the plan to link these development issues to sectoral objectives and projects. This may give a sense that the proposed projects are derived from real developmental needs.

On the other hand, the PRDP didn't clearly define its sectoral development issues. These may be considered as indirectly addressed under sections of sectors challenges, but also they are not clearly identified. Furthermore, the PRDP didn't address any link or matrix for linking its sectoral objectives or proposed programs and projects to development issues. This may affect the credibility of the national objectives and programs.

6.2.5 Development Objectives

A comparison is conducted between the PRDP and Nablus RDP objectives, in order to examine the percentage of the PRDP objectives that are reflected on Nablus RDP objectives. The results and percentages are listed in Table 6.2.

The table shows the percentages of reflected and not reflected objectives of the PRDP in the objectives of Nablus RDP under each sector. The major four sectors are addressed, but the sub-sectors, which are chosen for comparison are the common sub-sectors in the two plans. Percentages are calculated by studying the number of reflected and not reflected objectives of the PRDP in the objectives of Nablus RDP.

Table (6.2): Development Objectives of the PRDP and Nablus RDP

Sector/ Sub-Sector	Objectives of the PRDP reflected in Nablus RDP	
	% of reflected	% of not reflected
Social Sector		
Education	43	57
Health	60	40
Social Affairs (Women, Youth, and Culture)	14	86
Infrastructure Sector		
Transport	100	0
Electricity	100	0
Water/Wastewater	33	67
Solid Waste	100	0
Economy Sector		
Trade and Investment	17	83
Agriculture	67	33
Industry	100	0
Housing, Land Use and Urban Planning	0	100
Governance Sector		
Administrative and Civil Service Reform	100	0
Local Government	29	71
Average Percentage	41	59

Results show low average percentages. Only 41% of the national objectives are reflected in the governorate objectives, while 59% are not reflected. This means that less than half of the national objectives are reflected. These low percentages may be attributed to the process of preparing the governorate plan. According to an interview, which the researcher conducted with one of the experts who participated in preparing the governorate plan, they indicated that the team, which prepared the governorate plan identified the plan objectives in order not to being contradictory with the national objectives, rather than being derived from

these national objectives, and this check was conducted after the identification of the governorate objectives was done.⁷

Furthermore, results show different percentages among sectors. For example, in Social Affairs Sub-Sector only 14% of the national objectives are reflected in the governorate objectives. On the other hand, there are other sub-sectors objectives, which are completely reflected, such as the Electricity and the Transport Sub-Sectors objectives.

6.2.6 Indicators

Indicators are tools that help to measure the progress towards achieving the development objectives. Both plans addressed such tools and linked them with the development objectives and projects in a one matrix. It could be indicated that analysis of indicators is largely tied with analysis of objectives. Therefore, results of comparison between sectoral indicators could be grouped as presented hereafter.

- **Same objectives but with different indicators**

It is observed that some sectors propose the same objectives in both plans, but the indicators, which are proposed for these objectives are different in each plan. For example, in Solid Waste sub-sector, one of the objectives, which is proposed by the two plans is improving waste management. The indicator is proposed by the PRDP is to measure the volume of the solid waste, which is healthy disposed. On the other hand,

⁷ This information is based on the interview with Dr. Khaled Al-Sahili, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, An-Najah National University.

the governorate plan proposes to measure the number of unhealthy landfills.

- **Same objectives with the same indicators, but with different way of measurement**

It is observed that some sectors propose same objectives with the same indicators, but the way by which the indicators are measured is different in each plan. For example, in the Transport Sub-Sector, the same objective, which is proposed by both plans is to improve the traffic safety. The same indicator, which is proposed to be measured is the traffic accidents. The national plan proposes to measure the death rate in traffic accidents. On the other hand, the governorate plan proposes to measure the rate of the traffic accidents.

- **Similarity in objectives, indicators, and in the way of measurement**

There are few observed in sectoral indicators in both plans. An example of this group could be observed in the Education Sub-Sector. The same objective, which is proposed by the two plans is improving the quality of the education. The same indicator is to measure the percentage of schools, which are provided by libraries and labs.

- **Different objectives with different indicators**

This group represents the majority of the sectoral indicators. It is observed that the majority of indicators are largely different, due to the large differences in the related objectives for each plan, as only 41% of the PRDP objectives are reflected on Nablus objectives.

Furthermore, the governorate plan addresses the indicators without addressing the targets that should be measured to evaluate the success of the proposed projects. On the other hand, the PRDP identifies the targets for each year in the timeframe of the plan.

6.3 The Relationship between Nablus RDP and the NDP (2011-2013)

This section includes an assessment of the relationship between Nablus RDP for the years 2011-2015, and the NDP for the years 2011-2013. The objective of this assessment is to examine the degree at which the national planning team considered the regional governorate plan while preparing the national plan. Nablus RDP was adopted in July, 2010, and passed to the MOLG and the MOPAD for consideration in the NDP (2011-2013), which was being prepared at that time.

It should be indicated that the NDP for the years 2011-2013 differs than the previous one, the PRDP for the years 2011-2013, regarding the content. The NDP proposed only strategic objectives, priority policies, and indicators for the major sectors, without addressing proposed programs and projects and development issues. Therefore, the assessment is conducted regarding timeframes, sectors, development objectives, and indicators.

6.3.1 Timeframes

The NDP is prepared for three years as the previous plan. On the other hand, the governorate plan is prepared for five years. This means that the next national plan, which was prepared after developing the

governorate plan didn't consider a proper linkage of its timeframe with the regional plans, which were developed.

6.3.2 Sectors

The NDP addressed the same four major sectors as addressed in the previous national plan; the PRDP, while the governorate plan addressed five major sector as shown in Table 6.1.

The additional sector, which is addressed in the governorate plan; the Land Use, Urban Planning, and Housing Sector is addressed in the NDP as sub-sectors. Housing Sub-Sector is addressed in the NDP under the Infrastructure Sector, and Land Management is addressed under the Economy Sector.

6.3.3 Development Objectives

A comparison is conducted between Nablus RDP and the NDP objectives. The objective of the comparison is to examine the percentage of the reflected objectives of Nablus RDP in the objectives of the NDP. Results of comparison are listed in Table 6.3.

Results show that 53% of the governorate objectives are reflected in the NDP, while 47% are not reflected. This average percentage is low. This means that the national team who prepared the NDP didn't consider many of the governorates objectives while preparing the NDP. On the other hand, sectoral percentages are varying. For example, all of the governorate Water/Waste Water Sub-Sector objectives are reflected in the NDP, while

nothing of the governorate Health and Industry Sub-sectors objectives are reflected.

Table (6.3): Development Objectives of Nablus RDP and the NDP

Sector/ Sub-Sector	Objectives of Nablus RDP reflected in the NDP	
	% of reflected	% of not reflected
Social Sector		
Education	57	43
Health	0	100
Social Affairs (Women, Youth, and Culture)	100	0
Infrastructure Sector		
Transport	33	67
Electricity	67	33
Water/Wastewater	100	0
Solid Waste	100	0
Economy Sector		
Trade and Investment	75	25
Agriculture	33	67
Industry	0	100
Housing, Land Use and Urban Planning	50	50
Governance Sector		
Administrative and Civil Service Reform	29	71
Local Government	50	50
Average Percentage	53	47

6.3.4 Indicators

The majority of the indicators, which are addressed in both plans are different. All sectors, except the Infrastructure Sector, addressed completely different indicators.

