

USAID Rule of Law Program
Quarterly Report
January-March, 2010

**USAID Rule of Law Program
Sweifieh – McDonalds Building, 1st Floor
Abdel Rahim Al-Haj Mohamad Street
Amman, Jordan 11193**

Executive Summary

The Judicial Strategic Plan (JUST 2010-2012), was launched during the Second Judicial Conference in February. The strategy describes specific actions to fundamentally alter the structure of some components of the judicial system and improve the quality of judgments, court infrastructures and services.

Court administrators and Chiefs of Diwan began the foundation-level Training Program at Talal Abu Ghazaleh Business College in Amman. Three of the seven courses were completed this quarter. The Training Program is part of a comprehensive curriculum developed by the Rule of Law Project. It has been independently evaluated by Michigan State University and meets their requirements for certification. In addition to training and exercises, ROLP authored the 'Court Administration Practice Guide.'

Al-Jidara Consulting was awarded a contract to strengthen the capacity of the Ombudsman Bureau. Eco-Consult was awarded a contract to develop mechanisms that will ensure the security and maintenance of records and case files.

In March, ROLP received and evaluated the first release of the software for the Criminal Execution Department and initiated testing. This software will be piloted for six weeks. Estarta continued development on the ePortal for the MOJ. This portal will provide secure internet access to case information for judges, court staff and other personnel, while enabling public access for litigants and other stakeholders. It will also allow remote access to MIZAN. The first build of the Dashboard system was delivered in March 2010 and is being tested. The Dashboard is designed to improve the interface for delivery of statistical and management information and reports to judges, court administrators and other officials.

The First Instance Civil Income Tax and Criminal Income Tax Courts were established in January 2010 and are hearing new cases. Technology support functions in the courts continued to be transfred from ROLP staff to MOJ IT and court staff-enhancing their ability to sustain court automation independent of donor assistance.

The Call Center (service desk) was moved from its pilot location in the ROLP offices to its permanent location in the MOJ. It serves all 51 court locations with over 1500 users across the Kingdom. This functionality is a milestone in the development of the ITD as a professional technology management organization.

ROLP is assisting the Ministry of Justice and the Minister of Industry and Trade to develop amendments to the Industry and Trade Law and the Consumers Protection and Competition Law. ROLP proposed amendments were incorporated into the draft law and it was sent to the Legislative Bureau for final review.

Mediation departments in Salt and Irbid were launched in January. Judge Messiemi and the ROLP Mediation Team developed the 2010 ADR Department Action/Work Plan to ensure that ROLP initiatives and MOJ initiatives were complimentary and aligned. This Work Plan became a part of the MOJ Master Plan submitted to the Prime Minister.

ROLP repeated the forty-hour Basic Mediation Training Program to enhance the capacity of judges from courts outside of the Amman Palace of Justice. ROLP collected data regarding Mediation Programs from 2008 to 2009. ROLP developed a Mediation Awareness campaign to educate the public on the benefits of mediation as an alternative to litigation.

The 2009/2010 students in the Judicial Studies Diploma Program completed their first and second exams and registered for English courses at the American Language Center. The 2008/2009 students completed their second and final exams and began internships in The Palace of Justice, Public Prosecution and Grand Felonies Court. The 2007/2008 students who completed the program in the summer of 2009 are waiting appointments.

ROLP and MOJ prepared a 2010 Future Judges Unit Work Plan, which includes strategic objectives and key performance indicators. This Work Plan is the first of its kind and serves as a proactive effort and milestone in the institutional development of the Judicial Institute.

In cooperation with national and international partners, ROLP and the Judicial Institute of Jordan (JIJ) conducted sixteen CLE training programs.

Civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based and rural organizations, educational institutions and other non-governmental organizations submitted concept papers describing proposed grant-funded program related to human rights issues. Four finalists are developing their concepts into full proposals. Once proposal and budget amendments are completed, ROLP will startup the first round of small grant programs.

Objective 1: Enhance Judicial Performance to Reduce Delays and Increase Public Confidence

Case Management

Tracking long-pending cases and revising procedures serves to increase judicial performance:

Resolving long-pending cases (cases pending for more than two years) is necessary to improve judicial efficiency and performance. During the previous quarter, ROLP concluded its report on long-pending cases for five First Instance Courts in Zarqa, North Amman, South Amman, East Amman and West Amman. ROLP has continued to track these cases and encourage the Courts to give long-pending cases special attention in order to find a means to dispose them. Most long-pending cases are abandoned cases, cases involving multiple parties, of which some of them cannot be located for notification, and cases which require considerable work by a judge that in some instances are ignored if the judge knows that he/she would be rotated and the case passed on to a successor. Efforts to expand this study to all Courts within the Kingdom will depend upon the consensus of the Ministry of Justice and Judicial Council.

The following table illustrates the Court's progress in reducing the number of long-pending cases, from October 2009 to March 2010.

Court	# of Cases on 10/31/09	# of Cases on 3/31/10	# of Disposed Cases
North Amman	233	157	76
South Amman	115	83	32
East Amman	58	38	20
West Amman	96	53	43
Al Zarqa	128	81	47

Table 1: Cases which are long-pending

Twenty judges (one woman / nineteen men) in the West Amman First Instance Court attended training on case management and MIZAN V2 enhancements. The training was delivered by Judge Fedaa Al Hmoud and Judge Waleed Kanakrieh. Despite the success of this training and widespread support for case management principals in general, significant challenges remain to achieving positive outcomes for case management.

