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Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza
Quarterly Report
July – September 2008

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Submitted by Pact on behalf of Internews Network, Inc.

Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza
Quarterly Programmatic Report

I. Executive Summary

During the eighth quarter of *Aswatona: Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza*, Internews Network continued a slower pace until mid-July and during the month of September, there was very little activity due to the month of Ramadan. The in-house training that had been scheduled because it seemed possible was not held; no station was willing to schedule any training activities. However, with the technical approval of the work plan through December 2008, Aswatona accomplished the following:

The deliverables for this period as outlined in the last report are below:

Activity	Activities of This Quarter	#s	Planned	Actual
1.1a	open workshops - media and community - on issues of democracy, governance, and the role of media		September	Delayed
1.1b	open workshops on reporting on specific issues/topics	19 TV/radio journalists	August	August 24, 25 and 28
1.1ci	radio - interviewing, story creation (r&d), production technique and formats	23 journalists from 3 stations	August/Sept	Gaza Aug 20-21, Aug 23-25, Aug 26-28
1.1cii	television - interviewing, story creation (r&d), production technique and formats		August/Sept	Delayed
1.2a	in-house training and mentoring w/technical assessment	3 stations	July	One in July and two in August
2.1a	in-house training for radio in West Bank and Gaza on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories		September	Delayed
2.1b	in-house training for TV in the West Bank on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories		September	Delayed
2.1c	Specialized training in safety, interviewing, fieldwork		Prep work in August	September
2.1d	workshops in Journalism standards, ethics, program design, writing		September	Delayed

2.1e	selection of programs/stories for production support	5 contracts signed, 1 TV Network of 6 stations, 2 radio network of 10 stations total and 2 TV stations	August	August selection and Sept 28 signed
2.2a	local polling/evaluation on programming		August	September 26 and 30
2.2b	Development of business/management structure and marketing	20 station owners & managers	July 20-22	July 20-22
2.3a	Focus groups with media owners/managers on the Media Environment to explore issues of law, ethics, standards, professionalism, and interactions with each other and with government		July and September	Delayed until Oct at the request of the members
2.3b	Focus groups for licensing and other regulatory issues		July	Delayed until Oct at the request of the Ministries

II. Background

The goal of *Aswatona: Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza* is to enhance the role of local independent broadcast media in their local communities by strengthening reporting, enhancing business sustainability, and improving program production related to issues of local policies, good governance, civil society, and the aspects of democratic culture in the West Bank and Gaza.

The three main components are:

- 1) Strengthening the local media by creating self-sustaining business models, enhancing reporting and production capabilities, and skill-building on investigative and issue-specific journalism, and re-connecting the media outlets with their local communities by reporting on and working with local civil society organizations (CSOs) on field reporting.
- 2) Strengthening the knowledge base and awareness of the media and CSOs regarding each other's work, as well as strengthening the legal and regulatory sector that govern the

media, and strengthening the networking and informal association of the media sector in order to professionalize the field.

- 3) Funding innovative program productions combined with training to build more cooperative, responsive and professional production capabilities, and implementing a small grants program focused on CSOs' communications and work with the media and community outreach to their.



III. Key Results by Objective

Objective 1: Improved citizen awareness of and involvement in community-level democracy and governance issues.

In order to meet this objective, *Aswatona's* local media partners have had to work on re-connecting with the communities through field reporting and local news as well as attracting and maintaining listeners and viewers with quality programming.

1.1b – Workshops – reporting on specific issues and topics

As part of enhancing the skills of local journalists, Internews Network - Aswatona planned a series of workshops aimed at local broadcast media staff. After the success of several workshops on covering press conferences, extracting stories from press conferences, and conducting interviews for news, Aswatona planned a workshop on developing news items, mainly published in newspapers and electronic media, into radio or television reports.

The rationale for this workshop topic was the fact that several outlets broadcast written news items as they are, reading it from the source without developing it to suit the audio-visual media. The Aswatona staff realized that additional skills on research and writing as well as other efforts were needed in order create more interesting TV and radio news programming. It was clear that the journalists needed to search for more information, get reactions from officials, and/or whoever is involved in the topic that is being addressed in any print item.

Aswatona contracted two trainers, Hisham Abdullah and Ahmad Zaki, to run this activity. Hisham proposed an agenda for the training with the first two days for the theoretical approach and learning how to do research - where to start and where to proceed, then two days for the participants to develop and finalize their reports, which they had outlined and then the last day to

evaluate the final draft. Ahmad Zaki prepared the theoretical material as a manual for turning written news into audio and video reports.



The team invited reporters, mainly from partner and potential partner stations, since the topic is consistent with the Aswatona project strategy of raising journalistic skills for field work.

The Agenda



Turning Print Material into News and Stories for Radio and TV August 24-25 and 28, 2008



Focus will be directed on developing research skills through general news sources. Participants are expected to learn the value and importance of professional research and the techniques and tools of gathering the needed information to produce stories.

To improve reporters skills in research and access to information that will allow them to create stories through accessing proper materials (general print sources) and transforming them into professional radio and TV stories. The main goal is for journalists to realize that there are no limits on resources available for producing TV and Radio news. Sources are wide open and print media is an important source of information.

Training will be conducted on workshop style with opening lectures and discussions. Participants are expected to produce stories from day one. Stories will be proposed by both trainers and trainees. Each story will be evaluated and discussed after it is presented in the workshop.

Participants are expected to present written proposals and plans on how they will produce their stories.