In the Infrastructure Sector, indicators could be grouped as follows:

- **Same objectives with the same indicators, but with different way of measurement**

There are few observed indicators, which fall under this category. For example, the same objective of the Water Sub-Sector, which is addressed in both plans is improving the coverage of water services. The governorate plan proposed to measure the percentage of communities connected to water supply. On the other hand, the national plan proposed to measure the percentage of the households connected to water supply.

- **Similarity in objectives, indicators, and in the way of measurement**

Nearly, half of the Infrastructure Sector indicators are similar. For example, in the Electricity Sub-Sector, same objectives, same indicators, and same way of the measurement are observed in the both plans.

- **Different objectives with different indicators**

There are few observed indicators, which fall under this category. As the majority of the governorate Infrastructure Sector objectives are reflected in the national Infrastructure Sector objectives.

6.4 The Relationship between Nablus RDP and Nablus LDP

This section illustrates the relationship between Nablus Regional Development plan (RDP) for the years 2011-2015, and Nablus Local Development plan (LDP) for the years 2012-2015. The assessment of the relationship is conducted to examine the degree of reflection of Nablus

RDP on Nablus LDP. The objective of this assessment is to examine the degree at which the city planning team considered Nablus RDP while preparing the city plan.

The relationship is assessed regarding development visions, timeframes, sectors, development issues, development objectives, proposed programs and projects, budgets, and indicators.

6.4.1 Development Vision

The Development vision of Nablus City is:

“Nablus, capital of economy, incubator of education, symbol of steadfastness, and address of authenticity”.

This vision shapes the future that the city seeks to reach in eight years. The vision involves the following issues:

- Economy.
- Education.
- Steadfastness.
- Authenticity.

Nablus City had been identified as a Palestinian capital of economy and education (MDLF, 2011 A). Therefore, the city focuses on issues of education and economy in its vision. This is compared with Nablus Governorate vision, which is addressed in Section 6.2.1.

The governorate vision addressed the issue of economic attraction, which is reflected in the city vision, while it is observed that education issue, which is addressed in the city vision was not addressed in the governorate vision. The other issues, which are addressed in the city vision are the steadfastness and authenticity. These two issues could be somewhat related to the issue of culture and knowledge, which was addressed in the governorate vision.

6.4.2 Timeframes

Nablus City plan is prepared for four years, according to the lifecycle of the elected municipal council, while the governorate plan is prepared for five years.

This difference in timeframes may affect the coordination between the both plans. The proposed programs, projects, and budgets are distributed over the years of the plans. Therefore, difference in timeframes may cause a conflict in coordination and integration between the two plans.

6.4.3 Sectors

Table 6.4 summarizes the sectors that are addressed in Nablus Governorate and Nablus city plans.

Table (6.4): Sectors of Nablus RDP and Nablus LDP

No.	Nablus RDP Sectors	Nablus LDP Sectors
1	1. Land use, urban planning, and Housing Sector	1. Planning and Organization Sector
2	Social aspects Sector 1. Education 2. Health 3. Sport, youth, and cultural 4. Social welfare	Social Sector 1. Education 2. Health 3. Sport, and culture
3	Economy Sector	Economy Sector
4	Infrastructure and Environment Sector 1. Roads and transportation 2. Water/wastewater 3. Solid waste 4. Energy and telecommunication	Infrastructure Sector 1. Roads and transportation 2. Water and sanitation
5	Good Governance Sector	Institutional building Sector

Table 6.4 illustrates the major sectors and sub-sectors for each plan. Comparison between sectors shows few differences in number and names of some sectors. For example, two sub-sectors are not reflected in the city plan, there are the Solid Waste Sub-Sector and the Energy and Telecommunication Sector. This absence of some sectors in the city plan means that not all the proposed programs, which are suggested in the governorate plan are reflected in the city plan. It should be indicated that the Energy and Telecommunication Sub-Sector in the governorate is led by private institutions. This might be the reason that this Sub-Sector was not addressed in the city plan. However, it has to be stated that Nablus Governorate needs might not coincide with those for Nablus City.

6.4.4 Development Issues

In this section, the development issues of the common sectors of the both plans are studied. Results show that nearly all of the development issues in the city plan are reflected in the governorate plan, with additional few development issues in the city plan, which are specified for the city.

This is observed in all sectors except the Health Sub-Sector. In the Health Sub-Sector the development issues in both plans are completely different.

6.4.5 Development Objectives

Table 6.5 illustrates the results of comparison between the development objectives of the two plans in the common sectors. These percentages are calculated by studying the number of reflected and not reflected objectives of the governorate plan on the objectives of the city plan.

Percentages show that only 38% of the governorate objectives are reflected in the city objectives, while 62% are not reflected. This means that less than half of the governorate objectives are reflected in the city objectives.

Table (6.5): Development Objectives of Nablus RDP and Nablus LDP

Sector/ Sub-sector	Objectives of Nablus RDP reflected in Nablus LDP	
	% of reflected	% of not reflected
Economy	20	80
Planning	25	75
Transport	67	33
Water/ Waste Water	50	50
Education	57	43
Health	0	100
Social Affairs	100	0
Average Percentage	38	62

On the other hand, sectoral percentages of the reflected objectives of the governorate plan vary between 0% for the Health Sub-Sector objectives and 100% for the Social Affairs Sub-Sector objectives.

Based on an interview, which the researcher conducted with an expert who participated in preparing both plans (the governorate and the city plans), the majority of Nablus Municipality officials who participated in the preparation of the city plan, also participated in the preparation of the governorate plan.⁸ Nevertheless, weak reflection of the governorate objectives in the city objectives is observed.

6.4.6 Development Programs and Projects

In this section the comparison is conducted between the proposed programs and projects of the two plans. Results of comparison are summarized in Table 6.6.

⁸ This information is based on the interview with Dr. Amal Al-Hudhud, Strategic Planning Coordinator in Nablus Municipality.

Table (6.6): Development Programs and Projects of Nablus RDP and Nablus LDP

Sector/ Sub-Sector	Programs and projects of Nablus RDP reflected in Nablus LDP	
	% of reflected	% of not reflected
Economy	31	69
Planning	33	67
Transport	100	0
Water/waste water	75	25
Education	63	38
Health	40	60
Social Affairs	38	63
Institutional building	43	57
Average Percentage	47	53

Results show weak reflection of the governorate programs and projects on the city programs and projects, although these may not need to coincide as stated earlier. About half of the governorate programs and projects are reflected on the city programs and projects. Sectoral percentages show varying degrees, as the percentages of the reflected programs and projects of the governorate plan in the city plan range from 31% for the Economy Sector to 100% for the Transport Sub-Sector.

It should be indicated that the both plans addressed their proposed programs and projects in a linking matrix. This matrix links the proposed programs and projects to national codes under national programs. This matrix and its limitations was mentioned before. On the other hand, both plans addressed the geographical location of their proposed programs and projects.

6.4.7 Budgets

Comparison of budgets is conducted between the governorate plan and the city plan. Results are shown in Table 6.7. The table illustrates the budget of the common sectors of Nablus LDP and Nablus RDP.

