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IRAQ ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROGRAM

WEEKLY REPORT #48

October 8, 2011 – October 14, 2011

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DISCLAIMER

The author's views in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

The Access to Justice Erbil Team hosted a high-level delegation from USAID at the Program office in Erbil on October 11, 2011 for a meeting with the technical staff and program grantees for a discussion of various issues, including:

- Legal clinic status and future work in this area.
- Sustainability plan for existing project.
- Unifying laws of the Government of Iraq (GOI) and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).
- Corporate involvement of NGOs in KRG; plans for Corporate Social Responsibility plans with major companies in Iraq.
- USAID met with Soran Association for Care of the Handicapped NGO (SACH) to discuss the legal clinic project in Soran and how the project might impact rural areas.
- During the meeting with Soran, it was proposed that they economize their use of program funding by using paralegals to assist in preparing all paperwork for their lawyers, leaving funds available to extend their project

This visit was preceded by a joint USAID delegation/Access to Justice meeting with NGOs in Sulaymaniyah on October 10, in which three active NGOs participated and described their activities in the province.



Access to Justice and USAID representatives meet with prospective partner NGOs in Sulaymaniyah

COMPONENT 1 - IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE OF LEGAL REMEDIES

Result 1.1: Partner CSOs, Professional Organizations, and Government Partners launch Strategic Communication Campaign that effectively delivers priority Access to Justice messages to targeted vulnerable populations

Awareness Raising Campaigns Start-up Meeting in Erbil: The Public Awareness and Outreach team organized a meeting with all grantees in the Kurdistan Region to facilitate the start-up of their awareness raising campaigns. During the meeting the grantees and the component team had a detailed discussion on ways to increase the effectiveness of awareness raising campaigns. The grantees were assured of the program’s technical assistance in their activities. The component team emphasized the need for active coordination among the grantees to provide all possible assistance to vulnerable Iraqi’s who approach legal clinics for assistance. The Access to Justice Program requested that grantees keep at least 100 sets of their awareness campaign print materials such as brochures or flyers at all the program funded legal clinics. Access to Justice staff hope this will encourage cohesion among grantees, as well as provide additional support to vulnerable Iraqis who approach the clinics for legal aid, regardless of whether that clinic caters to their particular demographic. The Access to Justice Program team has agreed to provide training to social workers in the legal clinics to improve their communication skills and also to provide them with comprehensive information about using awareness raising materials from other grantees.

Participants were informed about the exceptions to USAID branding requirements and the mechanism for requesting a waiver and they were assured that the component team is always accessible for technical assistance and guidance. The team also informed the grantees that the maximum turnaround time for approval of their products will be one week.



Meeting with A2J partners in Erbil to discuss communications materials they will be using in awareness campaigns led by Component 1

Capacity Building for Communication Campaigns: The program started a series of trainings for media professionals of various partner government departments that aim to help participants communicate more effectively with the media, as well as, their target populations. The training course, which is being conducted by the program in coordination with IREX, is comprised of six trainings, the first of which, “Effective Communication Strategies,” was completed October 10-12 in Baghdad. A total of 24 participants (16 males and 8 females) from the media departments of

the Ministries of Labor and Social Welfare, Justice, and Human Rights, and the NGO Directorate attended the training. The interactive sessions helped the participants to better understand the role of an effective media office, provided practical solutions to dealing with journalists and practical skills on writing better news reports, press releases and articles. The participants commented that this training was different and useful for them because it focused on improving practical skills required to enhance their affectivity at work. The second training in this series is set for October 17-19, 2011.



Left: Picture of trainees attending the joint IREX / A2J training on Effective Communication Strategies;
Right: Trainer Hewa Othman leads a group exercise.