24 August, Sunday Day One

9:30-10:00 **Welcome and Opening**

10:00-10:30 **Research and Sources for TV and Radio**

- 10:30-11:30** **What, Who, and Where**
Participants to write down list of their own sources. Ask them to match the list to stories from clips of newspapers.
- 11:30-11:45** **Break**
- 11:45-13:00** **Small Groups and Plenary**
Present proposals for stories. Evaluate stories proposals with discussions. Write a plan to produce the story.
- 13:00-14:00** **Lunch**
- 14:00-15:00** **Research and Planning for TV and Radio**
Transforming written story proposals into voices, visuals, and affects that match and represent substance of stories.
- 15:00-16:00** **Continue discussion to outline participant research for TV and radio.**

25 August, Monday
Day Two

- 9:00-10:00** **Review and Prepare**
Assignments that will be produced
- 10:00-11:00** **Discussion on major issues of research, sources, contacts, materials**
- 11:00-11:45** **Focus on the participants' storyboard proposals**
- 11:45-12:00** **Break**
- 12:00-13:00** **Do we need more information?**
Techniques getting it and incorporating research into stories
- 13:00-14:00** **Lunch**

Depart to home stations to work on stories

28 August, Thursday
Day Three

- 9:00-11:00** **Presentation of the stories**
The group and trainers will review and evaluate
- 11:00-11:15** **Break**
- 11:15-13:00** **Continue the evaluations and discussion**
participants to evaluate the experience: what is visual and audio research?

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:30 Finish presenting stories

15:30-16:00 Closing remarks and completion certificates

The Workshop:

Day One:



Aswatona team inaugurated the event, welcomed the attendants, and pointed out the goals of such trainings. The main goal was to differentiate, journalistically, between a news item published in a newspaper, an electronic news agency, or even a rumor and an audio or video report. The format and the audience are different, thus, the latter requires that several steps be taken and implemented. The catch here is the research. The team then introduced the two trainers, who are known by most of the trainees. Each trainee got a package containing the agenda and the prepared material.

Trainer Hisham Abdullah began by talking about the importance of such trainings for journalists, hinting that everyone working in the media sector needs to attend workshops and develop trainings. He stated that as journalists, “we should be open to new ideas, to new approaches, to share ideas, and to brain storming with colleagues and experts.”

The topic of the training, Hisham stated, is an essential one for journalists working in the audio-visual sector because it involves the most important aspect for the profession: **research**. He also referred to the fact that in the successful outlets, coordination and cooperation (teamwork) is the cornerstone. Reporters, producers, editors, cameramen and the rest of the team should coordinate in order to guarantee professional work.

Trainer Ahmad Zaki spoke about news items published in Arabic papers or elsewhere, noting that there is a lack of professionalism, in both the written and audio-visual media. He stated that



there are no references, no elaboration, and that little development, or research is done. For example, he read a news item in one of the daily newspapers about the death of eleven children at the Ramallah governmental hospital. It was a shocking news story. The question is how does a broadcast journalist deal with it; should it be published as is or is it necessary to research and develop the story further? Ahmad then explained that this was the main focus of the workshop for the coming days.

Participants were asked to read newspapers and the electronic news agencies to look for news worth developing. They were then asked to list the sources of news in each of their governorates. They came up with the following list of sources:

Government, president's office, officials in different ministries, governor, local councils, experts, eyewitnesses, other journalists, statistics, statements and press releases, public relations, personal contacts, daily newspapers, news agencies, public and private foundations and associations, military or police officials, medical bodies, factions (parties) officials, clergymen, citizens

The trainers discussed the credibility of the sources and how to verify the accuracy of the information. They pointed out that the journalist's duty is to "dismantle the scene of the event and to re-construct it" so that s/he provides the audience with information and focuses on the interest of the community. Such a responsibility must lead the journalist to conduct the necessary research, to get as much information as possible, and then to decide who to interview. They gave several examples and asked the trainees to do the research.



One example from the newspaper was about a body found in an apartment. Participants' responses varied on how to deal with the story. One said that he would go with his camera to the scene to get visuals; another said that he would approach the neighbors; a third said she would contact the police department; a fourth would talk to the family of the victim, a fifth, to the ambulance driver; and so on.

Another example was on an ad for a specific commodity posted on billboards in the city. The trainer first asked if this was a source of news. All of the participants said it was. So, then the question became how to verify the credibility of the information given in the advertisement? Some of the answers the participants gave included talking to the producing company or the agent, talking to a food expert, talking to laboratories if they did analysis on the product, talking to the consumers, etc.

Participants were divided into groups, according to governorates, to come up with topics for stories for that area since each has its own local issues.

Groups:

Governorate	Topics
RAMALLAH	Traffic police, drinks vendor, police suppression of protesters, freedom of expression, political detention, media polarization
NABLUS	Released prisoners, back to school, Ramadan and the over-spending,
JENIN	Street food healthy or just cheap? unemployment, destroyed streets, hybridization of plants
TULKAREM	Destroyed streets, connecting the young generation with the cultural and political heritage
QALQILIA	Closure affects the market, handicapped agony,
BETHLEHEM	Child labor, handicapped and right of education, street boys

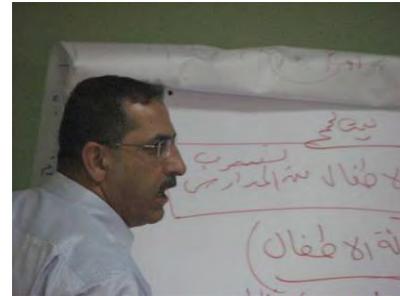
HEBRON	Lack of sports facilities
JERICHO	Closing factories

Day Two

Choosing Topics and Outlining the Needed Research

Topics discussed:

The trainers outlined how these stories were going to use what they had learned in the course; mainly in research and the story board development for their reports. Each participant then elaborated on his or her topic and outlined their approach to finding more information.



As each shared his/her story ideas, colleagues shared in critiquing, suggesting better approaches, better sources, and/or a better story board.