Table (6.7): Budget of Nablus LDP and Nablus RDP

Sector/ Sub-Sector	Development Budget (in thousand \$)	
	Nablus RDP	Nablus LDP
Economy	30,660	38,280
Planning	-	4,420
Transport	46,640	37,490
Water/waste water	63,170	63,830
Education	27,895	20,700
Health	142,937	21,200
Social Affairs	31,965	20,190
Governance (Institutional building)	9,482	14,250
Sum	352,749	220,360

The budget of Nablus LDP for these sectors equals about \$220 million. This budget is distributed over four years, which results in an average of about \$55 million per year. On the other hand, the budget of Nablus RDP for these sectors equals about \$353 million. This budget is distributed over five years, which results in an average of about \$71 million per year. This means that the budget of Nablus LDP represent 78% of the governorate plan.

This percentage could be considered very large, especially in the case that the governorate budget is considered also very large and unrealistic, as mentioned before. Moreover, the city population is about

146,493, which equals 39% of the governorate population of 372,621 (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2007).

Furthermore, some contradictions are observed in some sectoral budgets. For example, the sectors of Economy, Water/ Waste Water, Transport, and Institutional Building show larger budgets for the city compared for these for the governorate. This is unrealistic and may cause impossible implementation.

6.4.8 Indicators

As indicated before, indicators are largely tied with the development objectives. Therefore, results of comparison between the two plans could be categorized into four groups as follows:

- **Same objectives with different indicators**

Some sectors in both plans have same objectives, but with different indicators to be measured. This is observed in most sectors. For example, in the Water/ Waste Water Sub-Sector, the common objective is to increase the quantity of water provided for citizens. In the city plan the indicator is to measure the “per capita consumption”, while in the governorate plan is “the average of available water per capita per day”.

- **Same objectives with the same indicators, but with different way of measurement**

Some sectors propose the same objectives and the same indicators, but the way in which the same indicator is measured is different. For

example, in Transport Sub-Sector the both plans use the paved roads as an indicator to measure the objective of raising the efficiency of the road networks. But the governorate plan suggests the way of the measurement as the length of the paved roads in km, while the city plan suggests to measure the percentage of the length of the paved roads with respect to the total roads.

- **Similarity in objectives, indicators, and in the way of measurement**

There are few observed similar sectoral indicators in the two plans. An example of this group is observed in the Transport Sub-Sector. The same objective, which are proposed by the both plans is to improve the traffic safety. The indicator, which is proposed by both plans is to measure the rate of traffic accidents.

- **Different objectives with different indicators**

This is observed in all sectors. The differences in objectives are reflected on the indicators. For example, in the Health Sub-Sector, the development objectives of the two plans are completely different. Therefore, the indicators, which are proposed by the two plans are also completely different.

In general, the indicators are different between the two plans. The integration and coordination between the two plans necessitate the same indicators are proposed, in order to evaluate the progress of the two plans by the same way.

6.5 The Relationship between Nablus RDP and Beita LDP

The relationship between Nablus Regional Development Plan (RDP) for the years 2011-2015, and Beita Local Development Plan (LDP) for the years 2012-2015, is studied in this section. The assessment of the relationship is conducted to examine the degree of reflection of Nablus RDP on Beita LDP. The objective of this assessment is to examine the degree at which the town planning team considered Nablus RDP while preparing the town plan.

An assessment is conducted regarding development visions, timeframes, sectors, development issues, development objectives, proposed programs and projects, budgets, and indicators.

6.5.1 Development Vision

The development vision for Beita Town is:

“Together towards Beita, the model, safe, prosperous, and greenish town, which preserves its heritage and identity, and prevails by awareness, love, and respect”.

The vision of the town focusses on the following issues:

- Safety.
- Prosperity.
- Greenness Environment.

- Heritage and Identity.
- Awareness, Love, and Respect.

The elements of the governorate vision are discussed in section 6.2.1. According to the comparison, which is conducted between the elements of the two visions, it is concluded that the town vision focuses on the issues, which are related to the town itself, without considering the relation to the governorate vision, nevertheless, there are no contradictory between them.

6.5.2 Timeframes

As in all local plans, Beita LDP is prepared for four years, for the years 2012-2015, while the governorate plan is prepared for five years, for the years 2011-2015. As indicated before, this difference in timeframes may cause a conflict in linking the two plans, in terms of budgets, programs, and projects.

6.5.3 Sectors

The development sectors for Beita LDP and Nablus RDP are listed in Table 6.8. As shown in the table, both plans suggest the same five major development sectors, but with few differences in sub-sectors numbers and names.

Table (6.8): Sectors of Nablus RDP and Beita LDP

No.	Nablus RDP Sectors	Beita LDP Sectors
1	Land Use, Urban Planning, and Housing Sector	Planning and Organization Sector
2	Social Aspects Sector 1. Education 2. Health 3. Sport, Youth, and Culture 4. Social Welfare	Social Sector 1. Education 2. Sport and Culture
3	Economy Sector 1. Agriculture 2. Industry 3. Investment	Local Economy Sector 1. Agriculture 2. Tourism
4	Infrastructure and Environment	Infrastructure and Municipal Services
5	Good Governance	Institutional Building

In the Social Sector, Beita LDP includes only the Education, and the Sport and Youth Sub-sectors. In Economy Sector, Beita LDP includes only the Agriculture and the Tourism Sub-sectors, while it is observed, that there is an absence of the Tourism Sub-Sector in the governorate plan.

6.5.4 Development Issues

A comparison between the development issues of the both plans is conducted. The results show that all of the development issues, which are proposed in the town plan are completely reflected from the governorate development issues, except the development issues of the Tourism Sub-Sector, as this sector is not addressed in the governorate plan.

6.5.5 Development Objectives

In this section, a comparison is conducted between the development objectives for the common sectors between the both plans. Results of comparison is summarized in Table 6.9.

Table (6.9): Development Objectives of Nablus RDP and Beita LDP

Sector/ Sub-Sector	Objectives of Nablus RDP reflected in Beita LDP	
	% of reflected	% of not reflected
Economy (Agriculture)	33	67
Planning and Organization	67	33
Education	50	50
Infrastructure	30	70
Social Affairs (Sport and culture)	100	0
Governance (Institutional Building)	60	40
Average Percentage	48	52

The table shows the percentages of comparison between the objectives of the two plans. These percentages are calculated by studying the number of reflected and not reflected objectives of the governorate plan on the objectives the of the town plan. Results show that only 48% of the governorate objectives are reflected on the town objectives, while 52% are not. This means that less than half of the governorate objectives are reflected on the town objectives. This situation indicated a weak linkage in the objectives among the two plans.

For sectoral percentages, the reflection of the governorate objectives on the town objectives vary from 33% for the Agriculture Sub-Sector to 100% for the Social Affairs Sub-Sector.

6.5.6 Development Programs and Projects

In this section, a comparison is conducted between the proposed programs and projects of the two plans. Results are shown in Table 6.10.

The table shows the percentages of the comparison between the programs and projects of the two plans. These percentages are calculated by studying the number of reflected and not reflected programs and projects of the governorate plan on the programs and projects of the town plan.

Table (6.10): Development Programs and Projects of Nablus RDP and Beita LDP

Sector/ Sub-sector	Programs and projects of Nablus RDP reflected in Beita LDP	
	% of reflected	% of not reflected
Economy (Agriculture)	20	80
Planning and Organization	40	60
Education	56	44
infrastructure	33	67
Social Affairs (Sport and culture)	29	71
Governance (Institutional Building)	67	33
Average Percentage	40	60

It should be indicated that the proposed projects of the governorate plan, which could be inappropriate to be implemented in the town, are excluded from the comparison. For example, projects, which have identified places, or projects, which are large scale to be implemented in the town such as hospitals, are excluded.