Result 1.4: Effective Monitoring and Evaluation of implementing partner public awareness campaigns

The Component 1 team started tracking the progress of the design and implementation plans of grantees on their awareness raising campaigns. During the start-up meeting in Erbil on October 4, participants were asked to submit their campaigns' implementation plans to the Access to Justice Program no later than October 15 to ensure that the Program schedules monitoring activities accordingly. A similar exercise is in progress in Baghdad where the team is holding individual meetings with grantees to assist them in developing implementation plans. Two grantees in Baghdad have already initiated their campaign designs and submitted their draft materials to the program for review and approval during this week.

COMPONENT 2 - IMPROVE LEGAL EDUCATION AND SERVICES

Result 2.1: Support Iraqi NGOs working in priority access to justice areas to improve their administrative and substantive capacity to support vulnerable populations

The Component 2 team identified organizations to submit grant proposals that will include Component 2 activities including legal aid services. Representatives from the Human Rights Defenders Organization (HRD), a Baghdad based NGO that offers a range of legal services to vulnerable populations, visited the Baghdad office. The team received additional expressions of interest from al Amwaj Foundation for Human Rights in Basra, Shat al Arab District, and Women for Peace in Maysan.

The Component 2 Team Leader met with Mr. Shabaz Jamal, Project Officer from the UNDP ROL program and Ms. Rana Ksaifi, Protection Officer from UNHCR on October 11 to exchange information and discuss cooperation between the Access to Justice Program and the two UN programs in the Kurdistan Region so as to ensure that the programs are not in competition with each other.

The Component 2 Team Leader met with the Ms. Dalia Kaikhasraw, Executive Director of Tolerancy International, an Erbil based NGO, to discuss grant opportunities with the Access to Justice Program.

Result 2.2: Work with Iraqi legal professional associations (primarily the Iraqi Bar Association and Jurist Union and their subsidiaries) to increase administrative and substantive capacity for empowering lawyers and other legal professionals to assist vulnerable or disadvantaged populations

Component 2 and the Gender Specialist met with Ahlam Rashid, the Chair of the Women's Committee of the Iraqi Bar Association. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the next elections within the IBA and how the Access to Justice Program could support women lawyers in the election. Originally, it was believed that the elections would take place in November 2011; however, the elections will take place in November 2012. This provides the Access to Justice Program ample time to work with the IBA on capacity building of female lawyers who would like to seek a position on the Board. Ms. Rashid requested capacity building assistance in order to encourage and support women to stand for election.

The agenda also included discussion on holding a conference for all Iraqi women lawyers, including from the Kurdistan Region, to highlight issues that affect women lawyers in carrying out their duties as well as women's right to equal consideration to men in the workplace. Ms. Rashid is creating a Committee within the IBA to support this initiative, as well as others affecting women. The parties agreed to a tentative conference date of December 10, subject to modification. This would be the first time in Iraq's history that a conference dedicated to women lawyers in Iraq will be held. The next step is to finalize an agenda, following which submit a letter to the IBA offering the support of the Access to Justice Project for this endeavor.

Result 2.3: Assist the IBA and other legal associations to "increase the supply" of lawyers assisting vulnerable or disadvantaged populations through initiatives such as continuing legal education (CLE) for lawyers, pre-service and orientation training for new lawyers, and targeted training on assisting specific vulnerable groups

The Component 2 Team organized a new lawyers training course in partnership with the National Institute for Human Rights and the Iraqi Bar Association. The training took place on October 8 and 9 in the Baghdad IBA hall and centered on the rights of displaced people in international law and various national laws, including Social Welfare Law No. 126. The event was attended by 24 lawyers (19 male, 5 female).

Coordination with the Basra IBA: The Access to Justice Basra office agreed with the IBA in Basra to make presentations on vulnerable group rights in an upcoming conference scheduled for late October or early November of this year. The suggested presentations will discuss the role of the lawyers in helping and supporting vulnerable populations in reference to Article 70 (the *pro bono* article) of the proposed draft of the Law of Lawyers. The conference will also discuss the availability of legal aid offered to vulnerable and disadvantaged populations.

