

**Access to Microfinance & Improved Implementation of Policy Reform
(AMIR Program)**

Funded by U.S. Agency for International Development

**A Strategic Communications Plan
for the AMIR Program**

February 1999

“A quiet man can not be heard.”

-- Old Arab Proverb

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Executive Summary

This report presents a strategic communications plan for the AMIR Program. It examines the communications challenges and goals for each component and outlines an extensive schedule of activities that can be expanded as time and resources allow. The plan relies heavily on cooperation with business associations, microfinance institutions, and client government departments to disseminate information and co-sponsor activities and events. The report is the product of a six-week consultancy to examine the public awareness needs of the AMIR Program and to provide a long-term strategy for meeting those needs. The analysis and recommendations in this document are based upon an extensive review of AMIR documents and studies, private sector publications and media, and in-depth interviews with a wide range of people including AMIR staff, GOJ officials, business leaders, NGOs and the media (see Appendix B).

Communications Approach

AMIR's primary communications goals center around educating and influencing the attitudes of government officials and the business community, with less of an emphasis on informing the public. To avoid possible confusion about the goals of the plan, the term "communications campaign" will replace the term "public awareness" in referring to the activities herein and in implementation of the plan.

Information management is the most critical factor for the success of this campaign. All AMIR communications must reinforce general key messages, while avoiding debates on the technical details, which are too difficult for many audiences to grasp. AMIR must also control the accuracy of how others present information on its issues by providing talking points, discussion guides, briefing books and standard fact sheets to allies. These elements are reflected in the activities for each component, as appropriate.

Key Challenges

A successful communications campaign must take into account the realities of the environment in which the campaign will operate, including likely sources of opposition. An assessment of the Jordanian situation reveals the following general challenges that face each AMIR Program component:

Policy Reform Challenges

- Public skeptical of government's ability to negotiate trade agreements;
- Political will at highest levels is necessary to meet accession objectives;
- Absence of a "customer service" culture in customs and licensing departments; and,
- An uninformed business community that sees delays in reforms as a benefit.

Business Association Initiative Challenges

Weak internal/external communications due to low skills;
Government doesn't give weight to private sector concerns/input; and
A fractured private sector that lacks a unified voice.

Sustainable Microfinance Initiative Challenges

A strong welfare mentality that favors grants to the poor;
Concerns about interest rates; and
Low awareness of existing SMI success.

The media environment in Jordan presents its own unique challenges to dissemination of information through the press. The government owns the leading newspapers and all television and radio stations operating in Jordan. Programming decisions must be approved by the government, and information must not conflict with stated policies. Also, the quality of reporting reflects the predominant lack of journalistic training and limited comprehension of business, economics and trade issues. The AMIR Program will need to educate the media on the basic economic concepts behind its activities, and supply journalists with clear, complete information to ensure accurate reporting on AMIR activities and messages.

Communications Goals

After reviewing the AMIR Program's stated mission and program plans, and factoring in the challenges identified during the field research, several targeted communications goals emerge for each component. These goals serve as the qualitative basis for the selection of activities later in the plan. In general, the communications goals for each component are as follows:

Policy Reform Goals

Promote the benefits of WTO membership;
Motivate government to swiftly implement related reforms;
Encourage a pro-business attitude in the front-lines of government;
Enlist the support of the private sector and academia for reforms;
Show how businesses are adapting to reforms;
Link reforms to attracting foreign investment, highlighting the IPC's role; and
Clearly explain the impacts on the public, particularly of IPR reforms.

Sustainable Microfinance Initiative Goals

Educate government/businesses on the benefits of SMI;
Show how SMEs strengthen the economy through increased salaries and jobs; and
Promote the concept of entrepreneurship among the poor, especially women.

Business Associations Initiative Goals

Educate businesses on the impacts of reforms jointly with BAs;

Establish the credibility of BAs as contributors to policymaking and economic growth;
Unify the voice of business for greater impact;
Assist the BAs in conducting analyses of policy impacts to aid businesses and strengthen their input into the policy process; and
c Assist BAs in identifying the needs for adapting to reforms and delivering services to members.

Core Messages

A core message embodies the central information that one aims to communicate, and the residual impression one hopes to impart through every activity in a communications plan. Clarity and repetition of core messages is the key to a successful communications campaign. The following core messages are identified for the AMIR program components:

Policy Reform Message

"WTO membership will strengthen Jordan's future economic prosperity by increasing exports and foreign investment which will create jobs, requiring fair trade treatment for Jordan, and assuring Jordan a place in the global economy."

WTO membership is necessary for Jordan to create a pro-business environment that will create jobs and improve economic security for all Jordanians.

Increased international trade is the way by which Jordan will achieve significant economic growth.

WTO insures that Jordan will receive fair treatment from global trading partners regardless of size.

Jordan must either join the global trading economy or risk economic isolation.

Sustainable Microfinance Initiative Message

"Sustainable microfinance lending provides micro and small entrepreneurs with access to finances to fund the growth of small businesses. SMI is a commercial transaction with social benefits, not a social program per se."

Microfinance is proven to be a wealth builder among segments of society that would not normally have such opportunities to create wealth.

As individual wealth increases among borrowers, SMI reduces the pressure on governments to provide social safety nets, and lessens the drain on the economy.

Microfinance lending programs can contribute to the creation of jobs as financed businesses grow.

Business Association Initiative Message

"Government must take account of the impact of its policies on the private sector to ensure domestic economic growth...and business associations must unite and provide

reliable analyses to be an effective voice for private sector needs and concerns."

When government and the private sector work together to design economic policies, those policies are more likely to succeed in creating economic prosperity and growth for all citizens.

Business associations provide the private sector with a collective voice, which strengthens their message and improves the chances of impacting policy decisions.

Plan of Action

Each component will create its own informational materials including fact sheets, brochures, press kits, and in some cases newsletters and website pages. They will also conduct ongoing media outreach activities such as journalist briefings, regular press releases and news conferences, and news story placements.

Policy Reform Activities

The proposed activities for this component are designed to create an overall atmosphere of positive anticipation and support for WTO accession, backed up by a solid educational initiative on specific issues to targeted audiences. The Business Associations component will take the lead on many policy activities. In addition to basic communications activities such as opinion research and policy impact studies, the plan includes:

National Economic Summit and Economic Roundtable Series to facilitate dialogue between the public and private sectors on reform issues,
Private sector briefings to educate business leaders on the impacts of reforms,
“WTO Facts” public service announcements,
Issue ads in the print media,
Special newspaper insert on WTO membership,
Television program on reform issues, and
Activities focusing on IPR protection.

Sustainable Microfinance Initiative Activities

These activities take a two-pronged approach to promoting SMI: first, a National Conference with international microfinance experts clarifies best practices for SMI and tailors those practices for Jordan; second, field trips and other activities showcase the successes of borrowers in Jordan. In addition to basic activities such as a newsletter and website page, activities include:

SMI Resource Library,
National Summit on Sustainable Microfinance,
Public-Private Roundtable on SMI,
Field visits and study tours,
“Successful Entrepreneur” Campaign, and
Video on sustainable microfinance.

Business Association Initiative Activities

These activities are designed to educate the business associations on policy issues and improve their own communications skills, while they in turn educate target audiences on private sector concerns and participate in the policymaking process. There is significant crossover with the policy reform component in conducting several of these activities. Activities include:

BA/ Experts Directory,

Newsletter,

Policy Impact Studies and News Conference (with Policy Component),

Economic Roundtable Series,

Policy Briefing Series,

Influential Letters of Support,

Business Adjustment Survey, and

Association Partnership Program.

