



Rule of Law Project
مشروع سيادة القانون

USAID Rule of Law Program
Quarterly Report
April- June, 2010

USAID Rule of Law Program
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Executive Summary

On May 10th The Rule of Law Project (ROLP) met with the Minister of Justice to review ROLP's 2010 work plan and accomplishments made to date and discussed upcoming plans and activities. The meeting was attended by George Kara'a, COTR-USAID, and Judge Ali Al Masri from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ).

The Minister of Justice requested ROLP and USAID to suspend all activities related to case management and mediation until legal amendments were made to the laws that govern the two initiatives. The Minister also requested that ROLP provide additional services related to assisting the MOJ implement recently enacted regulations and temporary laws. These include the 'Cassation Court Technical Office Regulation of 2010,' 'Judicial Council Administrative Units Regulation of 2010,' the 'The Judicial Institute Regulation of 2010,' the "Public Prosecutor Law of 2010," and the "State's Cases Directorate Law of 2010." The Ministry of Industry and Trade have incorporated all ROLP proposed amendments into their draft law. The drafts have been sent to the legislative bureau for final review and once approved the revised law will be submitted to the Council of Ministers to be issued as a temporary law.

Upon completion of their assessment and documentation of the file cycle in First Instance Courts, Eco-Consult met with the ROLP and the MOJ to discuss court archiving systems, policies and file destruction processes. Brainstorming sessions were held to develop policies and regulations that will govern file destruction and the ROLP will continue holding discussion groups to monitor recommendations as made by Eco-Consult.

The first build of the Notary Public Software was developed, delivered and tested throughout May by the ROLP and MOJ to ensure its stability. The second build of software for the Criminal Execution Department was delivered as the ROLP and the MOJ initiated the national roll out plan successfully automating the departments in the NPOJ, North and West Amman First Instance Courts. The Civil Execution pilot has been postponed for further testing prior to pilot implementation.

Estarta continued with the development of the ePortal for web access to MIZAN data and information. Testing of the application is underway and is in its final stage before launching the system. The ROLP team is currently testing the deployment guides to ensure their instructions are accurate and most importantly, user friendly. The procurement and installation of 25 kiosks in 17 First Instance courts by the ROLP has also included developing enhanced features of the applications based on user feedback.

Two new rounds of Future Judges Scholarships have been announced and 14 graduates from public universities, second track and JIJ students were interviewed by a selection

committee in May. The recommendations of the selection committee have been forwarded to the Scholarship Committee who will review the applicants before endorsing and announcing the awardees in late July.

The ROLP received approval from USAID to award the first round of \$100,000 grants to three local NGO's to implement projects focusing on children's rights issues in Jordan. The Information and Research Center King Hussein Foundations (IRC-KHF), Al Thoria Center for Studies and the National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) were the recipients of grants amounting to \$253, 484.

A ROLP team of international and local consultants in the field of human rights initiated a general assessment of the human rights sector in Jordan. The team will make recommendations for needed interventions in the sector in a final report to be delivered to USAID soon.

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

Case Management

In May, ROLP started preparing a report on the complex case pilot project to summarize the final findings with reference to the original goals outlined at the pilot's launch. The pilot program was designed to identify, within the Case Management Department (CMD), a subset of complex cases to which judicial case management practices would be applied to expedite their resolution. The participating judges have found that too few cases meet the criteria and that cases might be better categorized by specialization instead. The Judiciary's long pending initiative for a case specialization program and specialized case training for judges remains under evaluation at the Judicial Council.

Currently the pilot complex case program is not applied to the types of cases that would most benefit from more proactive judicial case management. In addition, hearing judges do not feel sufficiently encouraged by the leadership of the judiciary and their peers nor sufficiently empowered by legal frameworks that allow them to be more proactive and assertive case managers. Accordingly, the Minister of Justice requested of the ROLP and USAID that until amendments were made to the laws governing case management the ROLP should suspend activities related to judicial case management. The ROLP will present the final report of the pilot program to the Chief Judge and recommend that the program be cancelled.