Result 2.4: Support development of programs and modernization of academic and practical curriculum related to extending access to justice to vulnerable populations at law schools in Iraqi Universities in key locations throughout Iraq

On October 12, Component 2 facilitated a meeting with USAID representatives Bob Davidson, Walter Doetsch, and Eileen Derby and Salahaddin Law School Dean Dr. Hussein, Legal Clinic Director, Dr. Rizgar, Legal Clinic Manager and Legal Financial Clinic Manager. The meeting included a discussion on the status of Salahaddin Law School's legal clinic and the use of law students as interns in the legal clinic. The University is already creating a plan for the intern program to bring to the Kurdistan MOHE for approval. The meeting was concluded with a tour of the legal clinic office on the campus.

Component 2 and the IBA Chairman and IBA delegation visited Baghdad Law School on October 13 to discuss an upcoming conference scheduled for February 2012. This meeting was a follow-up to the September 19 meeting at the Iraqi Hunting Club. The parties created a committee comprised of individuals from each organization to organize the February 2012 Law School and IBA national cooperation conference to discuss creating changes in the Law School curriculum that makes instruction for students more practical and relevant to assistance for the vulnerable populations in Iraq.



Dean of the Baghdad Law School, Dr. Ali Rufaiee (seated at desk), hosts a delegation from the Iraqi Bar Association to strengthen dialogue relevant to improving law school curriculum. Seated to his right (from right to left) are: Mohammad Al-Faisal (IBA Chairman), Ali Maktoof (A2J C2), Ali Ghalib (A2J Advisor), Ahlam Rasheed (IBA Board Member), and Ali Raheem (A2J C2).

regulations and legislation as they relate to vulnerable populations Component 3 contributed to the agenda and participated in a meeting with the Citizens' Affairs Directorate of the Cabinet of

Ministers (COMSEC) and the Ministries of Interior and Health, and the Higher Judicial Council. USAID COTR, Slavica Radosevic attended the meeting as well. The agenda included a discussion on the development of an electronic link between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior to reduce corruption and remove obstacles preventing vulnerable groups from readily accessing government services and legal assistance. Component 3 is working with the COMSEC Citizens' Affairs Directorate in formulating its recommendations after the above meeting on e-government strategy, a topic which emerged from the dialogue.



Dr. Ali Allaq, the General Secretary for the Council of Ministers, presides over discussions to improve the issuance of the Iraqi Jinsiya to vulnerable Iraqis. Seated to his right (right to left) are: Mohammad Tamimi (DG of COMSEC Citizens' Affairs), Dr. Aasem (MOH), and General Sabah (MOI – not shown in picture). Seated to his left are (left to right): Dr. Sinan (Head of IT Department for the Higher Judicial Council), Eric Nigh (A2J COP), Slavica Radosevic (USAID), Edrees (A2J), and Joseph Deaunay (A2J C3 Lead).

Together with the Erbil office, Kurdistan NGOS, and with input from the gender specialist, Component 3 prepared extensive commentary to the draft Kurdistan Law on Lawyers following discussion from the meeting which occurred last week discussing the addition of a requirement for lawyers to perform pro bono work in support of vulnerable groups. Component 3 and the Erbil Legal Advisor submitted a formal letter jointly signed by the above mentioned parties to the Kurdistan Bar Association communicating this commentary which included specific recommendations for changes to the draft law.



Picture from previous meeting of A2J partners to discuss inputs to the draft Law of Lawyers held at the offices of WEO, an A2J Grantee

In Baghdad, the Component 3 team worked with the IBA in redrafting elements of the Law on Lawyers based on comments received from attendees of the last preparatory conference held on the 29th of September. The team also worked on scheduling a second conference on the Law on Lawyers with the intention of finalizing and approving the draft, including *pro bono* obligations.

GRANTS ADMINISTRATION

The Capacity Building Specialist completed an “RFA, Grants Process, and Proposal Writing Workshop” for 13 participants (7 males, 6 females) representing 13 NGOs in Sulaymaniyah (one NGO from Kirkuk) on October 8 and 9. The same workshop was completed in Dohuk on October 11 and 12 for 18 NGO representatives (7 females, 11 males).