For example, one trainee said that he lives in Tulkarem and had noticed that the traffic was always difficult because the roads were so bad. He said that he had seen how the situation causes damages to the vehicles and those drivers had to fix their cars, which costs a lot of money. This means that the municipality is to blame and so he needed to talk to the officials, the drivers and to the man in the street.

In reviewing the story idea, other participants commented that the reporter needed do research to see if there was a major problem or if it was just one or two side streets. They suggested filming cars stuck in the roads, talking with officials at the scene and interviewing the drivers and passengers. The trainers asked several questions on where the reporter could find information and which officials should be interviewed, what is the relevant time for filming to show the problem, and how is he going to build the story board.

This was the case for every report idea and most of the participants shared ideas and suggestions. The interaction between the participants and trainers was very lively.

Day Three:

Critique and Review

Before coming back for the last day of the training, the participants were given two days to write their reports at their home stations. On Thursday, 28 August, each participant came back with his or her report. They were played for critique by their colleagues and the trainers. Many of them had changed their topics due to lack of time, sources, or tangible information on the issue.

For example, participant Yousef Ghanem from Farah TV in Jenin did a 1:45 minute report on the crisis of drinking water in the town. It was a short report that opened with shots showing

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water flows, general shots of the town; a pumping station with machines that are not working, and broken water-tanks in the street.

In his commentary, Yousef talked about the suffering of the citizens because they do not get water from the municipality and have to buy expensive water from the private sources. There was only one interview in the report with the municipality's engineer, who claimed that the problem is because of the lack of spare parts for the pump.

During the critique, almost every trainee criticized the report for lack of interviews with citizens and officials in the municipal council. They suggested that he could have shown water taps with not one drop of water coming out. The trainer, Hisham Abdullah, explained that the main problem of the report was that there was no essential information like the quantity of water needed for the citizens of the town, the shortfall, lack of strong and sharp questions, and the reporter did not do the needed background research to get the basic information, although for this type of issue there are a lot of statistics.

Trainer Ahmad Zaki explained that the reporter should have shown the crisis on camera and that he should have talked to the people and the officials. If the municipal council members refused to talk, he should show that too and instead interview an expert.

Another example was from Hiba Lama of Palestine News Network (PNN) radio about a released prisoner's homecoming only to find that his father had died while waiting for him. She dealt with the contradiction of feelings in the family and the released prisoner who were celebrating and mourning at the same time but that the sadness was stronger. She did interviews with the mother and the prisoner himself with the background sounds of Quranic verses in the house of condolences. This was her first radio news report.

In the critique, the participants commented that her voice tone does not change according to the events sequence, the report was too long, and the sound was not clear. They also said that she did not include any information on the prisoners in general. In his comments, the trainer Ahmad Zaki stated that the effects were over used and that the commentary needed to be stronger in its description of the feelings. He also said that a good effort was exerted.



Trainer Hisham Abdullah told her that it was good that she went to the condolences house, but it was also a good opportunity to talk to more people and to describe the scene. He commented that such chances of contradiction are rare so the story should be taken deeper. He suggested that reporters should always write down and record everything that he or she sees in such scenes and if s/he goes more than once s/he will find other corners and different approaches. However, he said, it is a good report.

Trainers' Reports in Brief

Hisham Abdullah:

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The main target was to train radio and television reporters on how to use print materials for audio and visual stories and to improve participants' skills on how to use sources and conduct research. We focused on the sources of news and on research as the best tools in the hands of the journalists. Then we focused on the research approaches and the importance of applying professional codes in asking questions and using information. We also thoroughly discussed the story board creation.

There were a few challenges in this training. Many of the participants came back with different topics than the ones they were assigned to do, their research was not enough and the language is a problem for them. They do not use audio visual effects to the maximum and have problems in the story board. Some of them implemented what was given in the course. The best two are Nizar Habash - Wattan TV and Hind Khelifa - Najah radio. Good although new, were Maysoon alBanna (Tariq alMahaba Radio), Alin Zanayed (asShabab radio), and Hiba Lama (PNN).

Ahmad Zaki:

The new training is a continuation building on the past courses organized by Aswatona on how to extract stories, cover press conferences, and conduct interviews. There is a real need for such trainings in the local media. Such trainings open the minds of journalists through brain storming and exchanging of ideas. Research and story board creation were the main topics of discussion, although participants were also given materials on how to turn print news items into radio and TV reports.

After two days of exercises and two days of field work, the participants came back with their stories. It should be known that the topics for the workshops chosen by Aswatona are very distinguished and done for the first time in Palestine. Aswatona provided all the needed equipment and material for the course.

Participants were given the opportunity to discuss the story proposals and topics. Theoretically, they showed real understanding of the topics discussed. I noticed that some of them filed the reports according to the skills learned during the workshop but some of them changed their topics due to different reasons. Some stories were distinguished but the most impressive was Hind Khalifa (Najah Radio). They all need more training on such skills.

Trainees' evaluation:

Participants filled a questionnaire distributed at the end of the workshop. Answers were as follows:

Workshop in general	Excellent	v. good	Good	Weak	v. weak
Suites your	5	7	4		

media work					
Implementation is possible	7	7	2		
Interaction encouraged	4	8	2	1	
Workshop's topics	10	4	2		
Provided equipments	3	6	5	3	
Venue	7	6	3		
Timing	5	7	4		
Duration	2	7	6	2	
Trainers approaches	3	11	2		
Expectations met	2	4	6	5	

NOTES:

- In some stable stations where the staff tends to stay, we notice that the trainees who attend the series of workshops accumulate skills and implement them
- Some of the newcomers are doing well. An example of this was Hiba Lama of PNN, though she needs some more training and practice.
- The interaction was very high as the participants shared ideas and did real brain storming; some were giving good ideas.
- Road to success for such trainings is practice. In the future, we might need to give more time for practical exercises.
- It is not a secret that the participants did not implement the skills in a perfect way but they tried. Keeping in mind that stations in general do not have the luxury to spare equipment and staff for the trainings, such workshops are meant to end with the staff having a product ready for airing.
- To give the trainees better chances and to push them for better implementation, Aswatona team asked each one to do a new report or to re-do the same report and deliver it to the team and the trainers to evaluate. We were very clear that reports should have been done according to the skills learned. We might have another open day of evaluation.
- Such trainings connect to the program assistance we provide for the stations, so that the Aswatona project goals are interrelated, interdependent, and complimentary.
- All stations involved and all journalists trained as well as the trainers concur that Aswatona workshops are unique, up to date, very fruitful, and meet the needs of the stations and the journalists, and thus the local media.
- Finally, although the training was open, each participant was given the opportunity to practice the learned skills and being evaluated.