Results of comparison show that only a percentage of 40% of the governorate programs and projects are reflected on the town programs and projects, while the majority, about 60% are not reflected. These percentages are varying from sector to another, as seen in Table 6.10. The reflection of the governorate programs and projects on the town programs

and projects are vary from 33% for the Institutional Building Sub-Sector to 80% for the Agriculture Sub-Sector.

As in Nablus LDP and Nablus RDP, Beita programs and projects are linked to national programs and codes through a linking matrix. This matrix and its limitations are discussed before.

6.5.7 Budgets

Budgets of Beita LDP and Nablus RDP are summarized in Table 6.11.

Table (6.11): Budget of Nablus RDP and Beita LDP

Sector/ Sub-Sector	Budget (in thousand \$)			
	Nablus RDP	Beita LDP		
		Local	Joint	Sum
Economy (Agriculture)	7,550	323	-	323
Planning and Organization	-	365	-	365
infrastructure	176,980	4,296	5,573	9,869
Education	277,895	1,415	1,600	3,015
Social Affairs (Sport and culture)	31,965	-	2,275	2,275
Governance (Institutional Building)	5,655	133	-	133
Sum	500,045	6,532	9,448	15,980

Table 6.11 summarizes the budgets of the two plans for the common sectors. The budgets for the proposed projects in Beita LDP are divided into two types, budgets for the local projects, and budgets for the projects, which are suggested to serve the surrounding communities, named as “joint services”, such as the Industrial School, the Football Playground, the Culture Center, the Roads Networks, and the Sewage Networks.

The budget of the governorate plan for the common sectors equals about \$500 million. This budget is distributed over five years, which results in an average of about \$100 million per year. On the other hand, the budget of town plan equals about \$16 million. This budget is distributed over four years, which results in an average of about \$4 million per year. This means that the town budget represents about 4% of the governorate plan.

The town population is about 10,545. This equals 3% of the governorate population of 372,621 (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2007). The percentage of the town budget of 4% of the governorate plan seems to be realistic, but it is difficult to conclude much from this percentage, by comparing it to the governorate budget, as the governorate budget was considered very large and unreal. On the other hand, there are no contradictions observed in sectoral budgets.

6.5.8 Indicators

As indicated before, the comparison between indicators necessitates considering the related development objectives. Results of comparison could be grouped as follows:

- **Same objectives with different indicators**

These are observed in all sectors. The majority of objectives are related but the indicators are different. For example, in Water/ Waste Water Sub-Sector, the common objective is to improve the water services. In the town plan the indicator is to measure the citizens' satisfaction, while in the

governorate plan the indicator is to measure the percentage of communities, which have water networks.

This may be attributed as the governorate plan indicator measures the accessibility to potable water to all citizens in the governorate, while this service in the town is already provided, so the town plan indicator measures the citizens' satisfaction of this service.

- **Same objectives with the same indicators, but with different way of measurement**

An example of this group is observed in the Institutional Building Sub-Sector. Both plans address the same objective; improving the performance of the employees. The same indicator, which is proposed by both plans is the training courses. But the governorate plan proposes to measure the number of participants in these courses, while the town plan proposes to measure the number of these training courses.

- **Similarity in objectives, indicators, and in the way of measurement**

There are few observed indicators, which fall under this category. An example of this is observed in the Electricity Sub-Sector. The same objective is improving the efficiency of electrical distribution networks. The indicator, which is proposed by both plans is the percentage of loss in the networks.

- **Different objective with different indicators**

There are few observed indicators, which fall under this category, because 92% of the town objectives are reflected in the governorate plan. But in some sectors, it is observed that there are few different objectives with surly have different indicators.

In general, differences in indicators are observed in all sectors between the two plans, whether in the indicators themselves or in the way of the measurement.

6.6 General Assessment

Based on the previous assessment of the relationships between Nablus RDP and the two national plans and the two others local plans, the following points could be concluded:

- There is a weak reflection of the governorate plan on the local plans. Percentages show that:
 - 38% and 47% of the governorate objectives and programs and projects are reflected on the city objectives and programs and projects, respectively.
 - 48% and 40% of the governorate objectives and programs and projects are reflected on the town objectives and programs and projects, respectively.

It could be noted that all these percentages are reflected in less than half of the respective objectives and programs and projects. This means

that local level plans didn't consider the governorate plan while preparing their local plans. This may cause a weak integration between these plans.

- There is a weak reflection of the PRDP (2008-2010) on the governorate plan. Percentages show that 41% of the national objectives are reflected on the governorate objectives. This percentages are less than half.
- There is a weak reflection of the governorate plan in the next national development plan; NDP (2011-2013). Percentages show that 53% of Nablus RDP objectives are reflected in the NDP objectives. As indicated before, the governorate plan was adopted in July 2010, and passed to the MOLG for consideration in the NDP, which was being prepared at that time. Nevertheless, a weak reflection of the governorate plan in the NDP is observed.
- It is observed that there is a weak capacity of lower levels in strategic and fiscal planning, as well as, the lower levels were too ambitious, as they proposed large number of programs and projects, which are difficult to be implemented especially in the case of limited budget, percentages show that:
 - Nablus LDP proposed budget represents 78% of the governorate proposed budget. This percentage could be considered very large.
 - Beita LDP proposed budget represents 4% of the governorate proposed budget. As indicated before, it is difficult to make a judgment on this percentage, as the governorate budget was considered very large and unrealistic.

These percentages could be considered generally large and unrealistic. This could make their implementation impossible. Moreover, capacity of local and regional level should be developed and upgraded.

- Indicators, which are proposed by all plans are different, whether this difference exists in the indicators themselves or in the way of measurement. It would be better if these indicators could be unified for all plans.
- Timeframes are different for the three plans. Nablus and Beita LDPs are prepared for four years, Nablus RDP is prepared for five years, and the PRDP (2008-2010) and the NDP (2011-2015) is prepared for three years. It would be better if timeframes of these plans could be unified. This could facilitate coordination and integration.
- Identification of sectors, including naming and numbering, as well as sub-sectors categorizations are different in the plans.

In general, it could be concluded that there is a weak relationship between these plans, which are considered in this case study. This weak relationship resulted in differences and lack of harmonization in timeframes, development issues, development objectives, development programs and projects, budgets, and indicators.

It is concluded that there is a need to develop a proper approach to link the multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine, considering integration and coordination.

Chapter Seven

The Proposed Model of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in Palestine

Chapter Seven

The Proposed Model of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in Palestine

7.1 Introduction

This chapter includes the proposed model of multi-level strategic development in Palestine. This model is developed based on reviewing some related concepts and approaches of multi-level strategic development planning, reviewing of some approaches in different countries, and analyzing and assessing the current relationships within the multi-level strategic development plans in Palestine.

The proposed roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders, which are involved in the planning process at the national, the regional, and the local levels are identified. The proposed model is developed in order to clarify how these roles and responsibilities could be linked in a sequential manner. These represent the proposed stages for preparing the multi-level strategic development plans.

