

## THE ROLE OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILS IN LOCAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**In April 2015, KAS Jordan Office organized in collaboration with Mossawah Center for Civil Society Development a seminar entitled: "The Role of Municipal Councils in Local Community Development" in Ajloun, Jerash and Amman. 50-60 participants discussed the role of municipalities in local development and studied the participatory relationship between municipalities, youth and civil society organizations.**

Following the welcoming remarks of KAS Project Manager Ms Nidaa Al-Shraideh, and Director of Mossawah Center for Civil Society Development, Mr Suliman Al Khawaldeh, professor of political sciences at Al Albayt University in Mafraq Dr. Abdallah Al Arqan, , talked about the role of municipal councils in the development of local communities. He defined local community and described the role of municipalities in strengthening cooperation in serving the local community. He stressed that municipalities are very essential for the local development, as they are close to their customers and they are most aware of their daily living issues. Al Arqan talked also about the developmental role of municipalities putting emphasis on the relevance of developing programs of the municipalities to the development of the municipal councils. This could be implemented through strengthening the role of municipal councils and the local community, improving their funding resources and raising their institutional capacity. At the end of his session, Al Arqan presented some success stories of developing programs of municipalities which targeted the strengthening of the developmental role of the municipal councils.

HE Senator Musa Al Maaytah, talked about the role of Municipalities Law and explored opportunities of implementing decentralization. He highlighted the weaknesses and stunts of the Municipality Law, underscoring it as a law of reform that strongly contributes to strengthening the role of local communities in the decision-making process.

He emphasized that this law is essential to the transition of the municipalities as it marks a shift from a service-oriented to development-oriented approach reflecting thus on the active involvement of local communities implementing projects.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup> session, the head of the Council for Youth, HE Dr. Sami Al Majali, talked about the developmental partnership between the municipal councils and the youth. He pointed out to the role of the Higher Council for Youth in empowering young people and motivating them to be key players with municipalities through the formation of local youth's councils that enable them to be part of the local governance. Through their envisaged participation, they will have access to the work mechanism of the different bodies of the local governance.

Director of Mossawah Center Mr Suliman Al Khawaldeh talked in the last session about the participatory relationship between municipalities and civil society organizations. He gave an introduction about civil society and its role, especially in the area of development, to serve local communities. Al Khawaldeh highlighted the challenges that the active partnership between civil society organizations and municipal councils is facing, pointing out to the importance of building trust between the two parties in order to com-

**Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.**

**AUSLANDSBÜRO JORDANIEN**

**04<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

**Muna Sukhni**

**Dr. Otmar Oehring**

**[www.kas.de/amman](http://www.kas.de/amman)**

plement each other to the effect of offering the local community improved services.

An important role that civil society organizations play is to implement programs that promote awareness of the importance of municipal work and the participation of society in the decision making.

At the end of the session, Al Khawaldeh shared the audience some success stories about the cooperation between Mossawah Center and municipalities, which had a great impact on the local community.