The ROLP continues to track long-pending cases in the First Instance Courts in Zarqa, North Amman, South Amman, East Amman and West Amman, and encourage the Courts to work towards finding a means to dispose of them. Most long-pending cases are abandoned cases, cases involving multiple parties of which a party may be unable to be located for notification or cases which require considerable work by a judge that in some instances are ignored if the judge knows that he/she may 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, and until the end of this quarter.

Court	# of Cases on 31 October 2009	# of Cases on 31 March 2010	# of Cases on 30 June 2010	# of Disposed Cases
North Amman	233	157	134	108
South Amman	115	83	66	49
East Amman	58	38	31	27
West Amman	96	53	49	47
Al Zarqa	128	81	72	56

Table 1: Cases which are long-pending

Court Administration

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

Court Administrators and Chiefs of Diwan continue the foundation-level Training Program at Talal Abu Ghazaleh Business College in Amman to enhance skills in 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. In April, the training focused on the use of the statistical reports in managing courts. Court data provides the empirical basis for policy and decision makers and provides management information for individual courts. The training also included methods of performance measurement including surveys preparation, analysis and data presentation.



Figure 1- Trainer Nagham Odeh enlivened the court administration training with her adult interactive training techniques, colorful presentations, and dynamic personality.

In May, the court administrators and Chiefs of Diwan attended the fifth course of the court administrator's curriculum related to skills and principles of management at Talal Abu Ghazaleh Business College in Amman. This training unit was delivered by a Jordanian trainer, Nagham Odeh, who uses interactive training techniques, keeping the trainees alert and involved in the material.

Throughout the six-week course, the trainees completed the following modules on management:

- Effective management
- Delegation
- Decision making
- Problem solving
- Motivation
- Team building

In June, the court administrators began the sixth course of their curriculum, “Human Resources Basics” where they are learning the rules of employment, staffing, work environment, employee performance and performance development. Mr. Jamil Sarraj, the local trainer is utilizing group motivation techniques which are based on feedback and self assessment from the practice session; actively keeping the trainees engaged in the training process.

Execution Department Pilot

In April, ROLP’s subcontractors, Eco-Consult, started the documentation of the file cycle in the North Amman court. Eco-Consult carried out an assessment of the storage areas in the court, and conducted site visits to other courts like the First Instance Courts of Amman, West Amman, Salt and Ein Basha Conciliation Court. The assessment allowed them to gain a better understanding of current storage practices and spaces. The final draft of the as-is report was completed in June documenting file processes and movement within the court. The ROLP is currently reviewing the deliverable before proposing the anticipated improved processes that will increase file integrity and safety.

At present the closed cases’ files are kept in storage rooms and are only destroyed after 15 years. The process of file destruction is very ad-hoc and bureaucratic despite the challenges related to lack of storage space and the deteriorating condition of the case files. ROLP is proposing a new policy for file-destruction which will create schedules for file destruction, templates and forms to streamline the process and check-lists of documents that are not to be destroyed. ROLP will also propose regulations to govern this process and submit the draft to the Ministry to consider.

Improving the file storage facility at courts will increase file security, maintain the integrity of file content, and ensure timely access to files when needed. According to North Amman Court Chief Judge, Waleed Kanakrieh, the deteriorating state of the storage facility at the courts causes delayed justice: “A ruling may be given in a person’s absence. The file must be available to proceed with an appeal. If the file is missing, the person could go to jail. The ROLP is conducting a study to organize files to prevent losses/misplaced files.”

In June, the ROLP team met with Eco-Consult and MOJ representatives to discuss the Courts Archiving Systems policies and file destruction processes. A committee including representatives from North Amman Court and the MOJ was formed to oversee a series of brain-storming sessions to develop policies and regulations that govern file destruction in courts launched by the ROLP and Eco-Consult. The ROLP will continue holding discussion groups with the Chief Judges who will act as a sounding board for the recommendations of Eco-Consult.

Technology Systems

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

Business practice reengineering and automation continued throughout this quarter for the Civil Execution, Criminal Execution and Notary Public Departments. The first build of the Notary Public software was delivered in May, and has been tested by the ROLP and the MOJ, to ensure stability. The Notary Public Software will link the department with the Department of Land and Survey (DLS), the public entity responsible for documenting and registering all movable assets in Jordan. Linking the two departments will integrate the Notary Public application and the DLS' system to facilitate the automatic exchange of information needed as per provisions of the law.