The relevant institutional, legal, and financial frameworks are presented. These three frameworks constitute the enabling environment that could be essential for adopting and implementing the proposed model effectively.

7.2 The Proposed Combined Approach of Top-down and Bottom-up Planning

The proposed approach for the multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine is a combined approach of top-down and bottom-up

planning. The strategic and fiscal planning policies are set out by the national level, while the strategic development planning is basically conducted by the local level, except the strategic development projects, which have a national character, such as hospitals, national roads, regional sewage treatment systems, and universities. The responsibility for planning such strategic projects are directed to the sectoral ministries at the national level.

Figure 7.1 illustrates the proposed combined approach of top-down and bottom-up planning. It is proposed that strategic development plans are prepared for two levels; the national and the local. The role of the regional level is proposed to be a coordinating role between the national and local levels, in addition to overseeing the local planning and providing technical support to the municipalities and JSCs. Furthermore, planning time horizon at the national and the local level is proposed to be unified for four years rolling plans in order to encourage integrated planning.

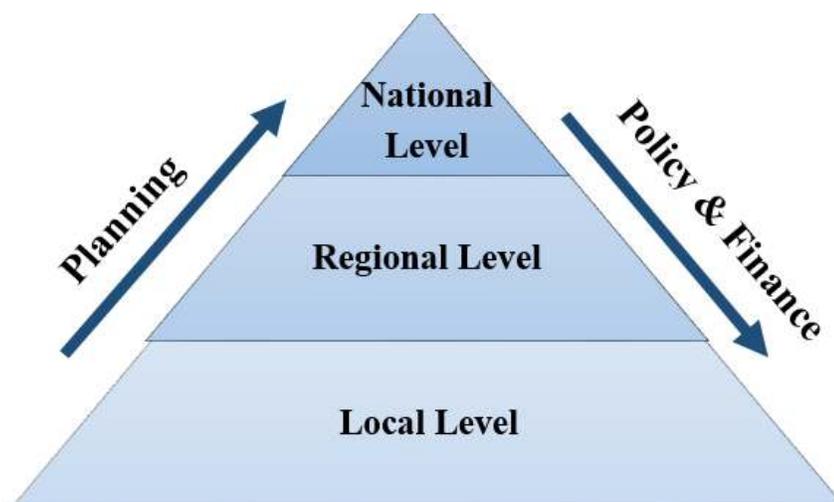


Figure (7.1): The Proposed Combined Approach of Top-down and Bottom-up Planning

7.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Table 7.1 illustrates the proposed roles and responsibilities of the all stakeholders that are involved in the strategic development planning process at the three levels, in addition to other agencies, which include official bodies.

Table (7.1): The Proposed Roles and Responsibilities of the Stakeholders

Level of Planning	Roles and Responsibilities
National level	
• Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve national plans. • Develop laws and regulations regarding the strategic development planning.
• MOPAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the Policy Agenda. • Prepare NDPs. • Coordinate between sectoral plans.
• MOF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecast budget resources. • Setout budget ceilings. • Finance local and national plans.
• MOLG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue legislation and policies in support of LDPs. • Prepare local planning procedures/ instruments/ manuals. • Establish a Planning and Implementation Management Support System. • Approve LDPs.
• Sectoral Ministries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare sectoral plans. • Planning for strategic projects, which have a national character, such as universities, national roads, regional sewage treatment systems, and hospitals. • Prepare sectoral indicators.
Regional level	
• Sectoral Directorates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in local planning. • Provide technical assistance to the municipalities and JSCs. • Facilitate feedback to the ministries.

Level of Planning	Roles and Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOLG Directorates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee and monitor the local planning. • Provide support to the municipalities and JSCs, as needed. • Coordinate between the municipalities and JSCs and the MOLG. • Coordinate between the municipalities and JSCs. • Facilitate feedback to the MOLG.
Local level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare LDPs for the cities and towns. • Setout local budgets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Service Councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare LDPs for the Joint Service area. • Coordination between villages. • Setout local budgets.
Other Agencies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDLF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical and financial support to the municipalities and JSCs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide financial support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Society Associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve in local strategic development planning.

7.4 The Proposed Model

The proposed model illustrates the functions of the stakeholders at each level in each stage of the planning process and their relations to each other. The proposed model is illustrated in Figure 7.2.

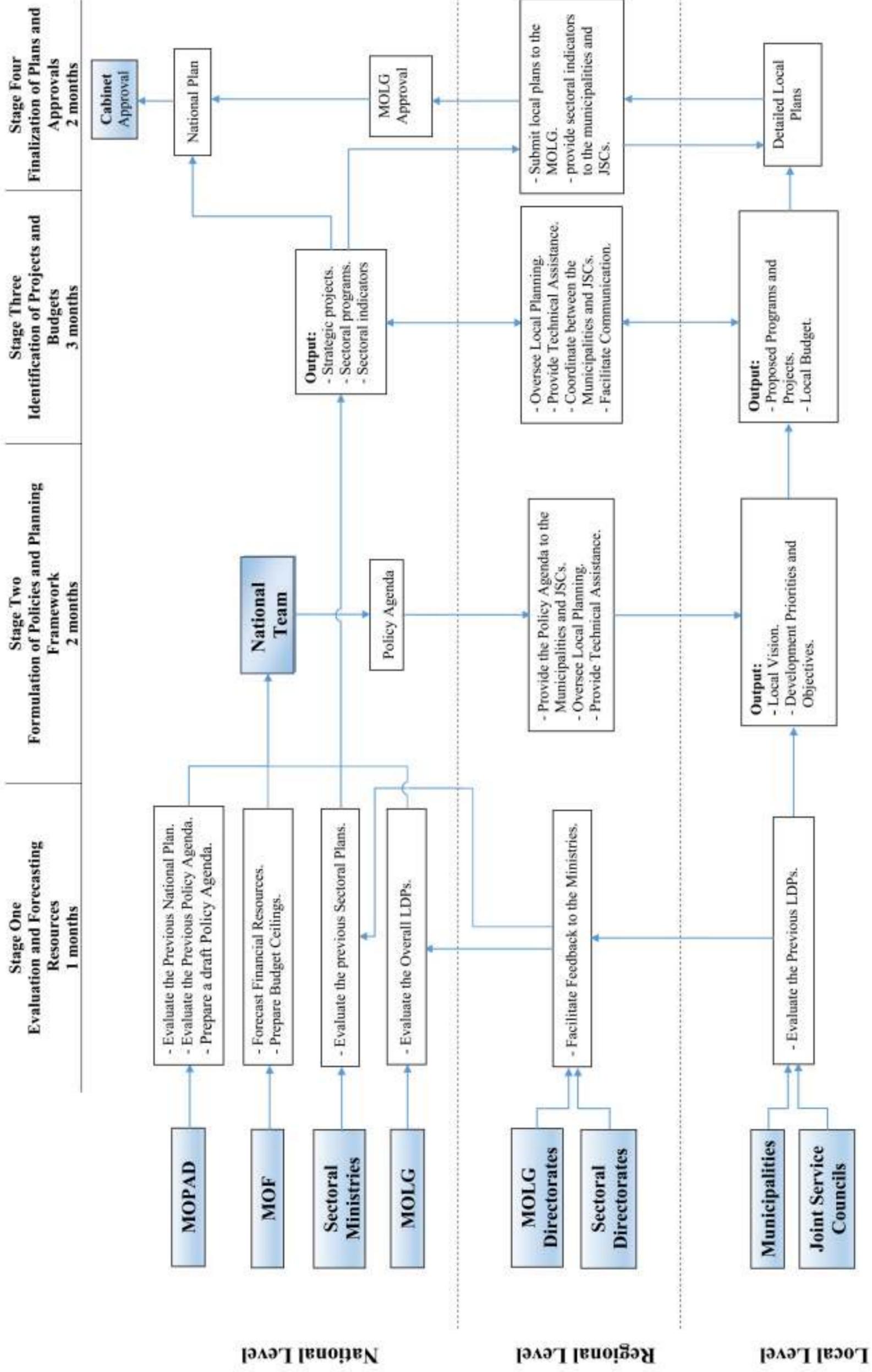


Figure (7.2): The Proposed Model of Multi-Level Strategic Development Planning in Palestine