AMIR Program-wide Activities

The following activities support the AMIR Program in general:

AMIR Program Newsletter,

Website,

Website Unveiling/AMIR Open House, and

Journalist Open House.

I. Introduction

The USAID Access to Microfinance and Improved Implementation of Policy Reform (AMIR) Program was created as part of USAID and Jordan's joint efforts to increase economic opportunity for all Jordanians through private sector growth. The project's three main components focus on microfinance, economic policy reform, and institutional development of business associations. While each component encompasses its own set of activities and goals, the three are at the same time interrelated in that they can impact the success of each other, as will be discussed later in this plan.

All three AMIR components include a "public awareness" subcomponent in their original workplans, with the following stated goals:

Sustainable Microfinance Initiative: Implement a public awareness campaign with educational materials to promote the concept of sustainable microfinance lending for the poor, highlighting the benefits of microenterprises in generating jobs and increasing incomes, especially for women and rural poor.

Improved Implementation of Policy Reform: Improve public awareness and public-private dialogue on policy issues to:

Explain to government, parliament and the business sector the impact of policy changes on businesses,

Educate the public on the need for, and the long-term objectives of, reform, and

Channel public input into the policy reform process.

Business Association Initiative:

Create a public relations capability within the business associations through training, to meet organizational goals for attracting members and to increase the impact of association lobbying and advocacy efforts, and

Assist the associations in holding public-private forums to enable policy dialogue.

Several communications consultants examined the AMIR Program during 1998 in an effort to create a public awareness action plan to achieve the stated goals. The resulting reports described an extensive menu of potential activities and communications tools for the AMIR Program team to implement. However, no priority was assigned to these tactics to guide the team in making choices in using their time and resources most effectively.

This report is the product of a six-week consultancy in Amman, Jordan to examine the long-term communications needs of the AMIR Program and to provide recommendations on a macro level public relations strategy. The Scope of Work required this consultant to design a public awareness approach that effectively integrates the needs of the three components with the day to day operations of the components and the demands on project staff. The analysis

and recommendations in this document are based upon an extensive review of AMIR documents and studies, private sector publications and media, and in-depth interviews with a wide range of people including GOJ officials, business leaders, NGOs and the media (see Appendix B).

This communications plan outlines a strategic approach to accomplishing the public awareness tasks, taking the project a step further beyond tactics. It examines the ultimate goals of the communication activities, the likely supporters and opponents of those goals, and the challenges the project is likely to face both in getting its message across and in motivating target audiences to take desired actions. The final strategy includes a discussion of messages and message carriers most likely to influence target policymakers, and a plan of activities that sets priorities and provides options for expansion of the program as time and resources allow.

A. Communications Program Management and Implementation

This plan of activities is extensive and will require additional staffing within the AMIR Program. The current Public Awareness and Training Manager, Ms. Sameera Qadoura, will be responsible for the overall management of the communications plan. She has a solid understanding of the AMIR Program, strong contacts within the government, media and NGO communities, and excellent communications skills. Two new hires will provide staff-level assistance to the Manager. A Training Assistant will help to organize training programs and seminars. A combination Public Relations Writer/Translator will have primary responsibility for drafting communications documents in both English and Arabic, including press releases, fact sheets, talking points, briefing books, and others documents to support the activities. The component leaders will provide the technical information for these documents, and will review drafts for accuracy prior to printing.

Beyond the AMIR staff, the services of outside consultants will be required. Many of the ongoing activities, such as the production of newsletters and television/radio ads, can be provided through a Jordanian communications firm under a partnership relationship. By dealing with one primary firm, AMIR benefits from the availability of experts in several areas – writers, producers, event organizers – as needed without having to hire individual contractors for each activity. After interviewing the two most prominent firms in Amman, the firm Arab Multi Media directed by Ma'az Shukayr seems to be the best candidate. Mr. Shukayr is a former journalist with extensive government and media contacts and a strong client base including international PVOs. In addition, Joyce Holmes, an Aman-based US writing consultant, is available to provide training to the AMIR staff and to assist in document production and review as necessary to ensure professional standards. A short-term contract with one or more communications writers will be used to create the core informational materials such as fact sheets and brochures. Ongoing strategic guidance and practical assistance on the planning and implementation of activities will be provided by a US-based communications consultant, through periodic missions to Amman and via email and telephone.

B. Activities Outside The Scope of This Consultancy

While this communications plan encompasses the key goals of all three AMIR components, it does not include certain specific activities, such as training materials for microfinance lenders and IPC promotional materials, which are operational tasks of the component programs. Specifically excluded from the scope of this consultancy are:

Policy Reform

Technical training for government, legal, and parliamentary bodies on WTO
Internal strategic communications plans for MIT and its directorates (WTO, IPR, Customs, IPC) to gain government cooperation and public support
Promotional materials for attracting foreign investment

Microfinance

Marketing materials/strategy for SMI lending programs
Training materials for lenders
Promotional strategies to attract customers

Business Associations

Training materials on advocacy and PR techniques
Internal strategic communications plans for business associations

This plan relies heavily on cooperation with business associations, microfinance institutions, and client agencies in government (MIT/WTO, IPC, IPR, Customs, MOP) to disseminate information and co-sponsor activities and events. However, these actions are driven by AMIR, not by the organizations themselves. Nevertheless, the internal communications plans for these organizations are important to AMIR's overall objectives and should be considered for separate technical assistance. Suggested scopes of work for such assistance are provided in Appendix A.

II. Approach

A. Renew Royal Mandate for WTO

Jordan is a country where policy and management decisions come from the top down. In this patriarchal society, the King sets the priorities for the nation. Government officials and average citizens alike take their cue from the King on how to react to new initiatives and change. Given this, USAID/AMIR must make a strategic decision regarding how to enlist the new King as the leading force behind WTO accession and the related policy reforms. The death of King Hussein has created a unique situation for Jordan. The entire world is watching His Majesty King Abdullah – as are all Jordanians – to see how the new King will position Jordan for the future, and whether he has a plan for improving the economic situation. An effort should be made to contact the new King – perhaps through the US Ambassador and/or the Georgetown University president – to encourage him to seize this opportunity to establish his economic leadership by making WTO accession a priority in the economic policies of his new reign. His support for sustainable microfinance programs and a strong, unified private sector is also key to Jordan's future.

A royal mandate to join WTO in 1999 would create an opportunity to offer close coordination and USAID/AMIR assistance to the Royal Court in explaining and promoting the economic benefits of WTO membership. In this case, the activities in this plan could be expanded into a much flashier national campaign with major events, intensive television and media coverage, and direct AMIR support to the GOJ media apparatus. Most importantly, the King would become a leading spokesperson in support of policy reforms and AMIR Program communications activities.

B. Communications vs. Public Awareness

Public awareness can be a misleading term. It gives the impression that the AMIR Program simply aims to educate broad public audiences. This is not the case. Rarely does one spend money and effort simply to educate. There is always an ultimate goal of that education. Any communications program must ask what it is trying to accomplish – why do you want the audiences to be informed? What do you want these groups to do with this information? How do you want them to react?

1. A Targeted Communications Campaign

Most of the communications activities in the AMIR Program are aimed at influencing government decision-makers to support pro-economic growth policies and implement corresponding legislation and regulations. This is true for all three AMIR Program components. Beyond the decision-makers, AMIR wants to influence the mid-level managers to carry out the new policies and apply them fairly and effectively. Neither target audience will be swayed by

newspaper stories and technical briefings. This will require targeted communications with tailored messages, delivered repeatedly by spokespeople who can influence the decision-makers. In other words, AMIR requires a lobbying campaign as much a public awareness campaign.