With respect to the Case Management Pilot Project in particular, these challenges include limitations in the Civil Procedures Law and the lack of active participation.

ROLP and Judge Ali Messiemi, Director of the Case Management and Mediation Directorate of the MOJ, evaluated the Complex Cases Case Management Pilot Program

in the NPOJ, interviewed participating judges, reviewed the procedures attempting to be practiced, and sought anecdotal information concerning impacts on cases within the pilot (a quantitative analysis/survey of cases is planned for the near future).

The pilot program was designed to use a set of criteria to identify, within the Case Management Department (CMD) processing of cases, a subset of complex cases to which judicial case management practices would be applied to expedite their resolution. The pilot program does not seem to be accomplishing its' anticipated objectives. The participating judges tend to think that the criteria are not useful because cases meeting the criteria as complex are rare and cases might better be categorized by specialization instead (the Judiciary's long pending initiative for a Case Specialization Program and specialized case training for judges remains stalled in the Judicial Council). Most of the participating judges do not feel empowered to act as judicial case managers until amendments to existing legal frameworks are passed.

Additionally, judges report that attorneys are frequently absent from hearings and view pre-trial discussions as repetitious and withhold participation until the case is assigned to a hearing judge. On the other hand, the Chief Judge of the court feels that the Pilot Program is a success because it has eliminated a substantial backlog of pending cases from the CMD. The design of the pilot program increased the number of CMD judges to 10 judges and as a result a valuable by-product of CMD backlog reduction was accomplished.

ROLP and Judge Ali Messiemi prepared and submitted a report to the Minister of Justice on the status of the CMD and an overview of Judicial Case Management principals and practices. The purpose of the report is to inform and then initiate a discussion within the MOJ and with ROLP to develop consensus on how to go forward on case management reforms. Currently, the MOJ is aware that the CMD model they created is not functioning satisfactorily. They also acknowledge that Judicial Case Management requires legal empowerment and strong support from the Judicial Council and Ministry leadership to have any reasonable chance for success. However, at this time, no statement of direction or priority for this subject has been formulated in the MOJ. ROLP will continue to call attention to these topics, with the aim of developing a strategy and timeline for adopting alternative approaches or continuing to refine the status quo.

ROLP supported a significant amendment to the civil procedures law that reduces the increase of backlog of cases in the Appeals courts. The Amman Appeals Court, in particular, suffers from a large backlog of civil appeals, criminal appeals, and judgment enforcement appeals cases from Conciliation Courts. The amendment allows First Instance Courts to review certain appeals from its' Conciliation Courts. The Ministry of Justice requested that ROLP develop and conduct training programs for all First Instance Judges in the Kingdom on appeals topics necessary to their functioning as Appeals Judges in their Courts.

One hundred and six Judges were trained in 5 sessions on consecutive weekends at a Dead Sea hotel this quarter. The courses were taught by Judges Kanakrieh and Darakh. ROLP provided all facility, accommodation and logistical support for the programs. A follow-up program to be conducted by two Cassation Court Judges, Humsi and Zorbi, was designed and developed this quarter and will be conducted beginning in April. This program will again target all 106 judges to develop unified practices such that their decisions in their role as First Instance Court Appeals Judges have less risk of being overturned on appeal to the Cassation Court.

Court Administration

ROLP is assisting the MOJ increase its institutional capacity and develop standardized procedures:

Court Administrators and Chiefs of Diwan began the foundation-level Training Program at Talal Abu Ghazaleh Business College in Amman. This Program consists of seven courses designed to develop and/or enhance skills in the following areas: principles of management; building credibility and relationships; basics of human resources; purpose and role of courts; fundamentals of case processing; using data and information for good decision making; and executive planning. Three of the seven courses were completed this quarter (see Table 2 for more information).

The Training Program is part of a comprehensive curriculum developed by ROLP. It has been independently evaluated by Michigan State University and meets their requirements for certification. Court Administrators and Chiefs of Diwan will undergo evaluations upon completion of the training on July 25th. If successful, they will earn a certificate from the Michigan State University.

During February, international consultant Stephen Bouch co-taught a court administration course on case management with Judge Waleed Kanakrieh. Mr. Bouch defined the roles and responsibilities of the court administrator, particularly with respect to case management and monitoring a court's performance. During his consultancy, Mr. Bouch reviewed proposed amendments to lesson plans and made recommendations for enhancements. He also assisted in the development of tests and evaluation exercises for trainees and helped revise materials for other courses in the Court Administration Curriculum.



Figure 1: Mr. Stephen Bouch coached court administrators on case management strategies and practices in the courts.

Photo by: Doaa Abu Gharbieh

The success of the Court Administrator position relies heavily upon his/her credibility and the relationships cultivated with other court officials. It also hinges upon their ability to ensure each department adheres to the same standards and operating procedures.

Credibility and relationships are established through cooperation. Training sessions encouraged Court Administrators to both cooperate and appreciate the dynamics involved in forming an inclusive judiciary. Jamal Bataineh recognizes, “knowledge-sharing among all staff is necessary to development.” Ne’ma Al-Atty values the sessions in part, because they “benefited from the experience of other participants and from sharing ideas.”