7.5 Stages

This section illustrates the stages of the proposed model, which are addressed in Figure 7.2. The model proposes four stages for conducting the multi-level strategic development planning for a period of eight months. This period is distributed as one month for the first stage, two months for the second stage, three months for the third stage, and two months for the fourth stage. These stages are illustrated hereafter.

7.5.1 Stage One: Evaluation and Forecasting Resources

An evaluation of previous national, sectoral, and local plans is proposed to be conducted at this stage. The MOPAD evaluates the previous plan and the previous Policy Agenda in order to prepare a draft Policy Agenda for the next plan. The MOF conducts a macro-economic forecasts and estimates of financial resource availability, in order to set out a budget ceiling.

At the local level, an evaluation of local plans is conducted parallel to the evaluation of the national and the sectoral plans. Municipalities and JSCs evaluate their previous local plans and provide feedback to the MOLG to be considered in the next national plan. This feedback could be facilitated through the MOLG directorates, which are located at each governorate, in addition to the annual feedback that are provided by the municipalities and JSCs, in order to be incorporated into the annual updated national plan.

Sectoral directorates facilitate a feedback to the sectoral ministries about the results of the evaluation of the previous local plans, in order to be considered in the next sectoral plan.

7.5.2 Stage Two: Formulation of Policies and Planning Framework

At this stage, the National Team that embeds all relevant ministries, agrees and adopts a Policy Agenda, through multiple meetings. These multiple meetings represent workshops or sessions between ministries, so as to compare competing sectors agendas, and to agree the trade-offs between the different ministries.

The main output of National team meetings is the adopted Policy Agenda. This Policy Agenda is provided to the municipalities and JSCs, and represents the planning guidelines for local planning.

At the local level, the municipalities and JSCs set out their visions, development priorities, and objectives based on the Policy Agenda. For municipalities and JSCs, which have limited capacities, technical assistance is provided by sectoral directorates and the MOLG directorates.

7.5.3 Stage Three: Identification of Projects and Budgets

At this stage, the municipalities and JSCs set out their proposed programs and projects, and allocate local budget. Thereafter, these programs, projects, and budgets are submitted to the sectoral ministries to be incorporated into the sectoral programs. This process includes debates between sectoral ministries and municipalities and JSCs through sectoral

directorates, in order to conduct tradeoffs between the proposed programs and projects. Thereafter, sectoral ministries prepare the strategic projects, which have a national character such as hospitals, national roads, regional sewage treatment systems, and universities, and incorporate the sectoral programs that come from the local level to set out the sector development program. Thereafter, the sectoral indicators are set out by the ministries to be provided to local level at the next stage.

MOLG directorates oversee local planning, provide technical assistance to the municipalities and JSCs in preparing their proposed programs, projects, and budgets, and facilitate feedback to the MOLG.

7.5.4 Stage Four: Finalization of Plans and Approvals

At the last stage, the municipalities and JSCs prepare their detailed local plans. Thereafter, they submit these detailed local plans to the MOLG for approval. This process is facilitated through the MOLG directorates.

At the national level, sectoral ministries submit their sectoral programs to the MOPAD. Thereafter, the MOPAD incorporates the sectoral programs to set out the national plan. Finally, national plans are submitted to the cabinet for approval.

7.6 Enabling Environment

Adopting and implementing a proper approach for linking the multi-level planning in Palestine necessitates creating an enabling environment, within which the proposed model could be reinforced and implemented

efficiently. This enabling environment could be categorized into three areas; the legal framework, the institutional framework, and the financial framework. These three frameworks, which are shown in Figure 7.3 identify how the three level of government could implement their planning functions, and be linked on a sound legal, institutional, and financial bases.

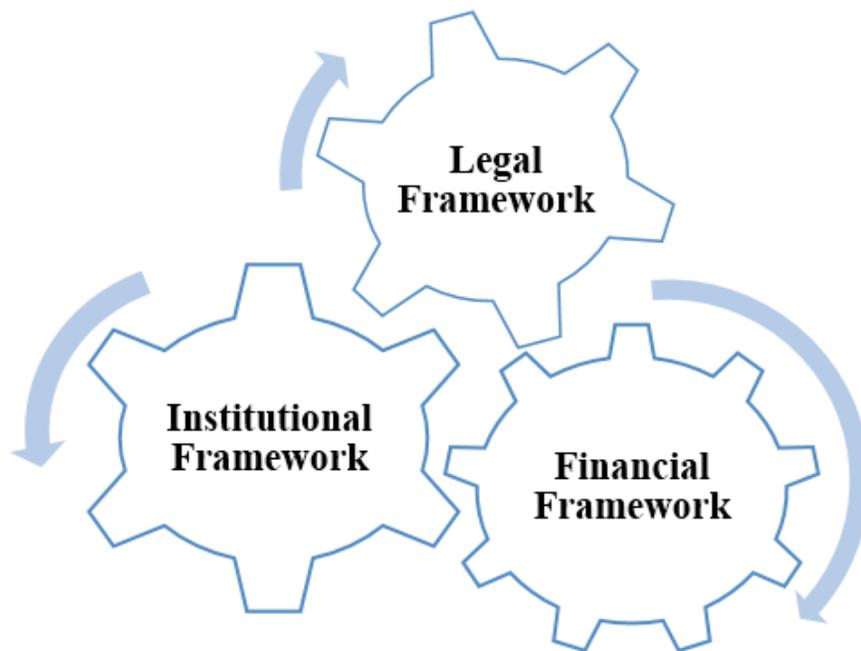


Figure (7.3): Three Areas of Enabling Environment

7.6.1 Institutional Framework

Strategic development planning in Palestine should be institutionalized at the three levels of the government in order to work more effectively. This implies that the national planning activities, the local planning activities, and the coordination activities at the intermediate level “the regional level” should be institutionalized. This institutionalization could be achieved through the following issues:

- 1) **Strategic development planning units:** Create or activate specialized directorates or units responsible for strategic development planning in the PNA institutions.
- 2) **Roles and responsibilities:** Roles and responsibilities should be clearly identified and agreed. The proposed roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders at the three levels and other agencies that involve the planning process, should be clearly identified and adopted.
- 3) **Two-way communication:** Communication should be improved vertically between the levels of the government and horizontally between the central ministries. Key ways to facilitate this are through:
 - **Improving access to information:** This could be facilitated by establishing an online information system at which planning information could be available at the time for each stakeholder.
 - **Spatially related information:** This implies that planning information has a geographical location, wherever applicable. The information system that has been prepared by the MOLG, which clarifies the sectoral programs for each local unit, should be reinforced and adopted.
 - **Role of the directorates:** The sectoral directorates and the MOLG directorate could play a facilitator role of communication between the national and the local level.
- 4) **Timing:** The timing of planning and decision making should be aligned across ministries and between the levels. Planning activities, which are

proposed in the model should be followed in a timely manner. Furthermore, information should be provided online on time. All these issues should be clarified in the planning manuals.