A secondary goal of the AMIR Program is to help the business community understand the impact of reforms and assist them in adjusting to the new environment. At the same time, AMIR aims to assist the establishment and growth of the poorest businesses through microcredit lending. Again, this will require targeted communications, not public awareness.

This does not mean that AMIR should not include activities aimed at informing the public and gaining their support for AMIR goals. But one should not lose sight of the fact that AMIR's primary goals target government and businesses, not the public. Given this, it is strongly recommended that the AMIR/USAID team abandon the term "public awareness" and adopt the term "communications campaign" in referring to the activities and goals herein. This may seem to be a minor detail, but it will go a long way in preventing misconceptions of where AMIR should focus its energy, and keep everyone on the right path.

2. Managing Information for Effect

There is no magic to a communications campaign. No "silver bullet" phrase or action which, when applied, will automatically achieve the desired outcome. Rather, the key is in managing the content and flow of information so that basic perceptions are created as core messages are repeated over and over. AMIR must create a constant drumbeat of key points that reverberates through a core group of spokespeople, and is eventually picked up by the media and the larger community.

Information management is the most critical factor for success and the core purpose for having a communications strategy. As the central source of information, AMIR will frame the way that information is presented to highlight key messages. AMIR will also control how others present information by providing talking points, discussion guides, briefing books and standard fact sheets that all reflect its core arguments and responses to likely opposition. For example, all speakers at public-private fora will be provided with "briefing books" and talking points that offer suggested answers for expected questions. Briefing books can be prepared for government officials and others allied with AMIR and identified as spokespeople on selected issues. Preparation is the key to control, as most speakers will be grateful for guidance on what to say and are likely to use talking points verbatim.

While some audiences will require more detailed information, it is important that the AMIR Program not get bogged down trying to explain and debate the finer points of these policies and programs. In that case, AMIR is often likely to lose the debate. Rather, by sticking to a core set of messages and key points, and always linking actions back to those messages, AMIR is

most likely to make an impact.

In all communications activities, AMIR must ensure that actions and messages in this plan do not interfere with the programmatic goals of the AMIR Program. This is particularly important in the policy reforms area, where AMIR leaders require a high level of trust and propriety with GOJ officials to accomplish reforms within the tight time schedule. Management of information, careful choice of spokespeople, and close coordination and review by the AMIR policy component leader will be critical.

3. Regular Communications Meetings

A communications director cannot carry out a successful government communications campaign without the participation and input of the AMIR component leaders. The communications activities and information must be relevant to the evolving policy process – thus priorities may change, and messages may have to be altered. As the AMIR management team responds to challenges on the policy and implementation front, they must include the communications director in their meetings to discuss the impact developments should have on the communications activities.

C. Key Challenges

A successful communications campaign must take into account the realities of the environment in which the campaign will operate, including likely sources of opposition. The AMIR Program faces some true challenges, which must be reflected in the program's communication strategy. The loss of King Hussein and the start of the young King Abdullah's reign compound a general sense of uncertainty for the future. The Jordanian public understands that economic reforms are ongoing, and that international aid organizations are working with the Jordanian government to influence the domestic policy process. Yet this process is often viewed more as a negative than a positive influence for Jordan's future. There is a fear of being manipulated by the world powers – a view reinforced by hardline Arab fundamentalists both in Jordan and in neighboring countries. Past experiences with international agreements have not yielded the promised improvements in everyday lives. Jordanians see their domestic businesses threatened by imports and foreign investment.

Within this environment, there is a lack of reliable information on the reform process and its expected impacts. Government news sources are circumspect, while opposition sources spread misinformation and promote worst case scenarios. Government and business leaders cannot help but be influenced by public fears and perceptions.

An assessment of the Jordanian environment reveals the following general challenges that face each AMIR Program component:

1. Policy Reform

Public mistrust of government from past economic reform experience.

The “peace process” has not brought the promised economic benefits. Consequently, the government has little credibility with the public on economic issues. The public is tired of false promises. These experiences will limit the effectiveness of government messengers, leaving non-government and private sector leaders as the most credible spokespeople for reforms.

Reaffirmation of political will at the highest levels of government is necessary to meet the WTO timeframe.

While the government is committed to joining the WTO, the speed of moving towards that goal needs to be faster. Ministerial officials fear that the Cabinet of Ministers and Parliament may not move quickly enough. AMIR needs to provide an information-based incentive to encourage them to move forward, explaining the consequences of joining WTO – but clearly showing the disadvantages of delay.

Parliament has competing priorities for time.

Parliament will play a key role in passing legislation, but many misperceptions of WTO exist. While there is currently no formal position of Parliament vis-à-vis WTO accession, some members of government believe that Parliament will have competing priorities for time. AMIR must create an environment that compels Parliament to embrace WTO accession and act swiftly. However, many of the related laws have recently been changed and now Parliament will be asked to revisit them and repeat this difficult legislative process – so resistance is likely.

Absence of a “customer service” culture in government departments.

The present customs and licensing culture hinders, rather than promotes, business growth. In some cases, this negatively impacts both domestic businesses and the IPC’s ability to service potential foreign investors. Agency officials on the front lines must be motivated to see their role as enabling businesses, not restricting them, and as facilitating the IPC’s activity.

The business community feels left in the dark.

Many business leaders do not understand the policy issues, nor have they had a chance to discuss or debate them with the government. While some business leaders are on board, those who are pro-WTO want a timeframe for changes so that they can plan to adapt. Through its Jordan-US Business Partnership project, USAID has provided a means of assuaging the pain of transition. While other, more specific means may be necessary, this good start needs to be put squarely into the AMIR messages.

Businesses benefit from delay in implementation.

Under the EU negotiations, significant grace periods allow businesses to adapt gradually to changes. WTO accession brings immediate implementation with no transition period. Thus businesses have a strong incentive to push for delay in joining. Again, the support for

adjustment could be used for affect.

Low comprehension in general of WTO process and impact.

In general, there is a lack of understanding of the WTO process, what it requires, and how it will impact Jordan. There is a misunderstanding that all tariffs will be eliminated leaving Jordan's businesses bare to compete with imports. Many people see this as new colonialism. AMIR must be transparent, honestly addressing the positive and negative impacts of WTO.

Negative public opinion of previous trade agreements.

The public has a generally negative opinion of the still unratified EU agreements and the QIZ zone in terms of perceived benefits. This is likely to impact their acceptance of WTO membership and the necessary reforms.

Lack of facts leaves AMIR on the defensive.

AMIR must define the issues first, not just respond to information requests or problems. Yet there is little hard data on the likely impacts of reforms in Jordan. Opponents can put forward misinformation with the worst case scenario, and right now the AMIR Program would be left in a defensive position. AMIR needs to identify the potential communications problems and preempt them by getting information out first. A series of strategic analysis studies is necessary to provide the hard data on tough issues.

Some policy changes will negatively impact public directly.

IPR is a critical issue that will impact consumers directly in the form of price increases and availability of goods. This is one of the most visible reforms and will require extensive public education to preempt a major outcry.

US Government must remain in background, except in some cases.

As noted above, fear of superpower manipulation means that USAID/AMIR must not be seen as pushing laws or advising on negotiating strategy. Thus, AMIR will need others to carry its messages, while maintaining control of message content. Yet in some cases, only the US Government can make assertions of policy benefits or urge certain actions – AMIR must remain neutral to preserve its relationships with Government and be effective in its programs.