In addition to training and exercises, ROLP authored the ‘Court Administration Practice Guide.’ This guide explains the myriad functions of the Court Administrator, including but not limited to: records and caseload management, human resources, data analysis and strategic planning. It also reduces ambiguity by describing the function of the Court, its respective departments and the specific actions needed to ensure the court fulfills its purpose.

Al-Jidara Consulting was awarded a subcontract to strengthen the capacity of the Ombudsman Bureau.

Departmental expansions and recent appointments promote modernization:

ROLP worked closely with the Chief Judge of the Execution Department to select and furnish an additional room, which will be used as a registration area. This Department also received training from ROLP regarding the automated system.

Eco-Consult was awarded a subcontract to develop mechanisms that will ensure the security and maintenance of records and case files. Eco-Consult will evaluate the flow and circulation of the physical case file inside the Court and between the Court's departments. The subcontractor will also examine archives and file storage areas in small, medium and large courts and assess the MOJ's plans for introducing electronic archiving systems. As a result, they will prepare an assessment report and recommendations for improving records management. Recommendations from Eco-Consult and Al-Jidara Consulting are due in July.

Chief Judge of the North Amman Court, Waleed Kanakrieh, underscored the need for a new system to maintain case files. He stated, "There are several problems with the existing method. Sometimes it takes days or weeks to locate a file. Missing files may cause delays in other processes. Case files include the ruling and the fees... After paying the fine, the person receives a release letter stating the court has closed the case. The judge can not provide the release letter if he does not have the file."

Table 2: Training Summary

Training Program Name	Field of Study	Start	End	Training Type	Trainee Information			
					Group Name	# of Male	# of Female	Total
Legislative Amendments Related to Jurisdiction in its Appellate Capacity.	Legal	1.Jan.10	2.Jan.10	Training	Southern and Central Judges	22	0	22
Legislative Amendments Related to Jurisdiction in its Appellate Capacity.	Legal	8.Jan.10	9.Jan.10	Training	Southern and Central Judges	22	0	22
40 Hours basic mediation training	Legal	24.jan.10	28.jan.10	Training	First Instance and Conciliation Judges	13	1	14
Second Jordanian Judicial conference (1st day)	Legal	15.Feb.10	15.Feb.10	Conference	All Jordanian Judges	0	0	1200
Second Jordanian Judicial conference (2nd day)	Legal	16.Feb.10	16Feb.10	Conference	Judges	131	1	132
Court Administration Training (7 Foundation Level Courses)								
Purposes of the courts	Legal	17-Jan-10	25-Jan-10	Training	Court Administrators/ Chiefs of Diwan/ MOJ - QA staff	16	5	21
Credibility and Relationships	Legal	7-Feb-10	8-Feb-10	Training	Court Administrators/ Chiefs of Diwan/ MOJ - QA staff			
Caseflow Management	Legal	28-Feb-10	14-Apr-10	Training	Court Administrators/ Chiefs of Diwan/ MOJ - QA staff			

Technology Systems

Design upgrades and new applications served to promote transparency and efficiency in the judicial system:

Business practice reengineering and automation continued during this quarter for the Civil Execution, Criminal Execution and Notary Public Departments. In March, ROLP received and evaluated the first release of the software for the Criminal Execution Department and initiated testing. This software will be piloted for six weeks. The Civil and Criminal Execution Departments are responsible for implementing the final judgment of cases; without complete satisfaction of judgment, justice is not served for litigants.

The Notary Public software is still in the process of development. Local subcontractor Estarta continued development efforts on the ePortal for the MOJ. This portal will provide secure internet access to case information for judges, court staff and other personnel while enabling public access for litigants and other stakeholders. It will also allow remote access to the MIZAN case management software. ROLP expects to implement the portal by the end of April 2010.

Through providing public access to court-related information and a framework for data input and retrieval, ROLP strives to increase public confidence and encourage a more efficient judiciary.

Chief Judge of the West Amman First Instance Court, Fida'a Al-Hmoud considers this progress as noteworthy. She states, "Automation allows litigants to save time and money because they can track their cases without traveling long distances to court. It also simplifies the business process by providing a user-friendly way for judges to access the court's performance at all levels. Reports can be generated and problems resolved at a much faster rate."

The first build of the Dashboard management information system was delivered in March and is being tested. Dashboard is designed to improve the interface for delivery of statistical and management information and reports to judges, court administrators and other officials. Dashboard will include an initial set of statistical reports created from MIZAN data, which will be easily accessible from PC desktops and will display statistics in easy-to-read charts, graphs, and data. MIZAN is currently capable of producing a wide and useful array of management information which has greatly improved case processing at the clerk level. However, generating and deciphering the reports requires more technical knowledge and time than most judges and case and court managers have.

The expected outcome of the Dashboard system is that if management information is more accessible and intuitive to understand then it will be more extensively used to enhance proactive case and court management. Dashboard will allow for more effective utilization of MIZAN's statistical and management information potential for reducing delay, backlog, and better distribution of cases over judges and courts.



Figure 2: Dashboard Design

Concurrent with the development of the application system, during this quarter, ROLP procured 6 computer servers to host the application. Providing the equipment was originally the responsibility of the MOJ; however due to budgetary constraints and delays, the MOJ requested that ROLP provide the equipment. ROLP received USAID approval for this expenditure and issued the RFP. Procurement, delivery and installation of the equipment are expected to conclude in 6-8 weeks.