In mid-June, the IT teams at the ROLP and the MOJ initiated a national rollout plan for the Criminal Execution application beginning with successful automation of the Criminal Execution departments in the New Palace of Justice, North Amman and West Amman First Instance Courts. The execution clerks are pleased with the new system. Ala'a Al Halteh, a clerk at the Criminal Execution Department in East Amman, finds the system "easy to use." The inquiry function, he adds, allows easy access to the execution case files in the database of the Prosecutor's Department. The case file is easily tracked as a result of linkage between Criminal Notifications Registrar and the Prosecutors Execution Registrar systems.

Enabling the rollout, the ROLP has been providing on-site training for court staff, including typists and criminal execution and notification staff on how to use the new software's functions. So far over 115 staff members have been trained including 65 female typists.

The Civil Execution software pilot is pending completion of testing and additional enhancements based on

feedback from court staff participating in the testing process. 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.

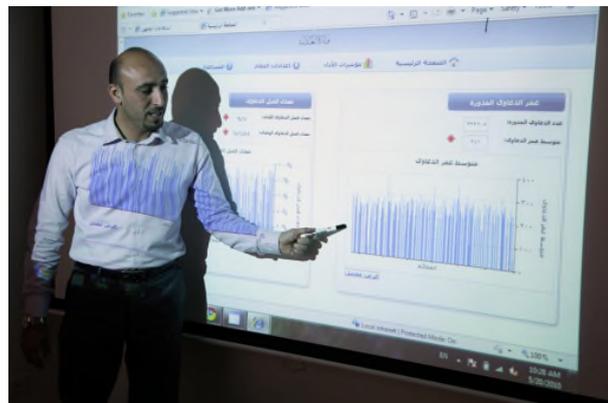


Figure 2 Suhaib Jabr, ROLP IT Manager, discussing Mizan-generated statistics from courts.

Estarta continued developing the ePortal for internet access to MIZAN data and information for judges, court staff, attorneys, litigants and other stakeholders and will also allow remote access to MIZAN by authorized users. ROLP continued testing the application which is now in the final stage before going live. The ROLP team is also testing the deployment guides to ensure its directions are precise and user-friendly.

The dashboard application is designed to improve the interface for the 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. The expected outcome of the dashboard system is that if management information is more accessible and intuitive to understand then it will be utilized more extensively, enhancing proactive case and court management.

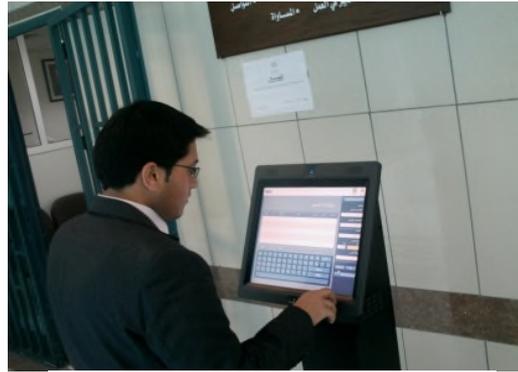


Figure 3: The newly installed kiosk at Salt Palace of Justice helps court user's access case-related information

ROLP procured and installed 25 kiosk machines in 17 First Instance Courts across Jordan during May. The development team is now enhancing the features of the Kiosk Application based on user feedback.

ROLP has also been collaborating with the Ministry of Justice in creating applications that will link Mizan to other public entities to share information pertinent to:

- The Ministry of Water (MOW): the MOJ signed an MOU with the MOW who build a web Service to retrieve information from Mizan for cases related to MOW. The ROLP will be responsible for preparing a replica for the Mizan transactional database allowing the MOW to access the replica to attain the related information.
- Criminal records: the MOJ development team is working on building an application using oracle developer to gather all criminal cases from Mizan all Jordanian citizens. The ROLP are working with the MOJ team to check their scripts and to prepare the needed data from Mizan.
- Document Management System (DMS): the MOJ has awarded DMS procurement for the ITEC Company. The ROLP is working with the MOJ in order to integrate Mizan and DMS.