1.1ci – Radio production technique and formats, writing and interviewing

In August, with the approval of USAID, three in-house radio trainings were conducted in Gaza on the technical aspects of radio production. Since Aswatona is not yet able to provide grants for production or new equipment to the stations, they requested this type of training so that they could use their existing equipment to its maximum capacity to produce quality programs.

Schedule:

- 1) Alwan Radio, August 20-21**
- 2) Forsan Al Erada, August 23-25**
- 3) Gaza FM, August 26-28**

The Aswatona staff in both Gaza and Ramallah worked with local trainer Husam Da'adleh to design the technical training for the stations. The goals of the training were to work with the staff on how to properly use the audio equipment to ensure high quality sound, how to produce the best recording from the field and in the studio, how to edit and insert interviews within reports, and even how to properly connect cables and maintain the equipment. Based on this, Husam Da'adleh prepared the material which was reviewed by the staff and collated into manual that was used for the training but will also be a reference for any radio engineer or technical staff.

The three-day agenda was the same for each of the stations:

Day One

Session One: 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Defining Sound and Audio

The Audio Journey: from the sound source, through airwaves changes till it reaches the ears of the listener.

The Human Audio Range

Break

Session Two: 12:00 to 1:30 p.m.

Sound sources, medium, microphones types and usage, cables and connections

Choosing the place (isolation and audio treatment)

Lunch

Session Three: 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Sound Mixers: sound inputs, gain control, equalizer, function of different mixer's keys like FX, master fader, pan

What is This Apparatus: its structure, usage, potentialities.

Day Two

Session One: 9:00 to 11:30

Review of the first day and a discussion on the new developments on the radio technicalities

Using ear-phones, old and new editing equipment and programs,

Ideal recording methods to get the best sound choosing the best mike and controlling sensitivity, sound corners reception, using effects and filters, etc.

Break

Session Two: 12:00 to 1:30p.m.

Digital editing and training on the **Adobe Audition program**.

Lunch

Session Three: 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Trainees asked to produce short reports and recordings using Cool Edit program

Day Three

Session One: 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Practice on Adobe Audition 3 program through practical recording and editing by the trainees.

Break

Session Two: 11:30 to 1:00 p.m.

Producing Reports and Studio work. Each trainee will be given the opportunity to implement on air what was covered in the course - how to use the different equipments, like mikes, mixers.

Lunch

Session Three: 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. (with break)

Participants will produce short reports followed by peer review. The best reports, whether from the field or in-house will be broadcast on the station.



However, the **Alwan Radio** staff had only two days due to various scheduling difficulties so the agenda was adjusted for the station. For Alwan, it was agreed with the owner and staff to focus on new radio techniques, the use of Adobe Audition 3, work on structure, connection, and maintenance of the equipment, and teaching them on radio engineering and control of the audio quality during live broadcasting.

Nine Alwan staff members participated in the training and, according to the Aswatona staff member and trainer, all were very active and interactive with the trainer and each other. The trainer noted that there were three staff members in particular who distinguished themselves in their work and productions. The trainer also noted that the female staff members were most interested in learning maintenance and equipment repair while the male staff was more



interested in the new technology. However, all of them wanted to learn every function of the equipment and editing program. It came as no surprise that the Alwan staff said that the time was too short and wanted more. They also said that the training was very useful and interesting and one said, "We hope for more such trainings to that we will be able to make you hear 'our voices'." The project name,



Aswatona, is Arabic for 'Our Voices'.

At **Forsan Al Erada Radio** station the full three-day agenda was implemented. This station has had its ups and downs, starting as a UNWRA radio for the handicapped and when funding stopped, being taken over by three members of the station staff. Over the last year, they have been off and on the air depending on the status of their equipment and the power supply (they have no backup generator). In the second session of the first day, the trainer discovered that the station had many errors in the connections of the cables and so they worked on a “real life” situation to reconnect and test the system of the station. The trainer noted that by the end of the training there were noticeable technical improvements in the station and among the staff. He also noted that the participants initiated very interesting ideas for the production topics with three of the seven staff really distinguishing themselves in their work.



Gaza FM Radio was the final station for the training. At the request of UNWRA, Internews invited two of the new staff members from a new radio station for women that they are launching in the new future. They, together with the five staff members from Gaza FM, participated in the training. Having just completed the workshop at Forsan Al Erada, the trainer, Husam noticed right away that there were far less errors in the connections in the Gaza FM set up. And, as with Alwan Radio, the female staff

was interested in the maintenance and repair of the equipment, while the male staff members were more interested in the updated techniques. Throughout the training, the participants were interactive displaying a strong sense of humor but a serious dedication to learning everything they could. As one participant said, “I am very grateful to Aswatona for providing such trainings”, while another simply said, “I will certainly implement the methods I learned regarding all audio technicalities.”