The relocation of information and technology departments, installation of software and training of personnel promotes sustainability:

The First Instance Civil Income Tax and Criminal Income Tax courts were established in January 2010 and are hearing new cases. Approximately 300 cases have been transferred to the First Instance Civil Income Tax Court and nearly 100 cases have been transferred to the First Instance Criminal Income Tax Court. These cases as a result of process reengineering which separated the Customs and Tax Court into three new Courts: First Instance Civil Income Tax Court, First Instance Criminal Income Tax Court, and the Customs Court. ROLP installed MIZAN V2 at the new courts and trained 20 staff members on its applications.

Information Technology Departments were transferred from ROLP to MOJ for the First Instance Customs Court and the First Instance Income Tax Court. In addition, ROLP technical staff completed installation and staff training for Mediation with respect to upgrades of the MIZAN V2 application in Zarqa, East Amman, North Amman, Salt, Irbid, West Amman, New Palace of Justice and South Amman. All courts received MIZAN V2 installation and training by the December 31, 2009, which enhanced the Courts ability to monitor cases, identify and resolve challenges and operate independently. However, ROLP continues to provide training and installation services concerning software enhancements and updates.

On February 21, 2010 the Call Center (service desk) was moved from its pilot location in the ROLP offices to its permanent location in the MOJ. It serves all 51 court locations with over 1500 users across the Kingdom.

The establishment of a Call Center as a part of MOJ's ITD technology support role is significant in that it greatly contributes to the MOJ's ability to operate and support the USAID-funded and developed computerized court systems. All end user requests for assistance, reports of equipment or software failures and suggestions for enhancements are routed exclusively to the Call Center; there they are systematically recorded, tracked,

resolved and communicated back to the originators or to management for inclusion in future systems enhancements. This functionality is a milestone in the development of the ITD as a professional technology management organization.



Figure 3: Call Center at the Ministry of Justice

The CSS team continues to support Notification Management Systems (NMS) at all courts, while working with MOJ to put improved data quality assurance practices in place and build capacity. The Ministry of Justice has yet to approve the proposed structure of the quality control unit. Once granted, quality control staff will assume their full duties in courts.

The ROLP Technical Staff has helped Court Administrators and other staff members feel empowered and prepared to participate in the reform process:

According to Jihad Hatamleh, “I can now specify weaknesses in departments and problem-solve more effectively.”

Husam Al-Sou’b states, “The training is useful because it includes simulations of what really happens in the court. We talk about business process and how to utilize technology. As a result, we are becoming experts, not just Court Administrators.”

Osama Hawamdeh claims, “We discuss how to address problems and as a result, we can see what other departments are working on and look for ways to become more consistent.”

Legal Amendments

ROLP is assisting the Ministry of Justice and the Minister of Industry and Trade develop amendments to the Industry and Trade Law and the Consumers Protection and Competition Law. ROLP is providing support to a steering committee that has been established to amend these laws.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade incorporated all ROLP proposed amendments into their draft law and sent the law to the Legislative Bureau for final review. Once approved, the revised law will be submitted to the Council of Ministers to be issued as a temporary law. The anticipated impact will be greater deterrence to repeat offenses because the law will stipulate that second offenses automatically receive the maximum fine. For example, a minimum first offence of JD10 will result in a fine of JD300 for a repeat offence. Increased deterrence will collaterally result in reduced case loads in Conciliation Courts.

Develop the Capacity of the Ministry of Justice

ROLP continues to support research and legislative advisory capacity building in the MOJ.

Mr. Qasim Abdo, Seconded Legislative Affairs Director at the MOJ, advised and provided administrative support to the Minister of Justice on legislative matters. Many of the initiatives of the newly launched Judicial Strategic Plan (JUST) require legislative amendments. Mr. Qasim Abdo participated in committees formed by the Ministry and represented the MOJ in committees formed by other entities, to study and create draft laws and regulations pertinent to the Insolvency Law, the National Center for Organ Donation regulations and the regulation for establishing shelters for the victims of trafficking in persons crimes.

Mr. Qasim Abdo, contributed to drafting the following laws and regulations that were approved by the Council of Ministers in 2010:

- Renewable Energy Law number (3) for the year 2010
- The Amended Publications Law number (5) for the year 2010
- The Social Security Law number (7) for the year 2010
- The Civil Tax Court Proceedings Regulation number (3) for the year 2010
- Judicial Council Administrative Units Regulation number (5) for the year 2010
- The Judicial Institute of Jordan Regulation number (6) for the year 2010
- The Court of Cassation Technical Office Regulation number (7) for the year 2010
- Animal Protection Regulation number (11) for the year 2010.

During this quarter, Mr. Sharif Rimawi, Seconded Legal Affairs Director at the MOJ, provided his advice and administrative services to the Minister of Justice on motions for retrial and appeal of over 150 cases. He studied the cases to ensure proper application of laws and provided his opinion to the Minister, who thereafter accepts or rejects the motions.

Mr. Sharif Rimawi participated in a committee concerned with studying the leasing contracts between the Ministry of Justice and landlords of its buildings to insure adherence to the new Tenants and Landlords law issued in 2009.

Several cases filed against MOJ staff were reviewed by Mr. Sharif Rimawi. If convicted of a crime or unethical conduct, the necessary legal procedures were taken against the offender.