The CSS team continues to support Notification Management Systems (NMS) at all courts, while working with the MOJ to put improved data quality assurance practices in place and build the MOJ's quality assurance functional 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.

Legal Amendments

The ROLP is assisting the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Industry and Trade develop amendments to the Industry and Trade Law and the Consumers Protection and Competition Law. The 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 (e.g. a minimum first offence of JD10 will result in a JD300 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 and represented the Ministry of Justice in the recently held workshop “Enhancing the Capacities of Legislative Drafting” in June by the Arab Women’s Legal Network, with the participation of the Legislations Bureau. During the workshop, Mr. Abdo presented a research paper on the challenges facing legislative drafting in Jordan and is currently part of the team which is drawing up the Manual for Legislative Drafting. Jurists hope the manual will set out the criteria for drafting legislative articles in Jordan. Mr. Abdo provided his legal expertise in drafting the regulations on the shelters housing victims of human trafficking crimes, pursuant to the articles of the Law Against Trafficking of Human Beings.

The Council of Ministers approved the following laws and regulations:

- Amended Criminal Law
- Amended Prosecution Administration Law
- Amended Law for the Grand Felonies Court Law
- Public Prosecution Department Law
- State Attorney Department Law.

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.

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.

Cassation Court Technical Office Support

Five Jordanian judges participated in a five-day study trip to the Egyptian Court of Cassation. The participating judges are the head of the Jordanian Cassation Court, the director of the Technical Office (TO) and four judges who were recently appointed to the TO. The study tour objective was the observation of the Egyptian Cassation Court's Technical Office functions and formulation of a plan to apply what they observed in the newly formed Technical Office.



Figure 4 Photo of the Jordanian judges who participated in Egypt's Study Tour.

A trip report was developed and released outlining the departments' functions and staff qualifications. The report was submitted to the Chief of the Cassation Court and the Chief Justice for review.

The administrative units within the Cassation Court were subsequently established as outlined by The Technical Office Regulations issued in February 2010. The units aim to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Technical Office to provide the Cassation Court with legal research services and collect, analyze and report court and case statistical information by 2013.

Mediation as an Alternative to Court Proceedings

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

On May 10, the ROLP met with the Minister of Justice to review the ROLP's work plan for 2010 and to present its accomplishments to date and upcoming plans and activities. The meeting was attended by George Kara, CTO-USAID, and Judge Ali Al Masri from the MOJ.

The Minister requested that USAID and ROLP suspend activities related to the rollout of additional mediation centers and the launch of the mediation awareness campaign until legal amendments are made to the laws governing Mediation.

Prior to this decision, ROLP had successfully concluded all its planned mediation training sessions for the current quarter. A four-day Advanced Mediation training course was held in April with the participation of 20 judges, including 4 women judges who had

previously attended a 40-hour basic mediation training conducted by Mr. Osama Safa and Judge Ali Messeimi in January 2010. Mr. Safa and Judge Messeimi partnered up again to

deliver the April training which focused on enhancing participant's skills and knowledge of negotiation and communication; two skills fundamental to their work as mediators.

The last day of training was dedicated to orienting Chief Judges on mediation; to focus their attention on the value of mediation to the justice system and to support them in encouraging their judges to make full use of mediation referrals. The Chief Judges agreed that several factors contribute to the success of mediation including the personal characteristics of the mediator, the types of cases referred to mediation and the litigants' awareness of the role of the mediator.

The attendees discussed the advantage of mediation in solving disputes between contracting companies. According to Chief Judge of Zarqa's First Instance Court, Judge Yasser Al Shibli, "mediation is more valuable than arbitration." He proposed that the mediation law should be amended in a way that will encourage companies to include an article in their contracts stating that in the case of dispute the parties will opt for mediation as a first stop before resorting to arbitration. Other Chief Judges argued that making referrals to mediation obligatory will undermine its value in arriving at mutual understanding and amicable solutions. Mr. Osama Al Safa described the inclusion of such an article in the contracts as "progressive" and should reduce the burden on courts creating more awareness of, and interest in mediation among attorneys.