The Combined Trainee Evaluations:

Subject/evaluation %	excellent	v. good	Good	Weak	v. weak
Content	60%	40%			
Relevant to your work	77%	21%	2%		
Implementation possibility	52%	39%	9%		
Encouraging discussion	52%	39%	9%		
Topics	70%	22%	9%		
Training equipments	30%	48%	4%	18%	
Venue	35%	48%	17%		
Timing	35%	26%	35%	4%	
Duration	5%	31%	36%	17%	11%
Dividing days	28%	52%	20%		
Trainers method	57%	30%	13%		

Expectations met	Much More than expected	More than expected	According to expectations	Less than expected	Much less than expected
	26%	48%	17%	9%	

Notes from the Trainer:

- The training was very effective; first, since it was in-house and second, it was on air.
- Reports and studio work were chosen as topics by trainees and then produced by them. This gave them self confidence.
- The trainees were very responsive and interactive during discussions and practice.
- I noticed that grave errors were made by the technical staff before the training, mainly in connections, using the sound mixer and mikes and in editing the reports. I expect now that these types of errors will not happen after the training.
- A positive change was noticeable with the trainees' use of equipment, mainly the microphones, the sound mixer, and the sound recorders. They also improved on editing using the new version of the audio editing programs, like Adobe Audition 3.
- Most of the training time was dedicated to practical training, even on-air, where the trainees produced several good reports, competed in proposing ideas for the topics, and to implement the learned technicalities.
- Trainees are staff in the stations, so on many occasions some of them had to leave the training for an hour or so to carry out their work, although also using what they were learning.
- Many of the participants proved, through their production, that they are distinguished in absorbing new technology and in better use of the equipment.

Finally, in Alwan and Gaza FM, the staff requested that Aswatona hold training for producing radio drama as well as proposing doing joint production between the two stations and Aswatona.

1.2a and 2.1e – Selection of Program Production and Capacity Building Grants

First Round Subgrants Update

Over the past three months the Aswatona project has officially closed the first nine subgrants awarded in September of 2007, and will soon close the tenth subgrant, which was signed in February of 2007. Virtually all of the awards given in the first round can be considered a success in terms of reconnecting the stations with respective communities. In addition, all of the supported stations have reported an increase in audience share in their governorates and in advertising, two key indicators of the success of the project.

The subgrant awarded to the Nablus-based Tariq Al Mahabeh radio station has proven to be one of the success stories of the first round. With Aswatona supporting the station through the provision of capacity building equipment, such as an audio-editing station and outside recorder, as well as production support, the station has seen an unprecedented rise in both its targeted

audience, local youth, and in advertising and sponsorship. Station Programming Director, Alaa Badarna, commented on the success of the project, stating, “Aswatona has helped build the program as we envisioned. We have seen that the kids have started to think about things other than fighting and the occupation. They still have dreams and these are reflected in our program”.

Some obstacles were faced, however, in the subgrant awarded to the Hebron-based radio station Khalil Radio. The station failed to fully commit itself to the obligations outlined in the award, and due to management and internal issues, experienced significant delays in the productions supported by Aswatona. Consequently, the subgrant was first suspended with new deadlines and then, as of September 27, 2008, the subgrant was officially cancelled. The Aswatona Grants Manager visited the station and discussed the reasoning behind the action with the Station Director. The Station Director understood the rationale and was apologetic for the station’s inability to keep to the outlined production and reporting schedules. Despite the cancellation, the station will continue to participate in other aspects of the project, including trainings and workshops.

Also, three additional station assessments were done; Tariq al Mahaba Radio in Nablus to determine improvements and use of equipment, Nablus TV to assess any additional staffing or equipment in considering a proposal, and Al Nour TV in Jericho to verify equipment need in relation to their addition to the Sada Network (see attachment for the reports).

Second Round Subgrants Overview



In late September, the Aswatona project implemented five new production and capacity building subgrants that had been developed and designed over the previous months. In accordance with the project mandate, now that the partner stations have effectively reconnected with their respective communities, the second round of subgrants will see the stations challenged to raise the level of creativity and quality of their productions. The six television and two radio programs to be supported will not only provide local communities with programming that is fresh and innovative, but are also more complex and professional in terms of production.

The Aswatona project’s monitoring and evaluation of the second round subgrants has also been improved. With respect to the lessons learned from the closing of the ten first round subgrants, the current subgrantees will work together with Aswatona’s Grants Manager and Senior Accountant to develop sound financial systems, submit informative narrative and financial reports that provide insight into the successes and challenges of the productions, as well as to submit copies of all properly marked episodes.



On August 28th, 2008, the Aswatona project was excited to witness the signing of a partnership agreement, called United Palestine News Network (UPNN), between three local media networks, Palestine News Network, Sada Network, and NUR Network, all of whom will be receiving support in the second round of subgrants. The Aswatona project has been working in conjunction with all

three networks in many facets, including trainings, funding, and assistance in how to increase inter-network cooperation. Such an unprecedented agreement in the Palestinian media will see the participating stations share programming and resources that will collectively strengthen the programming and coverage of all members.

Second Round Subgrants Signed 28 September 2008-09-30



1) Station: Wattan TV (Ramallah, with plans to broadcast via satellite).

Subgrant: Subgrant B1561 WTV 02

Total Value of Subgrant: \$44, 165.00

Support for: Two ongoing productions, *Life Tour* and *Weekly Harvest*, as well as support for the research and development of a bold new program, entitled *With the People*.

Program Description:

Weekly Harvest: The show will cover recent political and social news from the week, with analysis provided by established, respected, and objective panellists. Hosted by Wattan News-Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Hassan Abdullah, the show will feature a variety of guests that will complement the stories covered. The continued support of the program will permit the station to develop the *Weekly Harvest* set, increase production quality, and depth of the news presented. They are also seeking to adjust the format. These improvements are reflected in the increase of cost per production, from \$1681.10/episode in the first round of subgrants, to \$1929.58/per episode in the current round.