Mediation as an Alternative to Court Proceedings

Training, data collection and design improvements enhance service delivery and build capacity:

Mediation departments in Salt and Irbid were launched on January 31, 2010. Furniture and AC units were provided to modernize the facilities and make them more comfortable and amenable to dispute resolution. Staff members received training on administrative procedures.



Figure 4: The Mediation Department's waiting hall at the Sult's Palace of Justice, furnished by ROLP.

Photo by: Osama Nabil

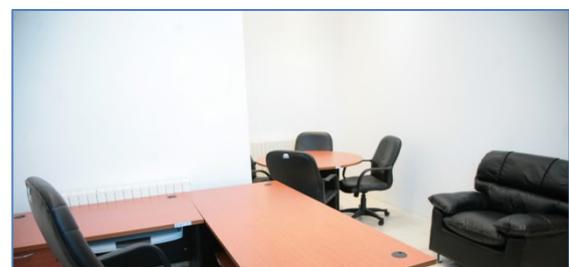


Figure 5: A Mediation judge's office at the Sult's Palace of Justice, furnished by ROLP.

Photo by: Osama Nabil

In January, Judge Ali Messiemi was appointed Director of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Department at the MOJ. ROLP informed Judge Messiemi on past, present and future mediation-related activities, provided him with a report which detailed the Department's accomplishments, installed MIZAN in his office and trained him on its' mediation functionalities and reports, included him in mediation training programs and is training him to become a mediation trainer. Soon after Judge Messiemi's appointment the Minister of Justice requested a work plan from each of the Ministry's directorates. Judge Messiemi and the ROLP Mediation Team responded by developing the 2010 ADR Department Action/Work Plan to ensure that ROLP initiatives and MOJ initiatives were complimentary and aligned. This Work Plan became a part of the MOJ Master Plan submitted to the Prime Minister.

The Chief Judges requested that ROLP repeat the forty-hour Basic Mediation Training Program to enhance the capacity of judges from courts outside of the Amman Palace of Justice. This Training was conducted by Mr. Osama Safa and Judge Ali Messiemi and held from January 24-28, 2010. Twenty- two (eighteen men and four women) judges from Amman, Zarqa, Irbid and Salt attended. This training expanded the network of skilled, competent mediators beyond the scope of Amman.

ROLP developed a mediation awareness campaign, which was reviewed by Judge Ali Messiemi. This campaign will be launched in April to educate the public on the benefits of mediation as an alternative to litigation.

ROLP collected data regarding Mediation Programs from 2008 to 2009. The following table illustrates the number of cases which were referred, disposed and settled in the pilot mediation program in the Amman Palace of Justice.

Court Name	Referred Cases 2008	Referred Cases 2009	Disposed Cases 2008 ⁱ	Disposed Cases 2009	Settled Cases 2008	Settled Cases 2009
First Instance	371	240	398	265	193	144
Conciliation	499	1034	481	867	335	613
Total	870	1274	879	1132	528	757

Table 3 Pilot Program Data

ⁱ Disposed Cases include pending cases from prior year referrals and cases referred within the current year.

ROLP and Judge Ali Messiemi are working to identify and remediate the cause for the decline in referred, disposed and settled cases in the First Instance Court. This decline is believed to be connected in part to issues related to the larger challenges associated with the Case Management Department mandate, legal framework and role. The significant increase in Conciliation referrals and dispositions signals increased confidence in and awareness of mediation as a dispute resolution process by attorneys and litigants when the CMD is not involved.

Chief Judge of Amman First Instance Court Ahmad Jamaliah, remains optimistic. He states, "I bought into this concept [of mediation] and have become interested in applying it in building the capacity of the court and public confidence. It is not enough to be satisfied with my work, but the work we are doing in the court as a whole. The court is a front-line entity in helping people find solutions."

Mediation Judge Abdullah Hamadneh acknowledges Mediation as a valuable component of the judicial process. He stated, “Cases worth millions of JD were resolved. International cases were resolved through mediation. Mediation can tackle the essence of the case, unlike the regular court which focuses on proceedings. Mediation is more personal, targeting the real point behind the case. There was a case where one of the litigants was satisfied when the other litigant apologized. The money is not always as important as admitting you were wrong. This process is increasing public confidence.”

Technical and Logistical Areas

Doubts about the veracity of mediation data in the NPOJ inhibit full confidence in the mediation functions and information in MIZAN in the NPOJ. Therefore, ROLP is in the process of data verification of MIZAN data in a smaller and more neutral court (West Amman Court), to verify the correctness of MIZAN mediation functions, or alternatively discover any unknown system or data defects. ROLP aims to create an atmosphere of full confidence in the data and information to further encourage use of mediation as a process and use of the mediation functionality of MIZAN as a management resource.

ROLP is also in the process of data verification for the Mediation component of MIZAN V2 in the West Amman Court.

These accomplishments notwithstanding, Chief Judges have not assigned Mediators to their positions in the Court, the Ministry of Justice has yet to deliver their itemized request for furniture and logistical support to ROLP and the Mediation Curriculum has not been approved. Additional strategies are being developed to identify and resolve the challenges which are impeding progress with respect to these issues. Lastly, lawyers, business owners and other professionals will be engaged to increase the number of cases referred for Mediation.

Objective 2: Promote an Independent and Empowered Judiciary While Increasing Its Transparency and Accountability

Justice Sector Strategic Planning

Early this quarter, Diala Khamra, DCOP, worked with the Ministry of Justice on developing the Judicial Strategic Plan (JUST 2010-2012), the launching of which took place during the Second Judicial Conference on February 14 and 15, 2010.