2. Business Associations

Weak internal/external communications due to low skills.

Business associations currently have little communication with their members on policy issues. Interaction with Government has been generally unsuccessful in the few instances BAs have tried to communicate externally. In fact, members surveyed want more information and advocacy from BAs. AMIR should move quickly to provide PR and advocacy training, tied in to its own communications goals.

Government generally ignores business community.

AMIR's goal is to build the capacity for the business community to participate in the public policy process. Currently the government does not see the private sector as relevant to decision making and therefore doesn't give weight to private sector concerns or input. If AMIR wants BAs to play this role, it needs to establish the credibility and professionalism of the BAs – the more professional and visible they are, the harder it will be for the government to ignore their input.

Private sector fractured, no united front.

The lack of coordination and unity within the private sector further contributes to the government's ability to ignore it, claiming that there is no consensus view or single voice of business. AMIR's efforts at coalition building here can lessen this weakness, and set the stage for some unified messages.

3. *Microfinance*

Low awareness of sustainable microfinance.

Many government decision-makers don't understand the concept of sustainable microfinance. Also, surveys show that awareness and understanding of SMI is particularly low in both the media and academic communities.

Strong welfare mentality in Jordan favors grants.

There is a previous perception of SMI as a social sector program to alleviate poverty. This raises concerns of why AMIR will now charge interest rates of the poor, rather than giving them assistance. AMIR must give SMI an unemployment spin, positioned as a commercial banking program to provide financing to poor business people unable to secure financing through normal banking channels. This is not a social program with social beneficiaries, rather a banking program with social benefits – borrowers must be seen as banking clients.

Some local leaders challenge high interest rates.

Other SMI programs have encountered resistance by local leaders to interest rates higher than usual bank rates. Only after intense meetings to discuss cultural and religious concerns did these leaders accept these charges as administrative fees that reflect the business costs involved. Yet these programs have now made over 27,000 successful microfinance loans, so clearly interest rates are not an issue to borrowers. AMIR must engage local leaders in the delivery of information to communities, and let them take credit for bringing SMI to their people to get their buy-in and approval.

Scant coverage of previous microfinance success.

The media has not covered the positive impact microfinance has had on communities through currently operating programs such as CHF and JWDS/SAVE. Without any previous operations of our own to promote, AMIR must work closely with these programs to highlight

their success stories, and gain cooperation on a unified set of messages for all programs to advance.

D. Media Environment in Jordan

Jordanians have relatively limited choices for getting daily news. There are just five Arabic language daily newspapers (including Al-Aswaq with a business/economic focus), and one English language daily. Of the several Arabic weeklies, few offer mainstream news. Complicating matters, the primary media outlets are predominantly government owned, including the major newspapers, television and radio. As a result, state-run news outlets currently play the largest role in educating the public on economic reforms and governmental policy decisions. This has an impact on the content and presentation of information, as it must not conflict with government policies. Government officials must approve programming decisions. Also, as the audience for Jordan Radio and TV Corporation programs is the greater Arab world, not just Jordan, programming decisions also take into account the censors of neighboring countries.

Newspapers and television are primary news delivery vehicles for greater Amman and the major cities. Ninety percent of the population is estimated to own a television. The rural regions also get their news from radio broadcasts. Call-in programs on radio and TV are popular. There are some special programs on television for women, farmers, and other population segments that can be effective for targeting these groups. Other targeted audiences can be reached through periodicals published in Jordan, including professional and economic magazines, as well as a new woman's magazine that mixes serious policy topics with fashion and culture.

While the quality of news reporting is higher than in many developing countries, there is still a general problem with the media's inability to comprehend – and therefore report accurately on – economic issues. Reporters often don't understand the topic they are reporting on. In one AMIR-sponsored survey, none of the media surveyed understood the concept of SMI. News stories are either incomplete and contain inaccuracies, or simply reflect the opinions of the person or organization that is the source of the story. While this can work in AMIR's favor, as in the cases where AMIR press releases are printed verbatim, it also opens the door to misinformation. As a result, even citizens who pay attention to the news do not fully understand the economic reform process. Clearly, AMIR must invest significant resources in educating the media if it is going to ensure that its activities and messages are reported accurately.

In this news environment, there is even more pressure on AMIR and its government partners to supply information with a clear central message supported by solid facts. If one remembers that a reporter's goal is to find the biggest, most dramatic news, it becomes clear that dry announcements of "information" will not likely be passed on to the public. The need for

supporting facts, analysis, and context become critical to improving the chances that AMIR's central messages will be included in the reporting. This involves the use of informative spokespeople, impact studies, and real examples of people (in the case of microfinance) or other countries (in the case of policy reform) to create news rather than disseminate facts. These concepts are further discussed in the strategy section, and are reflected in the action plan section of this report.

III. Communications Goals & Objectives

After reviewing AMIR's mission and written plans and materials, and examining the vision of both USAID and the organization's leadership, four primary over-arching communications goals emerge for the AMIR Program:

Demonstrate a joint Jordan-USAID commitment to strengthening Jordan's economy and improving the standard of living of all Jordanians;

Underscore the role of WTO membership and related reforms in creating an environment that is conducive and necessary for economic growth;

Highlight the importance of private sector involvement in this transition; and

Demonstrate assistance to all levels of economic activity: microenterprise credit, foreign investment promotion, business associations support, and policy reform.

Within the context of these primary goals and the challenges identified for the program, more targeted goals and objectives can be identified for the individual AMIR Program components. Each of the goals is reflected in the strategy and activities outlined later in this plan. The component goals are as follows:

A. Policy Reform

Convince Jordanians that WTO membership is vital to Jordan's future. WTO's positive impact on job creation should be highlighted here. This should be reinforced by explaining the negative consequences of not joining now, and the increasingly difficult barriers to entry later.

Promote the benefits of WTO membership to all levels of the public. The main emphasis of communications should be on government, Parliament and business leaders; however, the public requires a basic understanding to gain their general support for economic and administrative reforms.

Motivate government officials/Parliament to swiftly implement WTO-related policies. While Jordan's leaders have chosen to accede to the WTO, officials throughout the government must be encouraged to take actions to meet the timeframe for implementation. Special emphasis should be focused on the Legal Committee in Parliament.

Instill in customs and other government agency bureaucrats a commitment to implement policies in ways to assist business/economic growth, not hinder it. This message must come primarily from top government officials down to have any impact.

AMIR can reinforce the message through public/media discussion.

Engage the support of business and academic communities for reforms through outreach and education. Their buy-in and vocal support can help to motivate government and ensure proper decision-making. Also, transparency on the impact of changes is vital to businesses in preparing for WTO. Business associations play a leading role here.

Spotlight domestic businesses that are making changes to improve their competitiveness and benefit from reforms. Highlighting such activity counters fears of lost jobs and an import-based economy, and sets an example for all businesses. Business associations can play a key role in facilitating assistance in this area.

Show how reforms will assist the IPC in attracting foreign investors, thereby creating jobs and strengthening the economy. A key element of this message is that Jordan's small size and ability to implement reforms swiftly are important competitive advantages. A subgoal here is to strengthen the IPC's legitimacy in commanding government resources and agency cooperation.

Clearly explain the full impact of policy changes to the public, emphasizing the long-term benefits. The public must be prepared for the impact of new policies on their own lives, including short-term negatives, but highlighting long-term economic growth, employment and a gradual improvement in their standard of living.