Life Tour: This 60-minute program, the most popular program of Wattan TV to date, will continue to highlight Palestinian figures from ordinary backgrounds that have succeeded in their respective fields and contributed to their community. The second season, however, will be produced in documentary fashion, with interviews with people who know them, narration, and relevant footage of the figure being honored. Similar to the second season of *Weekly Harvest*, each episode of *Life Tour* will cost \$1549.19, an increase from the \$878.68/episode in the previous round. The weekly show will have 12 episodes in the program cycle, will be produced by the award winning producer Wafa Jamil, and will feature biographies of a wide variety of figures, such as Dr. Amin Thalaji, and activist Aisha Ouda. The success of this show has prompted Wattan TV to explore the feasibility of selling the series as a DVD box set.

With the People: This 70-minute weekly program will comprehensively explore a wide variety of social, economic, and political issues live on-air. The format of the show, undoubtedly the most technically advanced of any Aswatona-supported programs, will feature studio guests, field reports, street interviews with 'vox pops', and call-in sessions. The complexity of the show requires a two month period in which Wattan TV will implement a research and design phase to ensure that the program will reach its full potential as well as staff and moderator training. This

period will involve the creation of a program treatment, detailed formatting, topic selection, and capacity building. Wattan TV intends to embark on an extensive promotional campaign prior to the airing of the show.



2) Station: Sada Network (7 stations, West Bank wide)
Subgrant: B1561 Sada Network 02
Total Value of Subgrant: \$44,396.00

Support for: Continued production of *Sada Filistene*.

Program Description: The program, considered one of the success stories from the first round of subgrants, continues to be representative of many of the objectives of the Aswatona project, in that it gives each member station the opportunity to produce a local news segment to be compiled for collective broadcast on Friday evenings. Recently, the network has expanded to include Al Noor TV of Jericho, and Amwaj TV of Ramallah, thereby increasing the capacity of the program to deliver West Bank-wide stories to local audiences.



3) Station: Palestine News Network (6 stations, West Bank wide)
Subgrant: Subgrant B1561 PNN 00
Total Value of Subgrant: \$40,982.00

Aired: 30-minute bulletins at 12:00 pm and 4:00 pm. 5-minute bulletins at 8:00, 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 5:00, 6:00 daily

Support for: The Bethlehem-based Palestine News Network seeks to significantly improve the news coverage of the West Bank through its member radio stations with the production of an up-to-the-minute news bulletin to be produced and aired throughout the day. In addition, they have requested the provision of equipment and capacity building measures.

Program Description: The news bulletin will give participating radio stations the opportunity to provide their local audiences with hourly updates of current news items from contributing reporters throughout the West Bank. Utilizing resources from each station and reporters in the field, the news bulletin will dramatically improve the capacity of the stations to provide comprehensive, accurate, and timely news coverage.



4) Station: NUR Network (5 stations, West Bank wide)
Subgrant: Subgrant B1561 NUR 00
Total Value of Subgrant: \$41,950.00

Support for: Funding for one new and innovative production and provision of equipment to improve overall production quality.

Program Description: This 45-60 minute program, broadcast 5 days per week, will have segments produced by each member station and will cover issues related to the daily life in each of their communities in the West Bank. Through a single point of contact, the program permits Internews West Bank/Gaza Media Freedom
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listeners to call-in and email in order to contribute insight into the topics being covered. The program will also be enriched through complementary field reporting, such as interviews with municipality officials and people on the street and will effectively present local news to a national audience, enabling citizens of each governorate to be aware of the issues affecting people elsewhere throughout the West Bank. The type of topics to be addressed include examining the tourism in different governorates, exploring variations of food in different areas, discussing issues associated with mixed Christian/Muslim marriages in Bethlehem and other governorates, and, examining the policies and practices of gun control and combating the arms trade in different cities.

In addition to *Exposing the Event*, the program lineup of NUR Network member stations will be strengthened with the addition of a news bulletin to be broadcast throughout the day via a coordinated effort with the Palestine News Network.



5) Station: Farah TV (Jenin)

Subgrant: B1561 Farah TV 00

Total Value of Subgrant: \$18,000.00

Support for: Production of two productions, one ongoing and one new innovation.

Program Description:

1) ***If I Were Responsible:*** This innovative weekly program, comparable to a successful Aswatona supported radio program in the first round of subgrants, will engage the citizens of Jenin on issues that affect their daily lives. Hosted by the station's smart and savvy anchor, Abdelnasser Abuabeid, the show will have three segments that together will provide the audience with comprehensive coverage of the issues and challenge them to propose creative solutions to them. Topics to be addressed in the show include how to develop the tourism industry in Jenin, how to cope with rising fuel costs, and how to ensure that citizens follow the rule of law.

2) ***Panorama Farah:*** The first of its kind in Jenin, this news program, also hosted by Abdelnasser Abuabeid, provides the governorate with accurate and timely coverage of local and nationwide events. Providing additional funding to Farah will allow the station to produce more field reports, which will enrich the program by providing additional insight into the social, economic, political, and cultural stories covered. Moreover, the inclusion of in-studio guests and analysts will provide further discussion on the wider implications of events and go into greater detail of how this will affect the population of Jenin.

Second Round Subgrants Currently Waiting for Approval

1) Station: Al Fajr Al Jadeed (Tulkarem)

Total Value of Subgrant: \$12,000.00

Support for: Ongoing production of *Tulkarem Today*, with the provision of a much needed Online Editing System.