Under the patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan, the Ministry of Justice and Judicial Council hosted the Second Judicial Conference at the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Center at the Dead Sea, Jordan on February 15 & 16, 2010. The USAID-funded Rule of Law Program provided financial, administrative and logistical support for the Conference.



Figure 6: Pink Moon, a local subcontractor, in collaboration with ROLP successfully managed and implemented the Second Judicial Conference, and presented a unique brand that distinguished the event.

Photo by: Pink Moon

The Minister of Justice and the Chief Justice introduced the Strategy to His Majesty King Abdullah II and 1,700 conference attendees including invited guests from Ministries of Justice and judiciaries from the United States, France, Turkey, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Iraq, 750 Jordanian judges, US and other embassy's diplomats, Jordanian cabinet and parliament members, the Jordanian Bar Association council members, civil society and media representatives and Judicial Institute students.

The strategy identifies specific objectives and projects to fulfill the Judiciary's mission to "resolve court filed disputes with timely decisions and dispositions and subsequently to enforce compliance with court decisions according to Jordanian laws and fair trial practices; to improve court services through specialized cadres using modern technology and procedures; and to safeguard human rights and liberties and promote a better investment environment". The strategy describes specific actions to be taken including introduction of legislative amendments to fundamentally alter the structure of some components of the judicial system, enhance the independence of individual judges and the judiciary, improve transparency, reduce litigation times, improve the quality of judgments, attract better qualified judges and court staff, and improve court infrastructures and services provided to court users.

The second day of the conference included panel discussions with audience participation on topics including comparative analysis of Lebanese, Turkish, Egyptian, French, American, and Jordanian prosecution and attorney general systems, judicial inspections systems, and the roles of civil law Cassation Courts and common law Supreme Court structures.

The conference was much praised by all attendees for the plan's strategic objectives, the consensus demonstrated by the ministry and judiciary, and the event's organization and logistics. The Ministry of Justice, the Judicial Council, and USAID's Rule of Law Program view this conference as an important spring board for launching the reform activities of the Judicial Upgrade Strategy. The patronage of the Royal Court and the ministry's and judiciary's public championship for the Strategy will provide critical endorsement and motivation for court and judicial acceptance and cooperation with USAID's Rule of Law efforts to assist Jordan implement its reform agenda.

Judicial Studies Diploma

ROLP is helping to inspire and prepare candidates to become engaged members of the judicial system:

Members of the Judicial Institute of Jordan (JIJ) Academic Committee and Education Consultants Dr. Zeyadat and Dr. Elwan, traveled to judicial education institutes in Lebanon, France and Tunisia. They examined the diploma programs of these countries to assist in the development of a revised JIJ diploma curriculum. Their revisions are expected for submission to the MOJ in May 2010.

There are sixty-one students (thirty-four women and twenty-seven men) in the 2008/2009 cohort and sixty-two students (twenty-six women and thirty-six men) in the 2009/2010 cohort of the Judicial Studies Diploma Program.

During this quarter, the 2009/2010 group completed their first and second exams and registered for English courses at the American Language Center. Test results are expected in May.

The 2008/2009 cohort completed their second and final exams and began internships in The Palace of Justice, Public Prosecution and Grand Felonies Court. They are developing thesis reports and receive additional support from a legal expert who serves as an academic advisor.

The 2007/2008 cohort (twenty-three women and thirty men) completed the program in the summer of 2009. They are waiting for appointments from the MOJ.

Future Judges Program

The selection and training of future judges provides opportunities to cultivate leaders who will embrace the ideals of judicial integrity, independence and accountability:

ROLP provided administrative and management support for Future Judges Program Students in Jordan and abroad. Moreover, ROLP has been proactive in its efforts to strengthen the qualifications of the judiciary by providing experiential and enriching opportunities for aspiring judges. These opportunities included participation in the Second Judicial Conference. ROLP also hosted a forum with the Jerash sector of the All Jordan Youth Commission in which university students were advised of the Future Judges Program and given the opportunity to ask questions and request application information. ROLP also coordinated meetings between students and officials from the MOJ, JIJ and the University of Jordan.

ROLP and MOJ are exploring the possibility of conducting field visits and planning activities between academic semesters/courses, as a way to demonstrate support for students and utilize an on-site analysis to add depth to its formative evaluations. ROLP supported the MOJ in its initiative to coordinate efforts with the University of Jordan to determine the benefits and feasibility of establishing an office for the Future Judges Program at the Faculty of Law.

ROLP and MOJ prepared a 2010 Future Judges Unit Work Plan, which includes strategic objectives and key performance indicators. This Work Plan is the first of its kind and serves as a proactive effort and milestone in the institutional development of the Judicial Institute. It is currently under review by the MOJ for approval by the JIJ board of directors at their next meeting.

Education Consultant Ashraf Edwan, serves as academic advisor to all Future Judges Program Students and liaison between students and University Faculty. He helps ensure adherence to scholarship requirements, including but not limited to: grade point averages and ethical conduct. He also provides guidance concerning registration.

Students in the Future Judges Program have been assigned to one of three groups. Students who are in a post-graduate program are referred to as “graduate students.” Students who joined the program as a second, third or fourth-year undergraduate students are referred to as “senior undergraduates” and students who joined the program directly after high school are referred to as “junior undergraduates.”