The ROLP subsequently held a four-day train-the-trainer program on mediation from April 27th until May 2nd attended by 18 judges, including 4 females. The participants were chosen according to previous evaluations conducted by the trainer, Osama Safa, who was very impressed with the quality of the participants and their enthusiasm for mediation.

In June, ROLP started preparing the mid-year mediation progress report for 2009-2010 from all mediation centers across Jordan. The data collection is completed and the draft report is under review at the MOJ. The mediation team will be meeting with Judge Ali Messeimi to obtain approval of the draft and commence with finalizing the report.

User doubt about the accuracy of mediation data in the NPOJ prohibits full confidence in the functions and information in MIZAN. Therefore, ROLP is in the process of verifying MIZAN data in a smaller and more neutral court (West Amman Court), to validate MIZAN mediation functions and/or discover any unknown system or data defects. The ROLP aims to enhance confidence in the data to further encourage use of mediation as alternative dispute resolution and promote the use of mediation functionality of MIZAN as a management resource.

Concerning the responsibilities of the Ministry and Judiciary, Chief Judges have not assigned mediators to their positions in several courts and the Ministry of Justice has yet to deliver their itemized request for furniture and logistical support to ROLP. These issues will be placed on-hold per the Ministry's request to suspend further activity supporting mediation centers in the courts at this time. In the future, in order to increase the number of cases referred to mediation, lawyers, business owners and other professionals should also be included in the process

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

The Judges Affairs Unit

As a first step in response to assisting the Judicial Council implement the Judicial Council Administrative Units Regulation of 2010 the ROLP will build automated tools for the Judges Affairs' Unit and re-engineer its work processes. The ROLP carried out an analysis of the roles and responsibilities of the existing unit to define the requirements for an automated database of information (e.g. training, assignments, career paths etc.) related to judges.

The ROLP attended meetings with the Judicial Council's HR department in an effort to collect data to document current processes, procedures and work forms as reflected in the by-laws and regulations that govern the department's activities. The report outlining the Unit's processes and procedures has been developed and the ROLP is currently procuring application development services for design and building of the automated system.

Judicial Studies Diploma

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

In April the 2009/2010 diploma students completed their final exams and began studying second semester subjects. The 2008/2009 cohort began internships in the Palace of Justice, Public Prosecution and Grand Felonies Court. The students are receiving additional support from legal experts serving as academic advisors assisting them develop their thesis reports. In May the students met with H.E. the Minister of Justice to discuss their academic progress.



Figure 5 Diploma students discuss legal article with their instructor, Mustafa Al Assaf, former Chief Inspector.

The 2009/2010 diploma students started preparing for their first exams in June.

Future Judges Program (FJP)

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

Future Judges Scholarships were announced in April encouraging law graduates and JIJ students to apply for two newly funded scholarships. A selection committee met in April to shortlist candidates invited to join the graduate studies program. In May, the Committee, chaired by JIJ Director Judge Mansur Al Hadidi, completed interviewing 14 graduates from Jordanian public universities, second track students as well as JIJ students. The applications for the second round of announcements on the 1st of June are still under review. The FJP Unit, supported by ROLP, prepared and circulated the application forms, created checklists, and tabulated the final statistics of the applicants. The committee prepared a report on the result of the interviews which was sent to the Scholarship Committee for review allowing them to endorse and announce the awardees of the scholarship in late July.



Figure 6 Future Judges Program Students attend lecture at the JIJ.

The issuance of the amendments to the Judicial Independence Law impacts the FJP is that it decreases the minimum required age of appointed judges from 27 to 25 to accommodate the young JIJ graduates. The graduates who would be effected by the lowering of the minimum age, will however, work under senior judges and be regarded as ‘apprentice judges’ who do not have the authority to rule in a case for a least one year before they are permanently appointed as conciliation judges.

The Future Judges Program is highly regarded by Jordan’s top leadership. His Majesty King Abdulla II, in his speech addressing the newly appointed government in December 2009, considered the Program as the main guarantee for judicial independence. On February 22, 2010, the Prime Minister, Samir Rifa’ee, met the FJ students studying at the Jordan University’ law school and expressed his hope that the program will yield the anticipated results, and praised the efforts of the Ministry of Justice.