Program Description: The daily 60-minute program, broadcast at 7:30 pm, covers political, cultural, sports, economic, and social stories from the governorate and throughout the West Bank. The program was the most successful in the first round of subgrants in terms of significantly increasing public awareness of the station throughout the governorate of Tulkarem and helping to generate revenue through local sponsorship and advertising. However, in order to fully realize the potential of *Tulkarem Today*, the station has requested some additional support to be allocated towards covering essential personnel costs, while the station will cover considerable overhead costs related to transportation, tapes, DVDs, and communication. Thus, the sub award will alleviate some of the financial burden for the station, and permit it to expand its ability to send additional teams throughout the governorate and allocate greater amounts of time and resources to researching and following up on stories.

2) Station: Alwan Radio (Gaza)

Total Value of Subgrant: \$9,000.00

Support For: Two new and innovative productions.

Program Description:

Program 1: *Weekly Health Update:* The foundation for this weekly program is to raise awareness of common health issues affecting the community. Such a program is crucial in disseminating basic medical information in an environment where it is often difficult for people to locate proper care. A doctor will host the program and present an overview on such medical topics as the importance of consuming clean water regularly, providing healthy meals with limited resources, coping with a stressful environment, and treating everyday ailments like colds and allergies. The next segment will feature screened call-in questions from the public. The duration of the program will be approximately thirty to forty five minutes.

Program 2: *Informational Spots:* The premise of Alwan's informational spots production is to broadcast short announcements which aim to raise people's awareness of a broad range of basic social norms and behavior, such as encouraging people to dispose of their garbage in the proper manner, reminding people to drive safely, and promoting the consumption of healthier foods. Both Aswatona and Alwan radio are confident that such announcements can be broadcast in a manner that is apolitical and serves a great social need, especially with such a lack of educational programming in the Gaza Strip. Because the spots will be pre-recorded, review of the spots can be done before production. The spots will be produced daily and broadcast several times throughout the day.

Second Round Equipment and Geographic Waiver Requirements

The second round of subgrants will see a much smaller amount of technical equipment procured for the stations. Fortunately, due to the remaining dollar amount of the waiver approved on January 16, 2007, which permits the purchasing of equipment from geographic codes 935 and 294 for the total amount of \$103,200, an additional waiver will not be required. With the completion of the first round of subgrants the project purchased less than \$58,000 of the outlined equipment, primarily due to availability issues. The total value remaining, then, is equal to the sum of \$45,200. The waiver-required equipment to be purchased in the second round of

subgrants, including three digital mixers, six outside recorders, and one DV cameras, will not exceed the amount of \$11,760.

Objective Two: Increased and improved coverage of local news, including local manifestations of broad themes such as rule of law, good governance, and corruption

2.2b – Development of business/management structure and marketing

During the first year of the Aswatona Project, two business planning workshops were held, one for TV and one for radio, for owners, managers, and directors, and one workshop for both TV and radio sales and marketing. Among the recommendations and additional workshops that the trainees asked for was to have a specific media management and organizational structure development, including conducting meetings, the development of job descriptions for staff, and the financial and marketing planning.

Based on the relations developed with partners in the media outlets, the assessment visits, and process of evaluations of the stations in different areas including the managerial and administration capabilities of the managers as well as the overall organizational structures and the day to day schedule of programs, production, and broadcasting, the team agreed that it was a major need for the station administrators and managers to be trained in media management. The workshop was geared toward developing their skills in order to better organize their work, their stations in a more effective manner and to the best utilizing of the staff and the resources they have available to them.



*Media Management and Structure
Workshop
July 20-22, 2008*



Internews Network, Aswatona Project, conducted the third in a series of media management workshops, July 20-22, 2008. This workshop, for twenty station owners and managers, built on the previous workshops in Business Plan Development and Sales and Marketing done last year.

The design of the Media Management workshop came as a result of continued discussion with stations owners and managers regarding their needs. Many had requested information and training in media management and organizational structure, including the development of job descriptions, conducting internal meetings, lines of authority and communication, and the financial and marketing aspects of management. The staff shared information about the stations, their structures and staff, and the obstacles and challenges they face with the trainers in creating an agenda that would meet the stations' needs and participant expectations. As with all Aswatona trainings, the methodology and agenda included practical examples and case studies for group work and discussion.

The workshop was held at the Best Eastern Hotel in Ramallah. The main topic was the managerial structure of stations and the up-to-date theories and experiences in management and administration. During the three days, four major fields were examined and discussed:



- 1) Media management practices and behaviors,
- 2) Media outlet organizational structure development and implementation,
- 3) Writing and development of job descriptions and implementation,
- 4) Roles, responsibilities, and lines of communication and authority

During the opening session, the trainer began a discussion with the trainees to clarify their expectations of the training course. This helped the trainer to design the timing and length of each topic according to the expectations of the participants.

Dr. Hanna then gave the participants a brief overview of the importance of a stations, vision, mission, and objectives. Handing out the first of three questionnaires on creating a vision statement, the participants answered the following:

- 1) What do we want to be?
- 2) What should we provide?
- 3) For whom?
- 4) In which field?

For the mission statements, they were asked: 1) what do you do; 2) For whom do you do it; and 3) how do you do it?

After they had all been completed, he explained that from these answers to these specific questions, they now had their station's vision and mission. He did the same with for the stations' objectives with seven questions. From the objectives, they



broke into smaller groups and discussed the means by which they could achieve those objectives; they applied the SWOT analysis to assist them in outlining a potential plan. They then discussed the result and combined them into a final analysis and discussed how this is used to plan for implementation. By the first two sessions, they had the

basics for their stations and were able to then use this to discuss other management issues, such as marketing the station, staffing, job descriptions, lines of communication, and decision-making processes.