On January 5, 2010, all junior undergraduates and twelve senior undergraduate students met with His Excellency the Minister of Justice Mr. Ayman Odeh and the Chief of the Judicial Council at the Faculty of Law at the University of Jordan. On February 22, 2010, these students met with the Prime Minister at the University of Jordan. This meeting was convened in the presence of His Excellency the Minister of Justice Mr. Ayman Odeh, His Excellency the President of the Court of Cassation, the Chairman of the Judicial Council Ratib Al Wazani, His Excellency the President of the University of Jordan Dr. Khalid Al Karaki and all the members of the Judicial Council. These meetings were held to provide an opportunity for Future Judges Program Students to meet with senior officials and share experiences, ask questions and develop relationships.

Graduate Students

There are sixteen graduate students (eleven women and five men) in the Future Judges Program (FJP).

Two female students recently returned from universities in the United Kingdom, upon completion of LLM degree requirements. Including these students, there are now twelve graduates who have completed their academic programs and await appointments; their recommendations from the Ministry of Justice to the Judicial Council is pending. The remaining four students are still enrolled at universities in the United States and United Kingdom.

Senior Undergraduate Students (Seniors)

There are nineteen undergraduate students (thirteen women and six men) in the FJP.

Students who expect to graduate this semester were contacted and encouraged to apply for the LLM degree programs at foreign universities. They received guidance in the selection and application process for various LLM degree programs.

ROLP and the MOJ organized a field trip for sixty-three senior students and law school scholarship recipients to the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Company Control Department. They learned about the Ministry's duties, including the process of referring companies who are in violation of laws to the appropriate courts. The students provided a report which detailed their observations and what they gained from this experience.

Fifty-one juniors and nineteen seniors completed the English Language Course at the British Council and started new English and French courses in February.

ROLP monitored student performance and worked with academic advisors to prepare reports with respect to registration, attendance and academic progress.

Junior Undergraduate Students (Juniors)

There are one-hundred and thirty-one junior students in the FJP. The 2008 group consists of fifty-one students (twenty-six women and twenty-five men) and the 2009 group is comprised of eighty students (forty-two women and thirty-eight men).

The Ministry of Justice will share the cost of internet services to students within the FJP.

Juniors are enrolled in the University of Jordan, where RO LP continued to monitor their progress throughout the quarter. ROLP also tracked student progress at The British Council and The French Cultural Center. Students earned certificates of completion for English courses which concluded in November 2009. They started new English and French courses in February. In addition, three field trips were coordinated between the FJP, the Department of Criminal Investigation and the Judicial Institute of Jordan.

The Future Judges Program provides an invaluable opportunity to aspiring judges and has received the support and esteem of their family members.

“We are extremely happy. We never even dreamt that the ministry of justice will offer such opportunities to our son. I told him I cannot offer his university tuition, but he got the scholarship from the Future Judges Program, I cannot even describe how proud I am!”



Continuing Legal Education Program

Training adds quality to the judiciary by building the capacity of judges to resolve specialized and increasingly complex cases.

ROLP and the JIJ conducted sixteen training sessions with judges and Judicial Studies Program Students. The table below describes the subject of each session, the national and international partners who acted in cooperation with ROLP and JIJ and includes the male to female ratio of attendees (as listed in the column labeled M/F).

Subject Area	Collaboration	Date	Participants	M/F
Information Search / Evaluation	US Embassy	31/3/2010	6 Judges	5:1
	US Embassy	17/3/2010	6 Judges	5:1
	US Embassy	24/2/2010	11 Judges	11 M
	US Embassy	17/2/2010	17 JIJ Students	5:12
	US Embassy	10/2/2010	22 JIJ Students	11:11
	US Embassy	6/1/2010	8 Judges	6:2
Civil Case Management for the Palestinian Authority	USAID	20/3/2010 thru 1/4/2010	7 Judges	7 M
Natural Reserves and Legislation	RSCN	4/3/2010	21 JIJ Students	10:11
	RSCN	3/3/2010	14 JIJ Students	4:10
	RSCN	2/3/2010	22 JIJ Students	10:12
Civil Case Management	--	16/1/2010	20 Judges	19:1
Mediation for Jordan and Palestine		24-28/1/2010	20 Judges	19:1
Interpreting Statutes and Treaties	ABA	28/1/2010	39 JIJ Students	15:24

Mediation for the Palestinian Authority	--	31/1 thru 4/2/2010	20 Judges	19:1
Legislative Amendments		1-2/1/2010	22 Judges	22 M
		8-9/1/2010	22 Judges	22 M

Table 4 Legal Education

*RSCN = Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

**ABA = American Bar Association

Objective 3: Expand Access to Justice, Rule of Law and Public Awareness of the Rule of Law

Grants

The awareness and protection of human rights is essential to democracy:

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), community-based and rural organizations, educational institutions and other non-governmental organizations were encouraged to submit concept papers describing a proposed grant-funded program related to human rights issues. Application forms and instructions for concept papers were prepared and e-mailed to organizations. Twenty concept papers were received by January 3, 2010. They were cataloged, translated and screened for eligibility, technical competence, feasibility and management capabilities.

The Evaluation Committee (EC) convened in February and evaluated the concept papers, according to guidelines in the ROLP Grant Manual. These guidelines are related to assessing potential grantee's ability to manage technical areas, communications regarding technical program amendments and budgetary comments and recommendations. The budget section of each concept paper received additional scrutiny from the ROLP Finance Manager and Grant Staff.