- 5) Capacity:** Planning and administration capabilities should be developed and maintained at the national, the regional, and the local levels. Some training coursing could be conducted for all levels. To develop the capacity of the regional level so as to be capable of overseeing local planning and provide assistance, a training program could be conducted as the first step before the approach could be adopted.
- 6) Manuals:** The institutionalized activities should be included in the manual. The manual should clearly identify the roles and responsibilities, timing of the planning activities, and the approach of the communication.

7.6.2 Legal Framework

Strategic development planning and the linking model of the three levels, should be supported by laws and regulations, to ensure controlling and organization. The legal framework should clarify the following issues:

- 1) Laws and regulations:** It is necessary to set a law that enforces each municipality and JSC and each ministry at the national level to prepare a strategic development plan for each four years, with yearly updating. The law of the year 1997 for the LGUs and other laws for the national

level, should be clarified and include some amendments. An important issue is the degree to which amendments should be enshrined in these laws; this should be discussed by decision makers. Policies, regulations, and by-laws could be developed to organize the planning and linking approaches. The responsibilities for setting explanatory and detailing regulations could be delegated to the MOLG.

- 2) Roles and responsibilities:** Regulations should clearly identify the roles and the responsibilities of all stakeholders, which involve in the planning process, to avoid conflict and duplication of these roles and responsibilities.
- 3) Manuals:** Manuals, which are set for national and local planning should be approved and ratified, in order to enforce municipalities, JSCs, and national agencies to follow them.
- 4) Approvals:** The responsibility for LDPs approval is directed to the MOLG. The Cabinet is responsible for approving national plans. Moreover, it is necessary to set and illustrate clear standards and criteria for approvals.
- 5) Capacity:** This should be built in local governments to implement their functions effectively from a legal and administrative point of view. The preferred approach for designing procedures and by-laws for local governments is to work with them so that the systems reflect their reality and improve their legal conscious. Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen capacity of the MOLG in legislations.

7.6.3 Financial Framework

Integrated approach of strategic development planning necessitates linking planning to budgets, and strategic development planning to fiscal planning. The financial framework should clarify the following issues:

- 1) Fiscal planning approach:** The proposed combined approach of top-down and bottom-up fiscal planning should be perused. As the budget ceilings are set at the national level, and the fiscal planning are conducted at the local level, with oversight and assistances coming from the regional level in financial skills.
- 2) Spatial budget distribution:** Sectoral programs and budgets should be spatially distributed. After the budget ceilings are set by the MOF, the National Team should distribute this budget ceiling sectorally, and these sectoral budgets should be thereafter distributed locally. This ensures that all municipalities and JSCs will benefit from the sectoral budgets. Moreover, national plans should address the geographical location of all proposed projects and investments, wherever applicable.
- 3) Capacity:** Strengthen capacity at national, regional, and local levels in fiscal planning and financial management. It is necessary to build or upgrade the financial planning and management capacities and procedures to avoid over estimated budget and over-expenditures.
- 4) Donors:** Different approaches of donors' assistance should be harmonized. Donors' funding should also be linked to the strategic

development plans. It is also necessary to lessen the dependence on donor funding and increase the overall ability to fund plans.

- 5) **MLDF:** The role of the MDLF should be reinforced and strengthened for developing the planning capabilities of the municipalities and JSCs, and channeling funds. Training courses for the municipalities and JSCs could be facilitated by the MDLF.

- 6) **Local and private funds:** municipalities and JSCs should develop and increase their local revenue generation, and seek for private investments, so as to fund some of their local projects. This will gradually increase their independency, rather than being dependent on donors' funds to a great extent.

7.7 General Issues

- It should be considered that adopting and implementing the proposed model for the multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine couldn't be done at once. A gradual shift from the existing model to the preferable one, is more appropriate.

- Development of capacities should be included at the first step of adopting and implementing the proposed model. Development of skills, procedures, manuals, and regulations should be developed at the beginning. An organized training and development program for building capabilities especially for the local and regional level could be conducted.

- The proposed planning model should be adjustable over time, adaptable to changing conditions, and flexible enough to allow for the differences in technical, financial, and human resources of different municipalities and JSCs.

Chapter Eight
Conclusions and
Recommendations

Chapter Eight

Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Summary

Multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine is conducted at three levels; the national, the regional, and the local levels. The problem of the research is the lack of systemic planning linkages between these levels. As a result, there is some conflict and inconsistency in some aspects of the three levels of planning, as noticed in the resulting plans inconsistent timeframes, development issues, objectives, and proposed programs and projects.

In this study, literature in strategic development planning is reviewed, in order to illustrate and discuss some related concepts, principles, and approaches for linking multi-level strategic development planning. In addition, specific case studies of multi-level strategic development planning systems in different countries are discussed and analyzed to benefit from their experiences.

The three levels of strategic development planning in Palestine are analyzed and assessed regarding planning approach, participation, institutional and legal status, and linkages among the planning levels. In addition, an assessment of the current relationships and linkages among these three levels is conducted. Furthermore, a case study of multi-level strategic development planning in Nablus Governorate is studied. First, the relationships between the Governorate plan and two national plans are assessed. These national plans are the Palestinian Reform and Development

Plan (PRDP) for the years 2008-2010, and the National Development Plan (NDP) for the years 2011-2013. Second, the relationships between the Governorate plan and two local plans are assessed. These local plans are Nablus City Local Development plan (LDP) for the years 2012-2015, and Beita Town Local Development Plan (LDP) for the years 2012-2015.

Depending on literature review, analysis of the three levels, and assessment of the relationships among the plans in the case study, a proposed model of multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine is developed.

The proposed approach is a combined approach of top-down and bottom-up planning. It identifies the proposed roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders, which are involved in strategic development planning at the three levels. Furthermore, these roles and responsibilities are presented and linked in a sequential manner through an overall model.

In addition, the relevant institutional, legal, and financial frameworks are identified. These three frameworks constitute the enabling environment that could be essential for adopting and implementing the proposed model effectively.

8.2 Conclusions

Based on the outcome of the study the following can be concluded:

- Multi-level strategic development planning approach in Palestine lacks proper linkages between the national, the regional, and the local levels.

The existing linking approach is not clear, not regulated, and not institutionalized.

- There is some conflict and inconsistency for specific aspects of the three levels of plans, as follows:
 - Planning time horizons for the three levels of plans are different.
 - The proposed budgets of these plans are not coherent with each other, and sometimes there are very large and unrealistic.
 - Development issues, objectives, programs and projects, and indicators, which are proposed by these plans are inconsistent.
- Absence of supportive regulations that should clearly identify roles and responsibilities of planning stakeholders. This causes some overlaps, and duplications.
- Weak participation of the local level and community in preparing sectoral and national plans.
- National planning lacks bottom up planning approach that basically should start at local level identifying needs and priorities, and it lacks local feedback.
- Regional level is the weakest level; it suffers from the following issues:
 - There is no clear responsible body for regional planning.