Graduate Students

Up until now, sixteen graduate students (11 women and 5 men) enrolled in the Future Judges Program (FJP), fourteen of whom have completed their academic programs and await appointments as judges pending the recommendation by the Ministry of Justice to the Judicial Council. The remaining students are still enrolled at universities; three are studying in the United States and one in the United Kingdom.

Senior Undergraduate Students (Seniors)

There are 19 undergraduate students (13 women and 6 men) in the FJP. Seven students completed their English Language courses in May. ROLP continued monitoring student performance and working with academic advisors to prepare reports with respect to registration, attendance and academic progress. The Unit provided assistance for four students who applied for the First Track new scholarship to apply for the LLM degree at foreign universities.

Junior Undergraduate Students (Juniors)

There are 130 junior students in the FJP. The 2008 group consists of 51 students (26 women and 25 men) and the 2009 group is comprised of 80 students (42 women and 38 men). Juniors are enrolled in the University of Jordan, where ROLP continues to monitor their progress. The summer semester has started in June, and the Unit is following up with their academic supervisors to guarantee their attendance. The FJU continues to monitor the progress of the students taking English and French Language courses.

Continuing Legal Education Program

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

The ROLP and the JIJ conducted two training sessions with Judicial Studies Program Students, which focused on the experience of natural reserves and discussing the legislations which are concerned with biodiversity. The two training sessions were held at the JIJ in cooperation with the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN). Twenty six students, including 15 females attended the first training session which was held on 3rd April 2010 and another 26 students including 13 females attended the second training on the 10th April.

In May, ROLP and the JIJ conducted 12 follow up training courses for First Instance Court judges presiding over appellate cases. The courses were held in the North, South and middle regions, and were attended by 207 judges, including 15 females.

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

To address the needs of greater public information and improved perceptions of the judiciary, the ROLP's small grants program aims to increase the public's awareness of and participation in the on-going judicial reform process. In May, the ROLP received approval from USAID to award the first round of grants to three local NGOs to implement projects focusing on Children's Rights issues in Jordan.

The Information and Research center of King Hussein Foundation (IRC-KHF), Al Thoria Center for Studies, and the National Center for Human Rights (NCHR) are the recipients of this first round of grants, with a total value of \$253,484.31. ROLP conducted a workshop for 18 participants from the grantee organizations on "How to Administer and Manage a USAID Grant" on May 31st 2010. Two other organizations who are still in the proposal development phase, The Arab Council for Judicial and Legal Studies (ACJLs) and the Sisterhood is Global Institute (SIGI) also attended the workshop enabling them to gain access to the knowledge needed for them to manage their grants in the future.



Figure 7 the ROLP Grants Manager Sura Al-Khasawneh

The workshop was arranged to provide guidance on grant regulations, reporting requirements and forms ensuring that the grantees understand their responsibilities in administering USAID funded grants. The workshop also clarified specific activities required of the grantees as outlined in the handbook whilst highlighting and illustrating the process for obtaining ROLP grant approval. Holding the workshop has allowed grantees to understand their responsibilities as parties' to the signed grant agreement; reducing the possibility complications or difficulties during the process. Grants for IRC-KHF, AL Thoria Centre for Studies and the NCHR were signed at the end of the workshop and implemented on June 1, 2010 for a 12 month period.

The grantees submitted their first programmatic and financial report, covering the period of June 1-15.

Information Research Center – King Hussein Foundation: to be a Girl in Jordan: a Legal and Cultural Bias aims to raise awareness of the girl child's rights and advocates reform policies for gender equity in the law and have implemented the first activity of assessing and describing current policy and institutional framework applied to the girl child in Jordan. Desk research is being carried out in the form of reviewing literature describing these current policies and frameworks and reviewing legislation concerning the state of the girl child. More than 15 organizations have already been contacted and 36 studies have been collected. A short report will be issued and will form the first chapter of the book which is an anticipated outcome of this grant project.

The IRC will continue conducting desk research with a focus on the roles of tribal and Shari'a law and other socio-economic factors that shape the law. This will be followed

by development of research tools such as questionnaires for tribal leaders, Shari'a experts, civil society workers, sociologists and economists.