B. Sustainable Microfinance Initiative

Educate government and business leaders on the benefits of providing sustainable access to microcredit to enlist their support. Government must be convinced that SMI is truly beneficial to the poor, not harmful, so that it will maintain a supportive regulatory environment for microfinance.

Show examples of how SMEs strengthen the economy through jobs, increased salaries, and expendable income. The focus here must be on business development, not social welfare handouts, and the value of creating a business class amongst the poorer segments of society.

Promote the concept of entrepreneurship through borrowing among poor and disadvantaged Jordanians, especially women and rural poor. Poorer people should realize that they can grow their own businesses, and that money is available for businesses with solid plans. Case examples teach public how to do it themselves. We must be careful not to put so much emphasis on women, however, that men do not participate as a result.

C. Business Associations Initiative

Establish the credibility of business associations as vital participants in the policymaking process.

Government must see the business community as a viable contributor to the process, worthy of consultation and, more importantly, incorporating their advice into decision-making.

Promote the potential role of business associations in facilitating and achieving a

stronger economy through assistance to the private sector. The status of the business community must be elevated in the public and government's eyes, to be viewed as having a role in enabling Jordan's economic development, together with government. This can be accomplished by assisting the BAs in providing useful services to members.

Identify and conduct key policy analysis with associations, and use it to establish their

credibility with policymakers. Statistical analysis of issues will strengthen the advocacy capability of associations on controversial reforms. Policy analysis will be undertaken in cooperation with the policy reform component.

Unify the voice of business so that Associations become the logical place for

policymakers and others to go for information. Strong associations that conduct regular analysis of policy impacts on the private sector make it easier for government to ask the private sector for policy input. They also become a reliable source for media to request information and gauge reactions to policy issues.

Explain the impacts of reforms to the private sector through joint efforts with business

associations. Tapping into internal publications and newsletters, and sponsoring joint events such as policy forums provides a direct link to businesses for AMIR's information.

Assist business associations in identifying needs and delivering assistance to

businesses to adjust to reforms. By working with businesses to create solutions to reform challenges, AMIR can deflect criticism that reforms will solely benefit international competitors, and cultivate greater support from the private sector for reforms. This information can be channeled to the Jordan-US Business Partnership Program and others providing technical adjustment assistance.

IV. Communications Strategy

A. Principles of Information Management

Throughout this plan, all activities ultimately connect back to the following basic goals for managing AMIR's communications:

Take a **proactive approach** to addressing issues, with component directors thinking ahead to anticipate problems and identify opportunities.

Package dry information by **"making news"** with events, studies, awards, etc.

Wrap all information within the contextual framework of a set of **core messages**.

Coordinate all government departments and partner organizations possible to create **one consistent voice** on reforms and programs.

Always take steps to **manage information from others** by providing talking points, briefing books, and other coordination aids.

Repeat core messages and information over and over – one seminar or news article is never enough.

Strengthen communications with supporting **economic background** information and **relevant studies** to counter a lack of technical understanding.

B. Identifying and Training Messengers

The AMIR Program must rely almost entirely on government officials and people outside of AMIR itself to carry its messages to target audiences and the public. Thus it is vital that AMIR take the appropriate steps to control the content and core messages of information provided by these messengers.

As a first step, AMIR must identify those people who are supporters, as well as potential supporters, of the main messages and goals inherent in the AMIR Program component activities. AMIR component leaders should each create a list of supporters and potential supporters within the public and private sector whom AMIR can cultivate as spokespeople on the main issues and activities in each component. Of potential spokespeople, AMIR must determine whom it can convert and what it will take to bring them on board. Once these people are identified, each component will then provide communications training on its core issues and messages, to ensure that information is coordinated and all messengers speak with one voice. This training will be reinforced through the creation of discussion aids – including talking points and briefing books – for spokespeople and participants in AMIR activities.

C. Core Messages

The core message is the central piece of information that one aims to communicate to target

audiences through every activity in a communications plan. It is the overriding impression a participant or reader should be left with, and must not be lost in other information or overshadowed by any aspect of an event. Clarity and repetition of the core message is the key to a successful communications campaign. The core messages for each AMIR component are outlined in this section.

1. Policy Reform

It is unrealistic to think that AMIR can succeed in explaining all of the details of WTO accession to the public, business and government communities. The AMIR Project cannot achieve its communications goals if it becomes mired in the details. Instead, AMIR needs to take the high road and position WTO as an important move for the country within the context of economic prosperity and Jordan's own future.

Core Message for Policy Component:

WTO membership is critical to the two most important factors for Jordan's economic growth – increased exports and foreign investment.

WTO membership will strengthen Jordan's future economic prosperity by: Increased international trade (imports and exports) is the

primary way Jordan will achieve significant economic growth and improved prosperity – leading to the creation of jobs and Jordan must move beyond its regional trading partners to achieve true growth in these areas, and WTO membership is necessary to do that.

WTO membership is necessary for Jordan to create a pro-business environment that will create jobs and improve economic security for all Jordanians.

Jordan cannot survive economically on its own, but has great potential for becoming a regional center for commerce. WTO membership and the policy reforms associated with it will remove the barriers to Jordan's ability to develop to its full potential.

WTO insures that Jordan will receive fair treatment from global trading partners, regardless of size.

WTO gives Jordan equal status with large countries to enforce the fair application of trade laws. This guarantees that Jordan will enjoy nondiscriminatory access to foreign export markets, and is protected from predatory import practices.

Jordan must either join the global trading economy or risk economic isolation.

WTO must be portrayed as Jordan's opportunity to claim a place in the global economy, assuring that Jordan is not left behind as the rest of the world moves forward into the 21st century. The negative consequences of not joining WTO are too great.

2. Sustainable Microfinance Initiative

While seemingly benign on the surface, the promotion of sustainable microfinance lending to the poor faces risks from several directions. First, attempts to classify it as a social welfare program put SMI in the position of defending higher than normal interest rates. Second, too much emphasis on the benefits to women falsely labels it a “women’s program”, causing men to ignore – or worse, avoid – participation in the program.

The core messages for SMI must avoid falling into these traps, and position SMI as a “business lending program for the disadvantaged poor” right from the start. False perceptions adopted by target audiences in the beginning of the program will be extremely difficult to alter later on, and will impact the program’s chances for success.

Core Message for Microfinance:
Microfinance is proven to be a wealth builder among segments of society that would not normally have such opportunities to create wealth. By filling the gap in commercial lending and providing access to financing, SMI helps to create a business class within poorer segments of society. Sustainable microfinance lending provides micro and small entrepreneurs with access to finances to fund the growth of small businesses, and *As individual wealth increases among borrowers, SMI reduces the pressure on governments to provide social safety nets, and lessens the drain on the economy.* Not only do these citizens become financially self-sufficient, but their success in turn creates more resources for further investment into larger numbers of borrowers, at no cost to the government.

Microfinance lending programs can contribute to the creation of jobs as financed businesses grow. SMI can serve as a catalyst for microenterprises to grow into mainstream businesses, helping to fight unemployment at the lower economic levels of society.

3. Business Association Initiative

AMIR’s focus is on improving the credibility and importance of business associations in general as a valuable contributor to the policy process. As business associations strengthen and develop their own communications capabilities, they will deliver their own messages on specific policy changes.

When government and the private sector work together to design economic policies, those policies are more likely to succeed in creating economic prosperity and growth for all citizens.