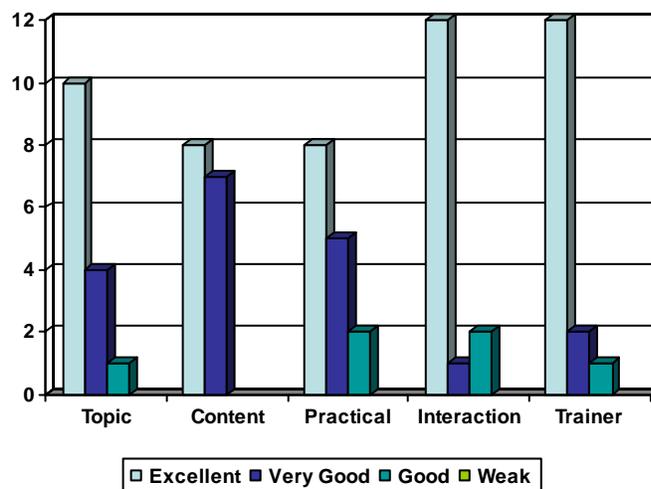
The trainer worked with them on organizing the administrative structure of the station, the efficient ways to divide labor, and to develop job descriptions. He also worked with them on how to improve relations between management and staff, how to increase productivity and to conduct staff meetings that included such practical examples of the importance of with keeping minutes that decisions made and tasks assigned.

They spent a good deal of time on the functions of the manager, director, and/owner in relation to the vision, mission, and objectives, as well as the interaction between management and staff. They outlined and examined how different organizational structures and decisions affected the station performance, staff retention, and financial aspects of the station.

All the sessions were based on practical examples and each of the theories was applied to one of the stations as an example. The experiences of the managers and the problematic issues they face in different fields were discussed, examined, and used. During the free time of the participants held different meetings to discuss the cooperation between different networks and individual stations in bilateral relations.

The participants were satisfied and active during the entire workshop and even began laying out the plans for how they would implement the knowledge they gained during the course.

Overall, the participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the training, trainer, and materials. They expressed the value of learning about managerial and behavioral concepts in a way that was easily understood through practical exercises and examples.



During the closing of the workshop, after final questions were addressed and thoughts expressed, certificates were presented to those who attended the whole course along with acknowledgement and thanks to the trainer and for the success of the workshop. As several participants said, “The trainer had a distinctive style and came with broad experience.” Another said that even though it was only three days, the training was “very useful and efficient and no time was wasted, it was worth it to leave all the work to attend.”

2.3 - Support of Development of Professional Broadcast Association



After lengthy discussions with the Ministries of Information and Telecommunication, it seemed as if a meeting between them and the broadcast stations would be possible the second week of August. However, as the date approached the Ministries explained that they were trying to have an agreed approach to the licensing and fee issue before meeting with the stations and asked for a delay. In response, the Coalition, which was going to use this meeting as a springboard, decided to also postpone.

At the end of August, the Ministries also explained that they were waiting for the new draft media law so that it could be part of the discussion so suggested postponing until October. Although there seems to be some confusion over exactly which law, Print and Publications, Audio-Visual, or a combination of the two, which the BirZeit Law Faculty is working on, there was no moving them to reconsider. The Aswatona team is trying to determine the exact nature of the law being drafted and will try again in October to schedule this important meeting.

Activities Planned for Next Quarter

Activities Planned for Next Quarter	Timeline
1.1a open workshops - media and community - on issues of democracy, governance, and the role of media	December
1.1b reporting on specific issues/topics	November
1.1cii television - interviewing, story creation (r&d), production technique and formats	October
2.1a in-house training for radio in West Bank and Gaza on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories	November
2.1b in-house training for TV in the West Bank on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories	December
2.1c Joint workshop on Conflict Reporting	October
2.2a Financial sustainability of the stations	November
2.3a Focus groups with media owners/managers on the Media Environment to explore issues of law, ethics, standards, professionalism, and interactions with each other and with government	November/December
2.3b Focus groups for licensing and other regulatory issues	October

III. Success Stories and Recommendations

The following story is but one example of the impact the stations' programs are having now that they are back out in the community:

Sada Filistene News Story Saves Village School

Fakhri Abu AlRob, a reporter for Jenin Merkezi TV in the northern part of the West Bank, heard of an evacuation order issued by the Israeli Army to destroy several homes and structures in the expansion of a military base in the area. The area under threat happened to have an elementary school serving four villages in the northern Jordan Valley, so he went to check it out.

In his report from Jenin for *Sada Filistene*, a weekly program funded by Internews Network Aswatona that airs throughout the West Bank, he focused on the school of Aqaba and the threats of the Israeli army to destroy the school as part of their policy of confiscating lands from the village for the expansion of the Israeli army training camps in the area.



The school is the only one in the area and serves villages surrounding Aqaba, like Tayaseer in the Jordan Valley 5 km from Aqaba. Eighty elementary level students and eighty kindergarten children use this school and half walk the 5km each way to attend school. They all would have been left without a school and would have had to be bused every day to Tubas 28km away with the challenges of checkpoints and closures.

The story was broadcast that next Friday on the Sada Network of six TV stations throughout the West Bank and grabbed the attention of other Palestinian media outlets, regional stations, peace activists, and international organizations, which picked up the cause of saving the school.

All levels of the municipal, regional, and national authority, as well as international organizations worked against the decision of school destruction and after months of work and with the Israeli High Court's decision, the school was excluded from the destruction order of the Army. Unfortunately, many houses and buildings were not.



The village counsel president, Sami Sadeq (seen left) said, “We thank the TV and media that brought the attention of the world on our area suffering since many years, the solidarity campaigns managed at least to save the school for our kids and our neighbor villages.”

The Director of the Palestinian Ministry of Education in the district of Tubas said, “With the reports of media (television) on the school issue, we managed to gather international support and effort to keep the school and the right of education for 160 students in the area of Jordan Valley.”

Unfortunately, the school is once again under threat as the Israeli Defense Forces challenge the court ruling as reported again by local stations.