Al Thoria Center for Studies: Children's Rights Culture Dissemination in Jordanian Badia Community will attempt to challenge cultural thoughts and behaviors of the Badia (rural Bedouin areas of Jordan) in how children are perceived and treated. The Center plans to implement three awareness raising dialogue sessions for 30 participants targeting children in the Badia. Al Thoria contacted four Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in the Northern, Middle and Southern Badia in preparation of future activities in those areas. The brochure and folder to be distributed to participants in all related project activities is under development.

The National Center for Human Rights (NCHR): Protection of Children/ Domestic Violence targets the issue of domestic violence against children by raising awareness of stakeholders and children and advocating for prevention of violence. The NCHR project staff had a meeting with nine members of the executive committee of the NGO network, and Actress Asmaa Mustafa from the Jordanian Artists Association where issues such as activity dates, venues and training workshops were discussed.

Training materials, pre and post questionnaires and evaluation forms that will be distributed to participants at the upcoming domestic violence awareness workshops in all 12 governorates of Jordan have been developed; and plans to start on the design of the project banner are underway. The NCHR also plans to conduct two awareness raising workshops for parents, grandparents and religious and community leaders at the Princess Basma Center for Social Services in South Shouneh, Al-Balqa governorate and in Ballas, Ajlun governorate on June 27 and July 6 respectively. The output of these workshops will contribute to data on the Children's Rights status in Jordan.

Support of proposals for future grants - The site visit to SIGI/Jordan was postponed to June 30 due to the revisions needed for their proposal and budget, based on the meeting held on June 14.

Communications

Based on the Minister's decision to halt all mediation activities, the proposed mediation media campaign was put on hold.

The new ROLP website is currently under development and is anticipated to be completed and launched in the near future.

Administration and Finance

The Administration and Finance team continued providing support to ROLP management and staff which included logistics follow up and internal travel coordination.

The project recruited a new Senior Administrator (Fadia Batarseh) who replaced the Administration Manager Assistant (Juliet Najjar). Ms. Batarseh commenced work on March 1st, 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. During April ROLP met with JIDARA to discuss the project plan to insure it meets the required goals. Accordingly, the company:

- Prepared the list of questions and the data collection templates in English & Arabic.
- Held meetings with His Excellency Abel Ilah AlKurdi, the president of Jordan Ombudsman on Tuesday April 13.
- Started the interviews with the Ombudsman's officials, including:
 - o The Director of Complaints Management Dr. Omar Zraiqtat.
 - o The Director of Investigations & Settlements Mr. Rateb Abu Zaid.
 - o The Director of Research and Studies Mr. Refaát Alhumsi. The as-is assessment report for the Bureau was completed and presented to ROLP for consideration. It was presented to the Ombudsman on June 22nd 2010. The report recommends

In addition to the assessment, work is underway to build the JOB's communications capacity. ROLP's communications consultant, Ms. Nermeen Obeidat developed the needs assessment report in which the Ombudsman's current status of internal and external communication was reviewed. The report proposes implementing communications activities that include boosting internal communication, proposed messaging, and suggested communications tools, namely the website. ROLP consultant presented the findings for consideration and feedback to stakeholders during the meeting held on June 22. ROLP currently awaits the directorate's reply before progressing further with this activity.

Human Rights Assessment

In June, the Jordan USAID Mission requested DPK through the ROLP to conduct an analysis study of the status of human rights programming in Jordan, including an assessment of existing human rights activities across the donor community and identification of the needs and opportunities to further develop this sector. A team of international and local consultants in the field of human rights initiated a general assessment of the human rights sector in Jordan, assessed the environment in which elements of human rights exist, and will make recommendations for needed interventions. The team will review strengths and weakness of the sector. The methods to be used in undertaking this assessment will include reviewing documentation, interviews, site visits, stakeholder meetings, etc. The study will result in a final report to be delivered to USAID in July or August.

Acronyms

CMM	Case Management and Mediation
EC	Evaluation Committee
ITD	Information Technology Directorate
JC	Judicial Council
JII	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