The NGO Coordinators conducted site visits to NGOs who received their first disbursements: Mercy Hands Humanitarian Aid in Baghdad, Salam Al Rafidain Organization in Yousifiya City, Al Rhama Humanity Association in Sadr City, and Al Amal Association in Najaf. All organizations are on track for implementation.

The Grant team reviewed Grant Applications for Iraqi Bar Association, IADO, and Basra Law School and expects to submit to USAID for approval in the coming days.

NGOs Training WS Invitation: The Basrah Regional Office distributed invitations to nine local Basrah NGOs to attend the October 15 and 16 workshop regarding managing grants & proposal writing. This workshop will be dedicated to facilitating the NGOs understanding of the RFA and explaining the grants application submission process.

PROGRAM SUPPORT UNIT

Media Specialist

- Met with the Deputy Director of the NGO Directorate to provide technical assistance on the best ways to implement a quick impact media campaign on the ninety day government

extension for NGO's re-registration according to the new NGO law. Also discussed the draft letter of intent for the updated NGO Directorate website and database development project Access to Justice intends to execute.

- Worked on the Arabic side of the Access to Justice website,

Gender Specialist

The Gender Specialist has been coordinating with the USAID-funded Primary Health Care Project on IDP issues.

The Gender Specialist met with Dr. Salim Al-Jabouri, Chair of the Human Rights Committee at Parliament, to follow up to a prior meeting. To further his objectives, Dr. Al-Jabouri is forming legislative teams to address issues affecting vulnerable groups. Dr. Al-Jabouri stated that he would like to rely on the Gender Specialist to achieve the objectives discussed in the prior meeting.

Next week, the Gender Specialist is scheduled to meet with Mrs. Intersar Al-Jabouri. Intersar Al-Jabouri is the Chair of the Women, Family and Children's Committee at Parliament. This will be the first meeting with Chair. At the prior meeting with this Committee the Chair was unable to attend.

The Gender Specialist reviewed the Kurdistan Law on Lawyers and the Begging Law (Basra only) from a gender perspective as well as a technical one and offered recommendations and commentary relevant to ensuring that rights of vulnerable groups are appropriately addressed within the law when possible.

ADMINISTRATION/OPERATIONS

The Program has received a formal notice that there will be a financial audit of locally incurred costs for the period covering from October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011. The audit will be conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, USAID/Iraq approved external auditors, as mentioned on the letter of Sandra Minkel, USAID Controller, dated October 12, 2011. No date has been fixed yet.

The registration process has suffered some setbacks with the request of an additional letter from the Ministry of Human Rights. We are currently discussing with the Ministry of Human Rights to help us by reissuing their support letter that covers the language that the Company Registry would like to see. The Ministry is hesitant to issue this letter. Access to Justice is in discussions as to how best to deal with the issue in order to push registration forward.