The GOJ must create mechanisms to seek input from the private sector into the legislative process, and implement recommendations as appropriate, to ensure that economic policies and legislation will achieve the desired results.

Business associations provide the private sector with a collective voice, which strengthens their message and improves the chances of impacting policy decisions.

As associations improve their professionalism and conduct high-quality impact analyses, they will attract members and strengthen their role as the voices for business.

Core Message for Business Associations

Initiative:

Government must take account of the impact of its policies on the private sector to ensure domestic economic growth ...

...and business associations must unite and provide reliable analyses to be an effective voice for private sector needs and concerns.

V. Action Plan

This action plan presents an aggressive communications campaign in support of the goals identified earlier in this report. The scope of the plan is ambitious, and is intended to serve as a comprehensive list of options from which AMIR/USAID can select activities as time and resources allow.

The activity lists for each component are in general order of implementation, and are divided into four sections:

- Preparation of Core Materials
- Consensus Building Activities
- Ongoing Media Outreach
- Expanded Program Options

The Consensus Building Activities are the heart of the campaign for each component, supported by the core materials and the ongoing media outreach. The Expanded Program Options are activities that may be added to the core activities as time and resources dictate. This allows for a flexible approach to the campaign that is responsive to developments in the negotiation process and unexpected delays. Assignments of responsibility, potential cosponsors, and timeframe for completion are listed for each activity. A complete implementation schedule for all activities is provided on page XX.

A. Policy Reform Activities

The implementation of policy reforms within the GOJ in preparation for WTO accession is a slow and challenging process. A comprehensive lobbying-oriented communications campaign will play an important role in helping to motivate government officials to move more swiftly. A strategic communications push can create an atmosphere of public accountability that will put pressure on government officials to get the job done.

The proposed activities for the policy component are designed to create an overall atmosphere of positive anticipation and support for WTO accession, backed up by a solid educational initiative on specific issues to targeted audiences. Much like Americans eventually supported NAFTA without really understanding the details, this campaign aims to create a general pro-WTO environment by taking the high road and reinforcing basic, positive messages. Technical details are provided only to those who require them, and even then are wrapped in the general messages.

1. Preparation of Core Materials

Opinion Research.

Responsibility: CDG/Al-Jidara

Timeframe: March

Conduct research on attitudes toward WTO membership and policy reform issues among business leaders, government officials, and the public. At present, AMIR has no statistical data on attitudes to guide communications strategy and refine messages. Previous studies tested only awareness of policy changes. AMIR will conduct a survey to establish a baseline of understanding and support for WTO and reforms. Findings will serve as the basis for refining messages and setting priorities in communications activities and training. Depending on the level of support among participants, the survey results themselves will be promoted to the media and target audiences.

Core Informational Materials.

Responsibility: AMIR Writer/Communications Firm

Timeframe: March/April

Create basic informational materials on key topics, for dissemination as appropriate throughout the campaign. All materials will be well researched and professionally designed to have a coordinated, high-quality look, allowing them to be combined as needed into information kits. They include:

General Brochure – importance of WTO membership for Jordan

Fact sheets – single sheets, 2-sided

- WTO Benefits to Consumers
- WTO Accession Process and Requirements
- Intellectual Property Rights and Consumers
- Changes in Customs Procedures
- Role of WTO in Attracting Foreign Investment
- Enforcement and the Legal System

Newsletter – bimonthly on WTO process, jointly with MIT/WTO

Press Kit

- Press releases on key events/milestones
- Press clippings
- Speech transcripts
- Impact study executive summaries
- Fact sheets as relevant, newsletter, brochure

Policy Impact Studies.

Responsibility: Technical Consultant

Co-sponsor: Crosscutting with Business Associations Component

Timeframe: March-May

Conduct studies to assess impacts of policy reforms on selected industries and provide data on the expected benefits to Jordan of WTO membership. Studies will be released publicly with supporting press releases highlighting key findings, and will be included in information and press kits. Suggested topics include:

- Drug availability in Jordan for top diseases/ailments
- Case studies of WTO impact on other Arab nations/ members (Qatar, Egypt, Singapore)
- Top concerns as identified in opinion research

2. Consensus Building Activities

National Economic Summit.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat/Communications Firm

Co-sponsors: HRH Abdullah, MIT/WTO

Timeframe: May

Hold high-level conference to launch national dialogue on enhancing economic opportunities in Jordan through policy reform. Summit will be hosted by His Majesty Abdullah, if possible, to announce his decision to make WTO accession a priority. Participants include the economic sub-cabinet, Parliamentarians, business leaders and associations, lawyers and judges, academics, NGOs, US Ambassador and other top USG officials, other donors, and community-level leaders. Briefing books with talking points, key facts, and Q&As will be prepared by AMIR and provided in advance to all participants. Media will be invited to cover the summit, followed by a press briefing. Will explore live television coverage on JTV.

Economic Roundtable Series.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat/AMIR specialists/Communications Firm

Co-sponsors: MIT/WTO, Crosscutting Activity with Business Associations Component

Timeframe: Quarterly

This series of educational seminars will be a natural offshoot of the National Economic Summit, with a similar mix of participants. Each of the three workshops will be conducted as a roundtable discussion with a professional moderator – possibly a leading economic journalist such as Rami Khouri, with opening presentations by experts and MIT officials. Briefing books will be prepared by AMIR and provided in advance to key speakers. Discussion guides will be prepared with key fact sheets for all participants. Media will be invited to cover the series, and it may be videotaped for possible broadcast as a special television series in an edited version. The series can be reduced or expanded in number. Suggested roundtable topics:

Intellectual Property Rights – cosponsored with Jordan Society for Protection of Property Rights, Pharmaceutical Manufacturers association; either a general overview including several industries, or focusing on one, preferably pharmaceuticals

“Shared Experiences: A Discussion of WTO Impact with Officials of Member Countries” – case studies of pros/cons of WTO membership in other countries, with economic reps from embassies

“Foreign Investment, Joint Ventures, and WTO Reforms” – cosponsored with IPC; highlights Jordan’s increased attractiveness from reforms, partnering opportunities; bring US state official to discuss foreign investment as key to an economic turnaround

Private Sector Briefings.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/AMIR Specialists

Co-sponsors: Crosscutting Activity with Business Associations Component

Timeframe: as resources permit

Informative briefings on single reform topics to provide business owners with detailed, practical information on changes that will impact their businesses. Briefings are provided by GOJ officials and/or visiting international AMIR consultants on an availability basis. Closed to the press to allow for frank discussion, but press releases will provide highlights to media. Briefings can also serve as the basis for fact sheets, and op-eds drafted for submission by attending business leaders. Topics include customs reforms, antidumping and retaliation mechanisms, enforcement of trade laws, IPR, and IPC partnering services.

Communications Training.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/F. Farhat/Consultant

Timeframe: April

Provide officials and third party supporters (business leaders, academics, local leaders, etc.) with communications training to respond effectively to media inquiries, to prepare them for speaking opportunities, and to keep them on message during meetings. Communications training ensures that key

messages are being delivered accurately and effectively by all spokespeople with one unified voice. Throughout this campaign, many of our target audiences will ultimately become our partners in reform, so communications training should be scheduled at periodic intervals.

3. Ongoing Media Outreach

Regular Press Releases.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat/AMIR Writer

Co-Sponsors: MIT/WTO

Timeframe: As appropriate

Press releases on reform developments, studies, and AMIR milestone events as they occur. Many of these milestones are pre-scheduled, allowing for drafts to be written beforehand and finalized at the time of the event. In addition to the media, releases will be disseminated to a broad contact database that includes government officials, business leaders, academics, and other relevant contacts. Releases will also be used in press and information kits, and briefing books. A press release template with letterhead bearing the logos of both MIT and AMIR will be created on the computer, allowing for email distribution and faxing.