The following organizations represent the five finalists who were invited to develop their concept papers into full proposals:

1. Information and Research Center-King Hussein Foundation
2. Sisterhood Is Global Institute; Jordan
3. Al-Thoria Center For Studies, Training and Consultations
4. Al-Zuhoor Charity Organization for Social Development
5. The National Centre for Human Rights

Al-Zuhoor Charity Organization for Social Development decided not to submit a proposal, leaving four finalists for consideration.

These finalists attended a proposal writing workshop on February 24, 2010, to build skills in proposal writing, become acquainted with the USAID- ROLP rules and regulations and learn how to describe their initiatives and responsibilities as outlined in the Grantees Handbook. The Grants Staff provided each potential grantee with a copy of the Grantee Handbook along with the proposal templates and guidelines.

On March 21, 2010, the finalists submitted their final proposals to ROLP. The proposals included a project to raise awareness of children's rights, child advocacy and domestic violence prevention and advocacy for female children. The Evaluation Committee has reviewed the proposals and requested proposal and budget amendments. The finalists are

currently preparing revised proposals. ROLP and the NGOs look forward to a grant award in the near future.

Communications

The Communications Department assisted the DCOP and the Ministry of Justice in developing materials for the Second Judicial Conference, including the draft agenda, invitation and public relations RFP. During and after the conference, cooperation continued with the MOJ's Communications Directorate in supplying the speakers' notes in Arabic, English and French. The notes will be published on-line via MOJ's website.

Also during this quarter, the Communications Specialist carried out three photo shoots to document the project's work in different areas including the furnishing of the Mediation Department at the Salt's Palace of Justice, the automation and re-engineering of Court departments at the Amman New Palace of Justice and the Court Administrators training.

The RFP for the ROLP website was developed and sent to potential vendors for proposals. Based on the technical and financial evaluations, Media Plus was selected. The communications consultant and the communications specialist had a meeting with the company to discuss the work plan, deliverables, and timelines in order to proceed. As per the discussions, ROLP received several design options as scheduled in mid March. Amendments were discussed and forwarded to the vendor to adjust the design accordingly. The design takes into account the pertinent USAID regulations.



Figure 8 The Rule of Law Project Home Page Design

Administration and Finance

The Administration and Finance team provided support to ROLP management and staff including logistics, follow-up and internal travel coordination.

For this quarter, much of the procurement activities were focused on providing computer and vehicle maintenance.

In January and February, the team was deeply involved in procurement and logistics arrangements for the Second Judicial Conference that was held at the Dead Sea on February 15 and 16. The team was in charge of coordinating with the event management company, material production, judges' transportation to and from the conference venue, hotel accommodation and venue final preparations for the conference.

In addition, the team was involved in providing support and coordination for all RFPs issued by technical teams, including receiving and recording vendor requests, drafting responses to queries from registered vendors as well as the financial assessment and evaluation of the received proposals.

ROLP also appointed a new Senior Administrator (Fadia Batarseh) who will replace the Administration Manager Assistant (Juliette Najjar) on March 1, 2010.

Objective 4: Windows of Opportunity

Ombudsman Capacity Building

The Ombudsman investigates complaints from aggrieved persons against public administration entities, attempts to resolve disputes on an amicable basis and recommends corrective action, where necessary. ROLP will conduct an assessment of the “as-is” operations of the Ombudsman to identify opportunities and recommend process improvements to enhance the Ombudsman’s delivery of services to the public.

The activities were included in ROLP’s second year annual work plan to assist the Government of Jordan’s Ombudsman Bureau (JOB) strengthen its institutional capacity. During February, ROLP met with the head of the Ombudsman office to discuss the Bureau’s needs and how ROLP may provide services to the JOB.

In March, work was begun with JIDARA, a local consultation firm, to assist with the initial assessment, conduct a workshop with key stakeholders, and develop a comprehensive Final Findings Report and English language Executive Summary.

Next Month’s Planned Activities

DATES	NO. DAYS	ACTIVITY	IMPACTED ENTITY	LOCATION	RESOURCES
OBJECTIVE 1: ENHANCE JUDICIAL PERFORMANCE TO REDUCE DELAYS AND INCREASE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE					
April 4	5 days	Advanced mediation training	20 Judges	Hayat Hotel	ROLP Mediation Trainer Judges
April	On-going	Court Administrators training	Court administrators and Chiefs of Diwan	Talal Abu Ghazaleh College	ROLP
Objective 2: Promote an Independent and Empowered Judiciary While Increasing Its Transparency and Accountability					
April 3, 17	1 day training	Experience of Natural Reserves-Legislations	JIJ Students	JIJ	JIJ Royal Scientific Society (RSCN)

Acronyms

CMM	Case Management and Mediation
EC	Evaluation Committee
ITD	Information Technology Directorate
JC	Judicial Council
JIJ	Judicial Institute of Jordan
JOB	Jordanian Ombudsman Bureau
MIT	Ministry of Industry and Trade
MIZAN	Automated case file management system tailor-made for Jordan courts and supporting departments. MIZAN V2 is the enhanced automated version of MIZAN V1; it will replaced MIZAN V1 in all national courts in Jordan.
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
ROLP	Rule of Law Program