IRAQ ACCESS TO JUSTICE PROGRAM UPCOMING SCHEDULE

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
October 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USAID Fraud awareness training on Mansour Compound – attended by all components, Grants and Finance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CI Awareness Raising Campaigns by Grantees: Start up meeting in Erbil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Erbil ▪ C1 Meetings with KRG Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and Ministry of Women ▪ Partners meeting in Erbil to discuss the Kurdistan Law on Lawyers draft 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Erbil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Sulaymaniya ▪ C2 New lawyer Training in IBA ▪ ICSSI NGO Conference – Attended by the Erbil Access to Justice Program Regional Director & NGO Advisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Sulaymaniya ▪ C2 New lawyer Training in IBA ▪ ICSSI NGO Conference – Attended by the Erbil Access to Justice Program Regional Director & NGO Advisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination ▪ Erbil Access to Justice Program team/USAID Baghdad-Erbil team – meeting in Sulaymaniya with 3 NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Dahouk ▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination ▪ Erbil Access to Justice Program staff meeting with USAID Baghdad-Erbil team - meeting in Erbil office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training –Dahouk ▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination ▪ Erbil Access to Justice Program team/USAID Baghdad-Erbil team – meeting with Salahaddin Law Faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ C3 COMSEC meeting for connecting the MOH Birth and Death certificates to the MOI for the Jinsiya Issue – 10 AM ▪ C2 Site Visit to Al-Amal Organization in Najaf 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training - Basrah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CI Series of Trainings on Advanced Communication Skills for Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and Grantees Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Basrah C1 Training for Ministry of Human Rights on Running Media Campaigns Provided by Grantee Al-Murtaqa – Rukn Jadriya Hotel in Karrada – Day 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C1 Series of Trainings on Advanced Communication Skills for Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and Grantees C2 NGOs Directorate (for training Sub. and the NGOs candidates list) C1 Training Provided by Grantee Al-Murtaqa – Rukn Jadriya Hotel in Karrada – Day 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C1 Series of Trainings on Advanced Communication Skills for Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and Grantees C2 New Lawyers Training (IBA) C1 Training for Ministry of Human Rights on Running Media Campaigns Provided by Grantee Al-Murtaqa – Rukn Jadriya Hotel in Karrada – Day 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C2 New Lawyers Training (IBA) C1 Training for Ministry of Human Rights on Running Media Campaigns Provided by Grantee Al-Murtaqa – Rukn Jadriya Hotel in Karrada – Day 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C2 Meeting with Basra regional Office in Baghdad/ NGOs Capacity Building training Grants Stocktaking Exercise with IA2J, DPK and LBG Home Office Staff C1 Training for Ministry of Human Rights on Running Media Campaigns Provided by Grantee Al-Murtaqa – Rukn Jadriya Hotel in Karrada – Day 5 	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants Stocktaking Exercise with IA2J, DPK and LBG Home Office Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants Stocktaking Exercise with IA2J, DPK and LBG Home Office Staff Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Baghdad (NGO Directorate) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Baghdad (NGO Directorate) C2 Capacity Building training Strategic Planning in Suly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C2 New Lawyers Training (IBA) C2 Capacity Building training Strategic Planning in Suly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C2 New Lawyers Training (IBA) C2 Capacity Building training Strategic Planning in Dohuk Targeted grants training for groups active in advocacy (Component 3 and Grants Team) Day 1 of 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C2 Capacity Building training Strategic Planning in Dohuk Targeted grants training for groups active in advocacy (Component 3 and Grants Team) Day 2 of 2 	

29	30	31	November 1	2	3	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ C2 New Lawyers Training (IBA) ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ C2 New Lawyers Training (IBA) ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination (C1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ C3 COMSEC meeting for streamlining procedures for the Jinsiya Issue as well as assisting Iraqis abroad in obtaining Jinsiya – 10 AM ▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination (C1) 	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training - Basrah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Basrah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Sulaymaniya ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training – Sulaymaniya ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training –Duhok ▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training –Duhok ▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 	

19	20	21	22	23	24	25
▪	▪ Grants Management Training in Finance, Procurement, and Personnel Policy, and Procedures for New Grantees–Erbil	▪ Grants Management Training in Finance, Procurement, and Personnel Policy, and Procedures for New Grantees–Erbil	▪ Grants Management Training in Finance, Procurement, and Personnel Policy, and Procedures for New Grantees–Erbil	▪ Grants Management Training in Finance, Procurement, and Personnel Policy, and Procedures for New Grantees–Erbil	▪ Grants Management Training in Finance, Procurement, and Personnel Policy, and Procedures for New Grantees–Erbil	
26	27	28	29	30	December 1	2
▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training –Erbil	▪ Grants RFP Proposal Writing Training –Erbil	▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination	▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination	▪ CI Series of Trainings on Effective Tools for Information Dissemination	▪	

Events circled in red are recommended for USAID attendance