Regular News Conferences/Press Briefings.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat/AMIR Writer

Co-Sponsors: MIT/WTO

Timeframe: At least monthly, as appropriate

Topical press conferences and briefings by government officials and experts on current developments and progress in the WTO reform process. Conferences used for major announcements, briefings for general updates. Press release and relevant fact sheets will be distributed. Briefing books with statements and Q&As will be prepared beforehand for speakers. It is assumed that these will take place in a briefing room in the MIT.

Editorial Board Meetings.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat

Co-Sponsors: MIT/WTO

Timeframe: March

Meetings with the Editor-in-Chief and top economic/business reporters of selected newspapers and magazines to establish a direct, personal relationship and provide key arguments for WTO reforms. The goal is to interest the paper in covering the issues and secure editorial support for joining WTO. Meetings will be used to propose the creation of a WTO column or continuing informational series of news articles and/or feature stories.

Journalist Backgrounder Lunch Series.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/AMIR Specialists/Supporters

Co-Sponsors: MIT/WTO

Timeframe: Monthly

Off-the-record informational briefings for journalists on selected reform topics and/or recent developments. These briefings are not intended to generate news stories; instead they are to educate journalists on the basics of reform issues to enable more accurate and complete reporting of the WTO reform process. Briefings are provided by visiting GOJ officials, AMIR staff and/or international AMIR consultants on an availability basis. Suggested topics include individual trade laws, enforcement mechanisms, IPR, customs reforms, role of IPC, FDI and job creation.

News Interviews/Feature Stories/Call-in Programs.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat/AMIR experts

Co-Sponsors: MIT/WTO

Timeframe: As pre-arranged

In-depth news and feature stories, and participation in call-in programs by government officials, AMIR experts, or media-trained third party supporters. AMIR will identify and proactively seek to arrange opportunities for such in-depth media coverage. Talking points and Q&As will be prepared for the interviewees.

Influential Op-Eds.

Responsibility: F.Farhat/AMIR Writer/Z.Ayoubi

Co-Sponsors: Crosscutting Activity with Business Associations Component

Timeframe: Bimonthly from May

Opinion pieces by influential supporters on key policy issues, submitted to/printed in leading newspapers. Op-eds will be drafted by AMIR to reflect the “author”, who will then edit the piece with his/her own writing style. Topics will reflect AMIR communications goals, current developments and/or critical issues as identified by opinion research.

4. Expanded Program Options

“Trade Up to WTO” Trading Cards.

Responsibility: Communications Firm

Co-sponsor: MIT/WTO

Timeframe: April/May

Trading card sets printed with facts and figures on WTO and policy reforms, for distribution at the National Economic Summit. The colorful cards provide a novel, fun way to learn about WTO in detail, and will generate news coverage in and of themselves. Produced in Arabic, card sets will be distributed to schools as an aid for teachers to explain WTO, given out at all campaign events, and distributed to the media.

“WTO Facts” PSAs.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Communications Firm

Co-Sponsors: MIT/WTO

Timeframe: May-onward

A series of short, one or two minute clips that explain the basic impacts on Jordanians of WTO and policy reforms in simple language. These factoids will be aired like public service announcements on television and radio. Initially three topics will be produced and rotated daily, with additional topics produced later. They will begin airing immediately following the National Economic Summit, to build on the momentum. This offers a rare chance to reach the public directly with unfiltered information, in a brief format that airs during popular programming times.

Newspaper/Magazine Issue Ads.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Communications Firm

Co-Sponsors: Business Associations

Timeframe: May-onward

Pro-WTO membership ads with a catchy slogan like “Trade Up to WTO” and minimal details, to create a visual mixture of politics and art. The fundamental role of print advertising is that people do not read it carefully, but they are left with some impression of the message. Three ads will be developed and rotated weekly. Both the slogan and ads will be tested for effectiveness in focus groups. Ads will run once a week in the top three daily newspapers and in selected business/economic periodicals.

Special Newspaper Insert.

Responsibility: F.Farhat/AMIR Writer

Timeframe: June

Pull-out newspaper insert on the WTO accession process and impacts of reforms, intended to be a guide to the final countdown to accession. The insert will draw heavily from AMIR fact sheets and briefings, and will include articles written by experts and business leaders to provide a news feel. AMIR will purchase the insert space from a leading daily newspaper, and print additional copies to be added to information kits and distributed at AMIR events.

Television Series on WTO Reforms.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat/Communications Firm

Co-Sponsors: MIT/WTO

Timeframe: August - monthly

A monthly television series that follows the WTO accession process and presents policy reform issues in an entertaining and simplified format. Series will include coverage of the Economic Roundtable Series, interspersed with policy explanation pieces, interesting graphics, and interviews with GOJ officials and experts.

5. Special Focus: IPR Events:

Artists' Rights Concert.

Responsibility: Communications Firm

Co-Sponsors: MIT/IPR, Jordanian Society for the Protection of Property Rights

Timeframe: August

A televised concert with top Jordanian and Arab artists, to focus attention on the need for intellectual property rights laws and public respect for the rights of creative artists. The Crown Prince or a member of the royal family will be invited to host the event. Musical performances will be interspersed with commentary by the artists on the issue and their personal experiences. Tickets will be free, in exchange for a pirated CD or cassette, which in turn will be piled on the stage as a visible symbol of the extent of pirating. The event will be heavily advertised beforehand. A brochure on IPR will be created for distribution at the event. Posters, stickers, hats and t-shirts will be produced and sold at cost bearing a colorful logo (created by a local artist) and slogan along the lines of "I respect creativity". Concertgoers will all be asked to take an "I respect creativity" pledge, led by the artists onstage. The media will be invited to a pre-concert press briefing with the artists, at which fact sheets will be distributed that calculate the lost revenues to artists from piracy. Public service announcements will be taped with artists at the event, for later broadcast. The US Recording Industry Association will be invited to co-host and/or participate in the event, as well as to arrange for a major US artist to attend.

Writers Read-In for IPR.

Responsibility: Communications Firm

Co-Sponsors: MIT/IPR, Jordanian Society for the Protection of Property Rights

Timeframe: September-November

A bi-weekly series of evening read-ins by leading Jordanian writers from their own works, to highlight the need for intellectual property rights laws and public respect for copyrights. Poets, novelists, and others will be invited to participate, and will intersperse readings of their writings with commentary on the need for property rights reforms. A brochure, poster, stickers, and other materials with the anti-piracy logo will be

disseminated. The read-ins will take place at various public venues around the country, and may be televised for either a series or a single special program. News media will be encouraged to interview the artists following their performances.

“Lost Opportunities” PSAs.

Responsibility: Communications Firm

Co-sponsor: Jordanian Society for the Protection of Property Rights

Timeframe: August-November

A series of ads featuring actual people (artists, writers, inventors) who have been harmed or disincentivised in their work by the lack of intellectual property protections in Jordan. The ads put a human face on the victims of piracy, while highlighting the loss to society in general due to works never produced – the “lost opportunities” – due to a lack of benefit from the creations. The ads will be inexpensive to produce as they are simply filming a person talking. Four or five ads will be rotated over the course of five months. They can easily be turned into print ads as well.

Pharmaceutical Point-of-Sale Displays.