- There is no officially adopted approach that could be relied upon in preparing such plans, as various types of approaches had been followed, despite the existence of a draft procedural manual.
- Absence of laws and regulations that should oblige regions (governorates) to prepare such plans.

It is concluded that there is no need for preparing such plans. Palestine area is smaller than including this intermediate level of planning between the national and the local levels.

Depending on the previous conclusions, the proposed model for multi-level strategic development planning is developed. The model proposes the following points:

- Strategic development plans are proposed to be prepared for two levels; the national and the local. The role of the regional level is the coordination between the national and the local levels, in addition to overseeing the local planning and providing technical support to the municipalities and the JSCs.
- It is concluded that the proper approach for linking multi-level strategic development planning is a combined approach of top-down and bottom-up planning. As the strategic and fiscal planning policies are set out by the national level, while the strategic development planning is basically conducted by the local level, except the strategic development projects, which have a national character, such as hospitals, national

roads, regional sewage treatment systems, and universities. The responsibility for planning such strategic projects are directed to the sectoral ministries at the national level.

- Roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders at the national, the regional, and the local level are proposed. Furthermore, these roles and responsibilities are presented and linked in a sequential manner through an overall model.
- The period of the planning process is proposed to be eight months, through and integrating process among the three levels. On the other hand, the timeframe in which national and local plans are identified to be four years.
- The relevant institutional, legal, and financial frameworks are developed. These three frameworks constitute the enabling environment that could be essential for adopting and implementing the proposed model effectively.

8.3 Recommendations

With consideration of the conclusions, the following recommendations are presented hereafter:

- It is recommended to have a debate with relevant ministries for the adoption of the proposed model for the multi-level strategic development planning in Palestine.

- The proposed roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, which are involved in planning process at the national, the regional, and the local levels are recommended to be regulated and clearly identified and addressed in the guidelines and manuals.
- The proposed institutional, legal, and financial frameworks, which constitute the enabling environment for adopting the proposed model are recommended to be created and followed.
- The planning time horizon at the national and the local levels is recommended to be unified for four years rolling plans, in order to encourage integrated planning.
- It is recommended that strategic development planning is conducted by municipalities and JSCs, except planning for strategic projects that have a national character such as hospitals, universities, national roads, and regional sewage treatment systems, which is recommended to be conducted by sectoral ministries at the local level.
- It is recommended that the indicators, which measure the progress towards achieving the development objectives are unified and set by the sectoral ministries at the national level. Moreover, the proposed online information system have to include agreed upon values of baseline indicators.
- Palestinian villages are recommended to amalgamate into JSCs in order to prepare joint strategic development plans. Small municipalities are

recommended to amalgamate into larger municipalities in order to prepare joint strategic development plans.

- It is recommended that the sectoral budgets are distributed locally for each municipality and JSC.
- It is recommended to create or activate specialized directorates or units responsible for strategic development planning in the PNA institutions.
- It is recommended to establish an online information system, at which planning information could be available at the time for each stakeholder.
- The proposed programs and projects are recommended to be addressed in the national and local plans with their geographical location.
- It is recommended to conduct training programs in strategic and fiscal planning for planners at the national, the regional, and the local levels.
- Municipalities and JSCs are recommended to increase their local revenue generation, and seek for private investments.

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Interviews

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جامعة النجاح الوطنية
كلية الدراسات العليا

نموذج مقترح لمستويات التخطيط التنموي الاستراتيجي في فلسطين

إعداد

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إشراف

أ. د. سمير أبو عيشة

قدمت هذه الأطروحة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في الإدارة
الهندسية بكلية الدراسات العليا في جامعة النجاح الوطنية في نابلس، فلسطين

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المُلخَص

التخطيط التنموي الإستراتيجي في فلسطين يتم على ثلاثة مستويات: المستوى الوطني والإقليمي والمحلي. وتكمن مشكلة البحث في ضعف الروابط بين هذه المستويات الثلاثة من التخطيط، مما انعكس على عدم الانسجام والتكامل بين محتوى الخطط التنموية الاستراتيجية التي تُحضّر من قبل المستويات الثلاثة. وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إعداد نموذج مقترح للتشبيك بين هذه المستويات الثلاثة يأخذ بعين الإعتبار التكامل والتنسيق بينها.

اعتمدت الدراسة على المبادئ الأساسية للتخطيط التنموي الاستراتيجي المتعدد المستويات والمنهجيات المتبعة للتكامل والتنسيق بين المستويات المختلفة من التخطيط. كما تمت الاستفادة من تجارب عدة لمنهجيات التخطيط التنموي الاستراتيجي المتعدد المستويات في دول مختلفة.

وقد تم تحليل المستويات الثلاثة من التخطيط بما يخص المنهجية والمشاركة المجتمعية والوضع المأسسي والقانوني والروابط مع المستويات الأخرى. كما اعتمد التخطيط التنموي الإستراتيجي في محافظة نابلس كحالة دراسية، وذلك لفحص الروابط بين الخطة التنموية الإستراتيجية للمحافظة مع عدة خطط وطنية ومحلية. فعلى المستوى الوطني تم تحليل وتقييم العلاقة بين خطة المحافظة وخطة الاصلاح والتنمية للأعوام 2008-2010، وبين خطة المحافظة والخطة الوطنية للأعوام 2011-2013. وعلى المستوى المحلي، تم تحليل وتقييم العلاقة بين خطة المحافظة والخطة التنموية الإستراتيجية لمدينة نابلس للأعوام 2012-2015، وبين خطة المحافظة والخطة التنموية الإستراتيجية لبلدة بيتا للأعوام 2012-2015.

خلصت الدراسة إلى تطوير نموذج مقترح للتشبيك بين المستويات الثلاثة من التخطيط. وقد اقترحت الدراسة أن تكون منهجية التخطيط من أسفل لأعلى ومن أعلى لأسفل، على أن ترسم السياسات التنموية وطنياً، وأن يوكل التخطيط للمستوى المحلي، باستثناء المشاريع الاستراتيجية ذات البعد الوطني، كالمستشفيات والجامعات والطرق الخارجية وأنظمة تصريف ومعالجة المياه العادمة الإقليمية، حيث يقترح أن يكون التخطيط لهذه المشاريع موكلاً للوزارات القطاعية على المستوى الوطني. وتقترح الدراسة أن يكون دور المستوى الإقليمي مقتصرًا على التنسيق بين المستويين الوطني والمحلي، إضافة إلى تقديم الدعم والمساندة للبلديات والمجالس المحلية المشتركة في إعداد خططها المحلية، دونما الحاجة لإعداد خطط تنموية استراتيجية على مستوى المحافظات.

كما قامت الدراسة باقتراح وتحديد أدوار ومسؤوليات أصحاب العلاقة المشاركين في إعداد الخطط التنموية الاستراتيجية للمستويات الثلاثة، واقترحت نموذجاً للتشبيك بين هذه الأدوار في كل مرحلة من مراحل التخطيط المتكامل للمستويين المحلي والوطني. كما تم اقتراح إطار مؤسسي وإطار قانوني وإطار مالي لدعم المنهجية المقترحة، بحيث تشكل هذه الأطر الثلاثة البيئة الداعمة لتبني وتطبيق المنهجية المقترحة بنجاح وفعالية.