Responsibility: Communications Firm

Co-sponsor: Pharmaceutical manufacturers association, Jordanian Society for the Protection of Property Rights

Timeframe: August or coincide with Roundtable event

Stand-alone displays for distribution of a brochure on the expected impact of WTO membership on pharmaceutical manufacturers and drug availability. Displays will be placed in medical facilities and doctors’ offices, senior centers and retirement homes, and pharmacies. Brochure will explain short and long term impacts, and will include results of a drug availability study to highlight the need for increased access to quality drugs. A tear off postcard or phone number for more information will be included, possibly for the pharmaceutical manufacturers association.

B. Sustainable Microfinance Initiative

1. Preparation of Core Materials

Core Informational Materials.

Responsibility: AMIR Writer/Communications Firm

Timeframe: March/April

Create basic informational materials on key microfinance issues for dissemination as appropriate throughout the campaign. All materials will be professionally designed to have a coordinated, high-quality look, allowing them to be combined as needed into information kits. They include:

- Brochure – – What is Sustainable Microfinance?
- Fact sheets – single sheets, 2-sided
 - Microfinance: A Record of Success Around the World
 - Best lending practices of microfinance
 - Current statistics on SMI clients
- Reference Library Bibliography card
- Press Kit – for selected events
 - Press releases on events
 - Press clippings
 - Copies of print ads
 - Fact sheets as relevant, newsletter

SMI Newsletter.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Communications Firm

Co-Sponsors: Lending Institutions

Timeframe: Quarterly, beginning July

Bi-lingual newsletter to provide timely information on SMI activities and substantive information on selected issues. Relatively light reading in a visually appealing format with photos and basic graphics, 4–6 pages to encourage reading. Spotlight each issue on one micro-entrepreneur. Guest writers provide “expert opinion” columns. Articles will be adapted from press releases, fact sheets, workshops, seminars, and study tours. Distributed to a wide audience, including government, private sector, PVOs/NGOs, academia, donor organizations, cultural and local leaders, media, and others.

SMI Website Page.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Contractor

Co-Sponsors: USAID

Timeframe: July

Website page linked to USAID website, with current information on SMI component activities, lending statistics, resource library bibliography, and links to educational sites on sustainable microfinance lending best practices. Includes AMIR contact information and a link to the AMIR website. Web page will be created and maintained via the internet by a contractor in the US, who is emailed documents/updates by the AMIR communications staff. The page will be announced through a mailing of cards featuring a tear-off rolodex card with the site URL and AMIR contact information. The cards will also be included in press kits and information kits, and be distributed at selected events.

2. Consensus Building Activities

Opinion Research.

Responsibility: CDG/Al-Jidara

Timeframe: ??

Conduct research on attitudes toward sustainable microfinance among public officials, the private financial sector, academia, and local officials/community leaders. At present, AMIR conducts ongoing surveys on awareness and understanding, but has no statistical data on attitudes to guide communications strategy and refine messages. The surveys will be expanded to capture attitudes. Findings will serve as the basis for refining messages and setting priorities in communications activities and training.

Communications Training.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/D.Farwagi/Consultant

Timeframe: May

Provide selected officials, lending institutions, NGOs, and others with communications training to respond effectively to media inquiries, prepare them for speaking opportunities, and keep them on message in all transactions. Communications training ensures that key messages are being delivered accurately and effectively by all spokespeople, using common terminology.

Resource Library.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/D.Farwagi

Timeframe: May

Establish a sustainable microfinance resource library at AMIR office and publicize it to targeted audiences. A bibliography reference card will be printed on card stock, with a note to check the SMI webpage for new additions. The card will be mailed to targeted audiences and included in press/info kits. A press release will announce the opening of the library to the media.

National Sustainable Microfinance Summit.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/D.Farwagi

Timeframe: August

Hold high-level conference to highlight international best practices in sustainable microfinance lending and their role in enhancing economic growth, and address their applications to SMI initiatives in Jordan. Queen Noor will be invited to participate and give an opening speech. Summit will feature international experts on SMI to provide examples from other developing countries. Participants include the economic ministries, Parliamentarians, business leaders and associations, financial institutions and lenders, community-level leaders, academics, women's organizations, NGOs, USG officials, and other donors. Briefing books with talking points, key facts, and Q&As will be prepared by AMIR and provided in advance to all participants. Media will be invited to cover the summit, followed by a press briefing.

SMI Public-Private Roundtable.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/D.Farwagi

Co-Sponsor: MOP

Timeframe: October

A roundtable discussion to increase awareness and understanding of sustainable microfinance lending with participants from government, the private sector, financial institutions, lenders, clergy, academia, local government leaders, women's organizations and NGOs. Led by a professional moderator – possibly a leading economic journalist – with opening presentations by international experts and MOP officials. Briefing books will be prepared by AMIR and provided in advance to key speakers. Discussion guides will be prepared with key fact sheets for all participants. Media will be invited to cover the summit, and it will be videotaped for possible broadcast as a special program in an edited version. "Findings" will be published into a special report distributed to government officials.

Field Visits for Government Officials.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/D.Farwagi

Co-Sponsor: MOP

Timeframe: October

A day trip for government officials and media to visit micro-entrepreneurs in their businesses at a village outside Amman. Trip will include a stop for lunch, with a luncheon speech by an international expert on sustainable microfinance.

Study Tours.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/D.Farwagi

Timeframe: As appropriate

Educational tours for high level government officials, lenders, NGOs and media to international organizations and/or successful sustainable microfinance operations. Examples include the Boulder Economic Development Institute, and the Alexandria Businessmen's Association in Egypt, which has a successful SMI program.

3. Ongoing Media Outreach

Regular Press Releases.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/D.Farwagi/AMIR Writer

Co-Sponsors: Lending Institutions

Timeframe: As appropriate

Press releases on workshops, seminars, study tours, and other milestone events as they occur. Many of these milestones are pre-scheduled, allowing for drafts to be written beforehand and finalized at the time of the event. In addition to the media, releases will be disseminated to a broad contact database that includes government officials, financial and business leaders, academics, and other relevant contacts. They will also be included in press and information kits, and briefing books. Distribution by email and faxing.

Regular News Conferences/Press Briefings.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/D.Farwagi/AMIR Writer

Co-Sponsors: Lending Institutions

Timeframe: As appropriate

Topical press conferences and briefings by AMIR, lending institutions, financial officials and experts on current developments and progress in the SMI lending process. Conferences used for major announcements, briefings for general updates. Press release and relevant fact sheets distributed. Briefing books with statements and Q&As will be prepared beforehand for speakers

Editorial Board Meetings.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/D.Farwagi

Co-Sponsors: JWDS, CHF

Timeframe: Start of lending

Meetings with the Editor-in-Chief and top economic/business reporters of selected newspapers and magazines to establish a direct, personal relationship and explain the basics of sustainable microfinance lending. The goal is to ensure basic accuracy in news coverage and secure editorial support for sustainable microfinance in the form of positive editorials. Co-sponsor lenders will provide examples of success in their programs.

Journalist Backgrounder Series.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/D.Farwagi/Experts

Timeframe: August – bi-monthly

Off-the-record informational briefings for journalists on selected SMI issues and/or recent developments. These briefings are not intended to generate news stories; instead they are to educate journalists on the basics of sustainable microfinance lending to enable more accurate and complete reporting. Briefings are provided by AMIR staff, financial experts, and lending institutions. Suggested topics include the concept of sustainability in microfinance lending.

News Interviews/Feature Stories/Call-in Programs.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/D.Farwagi

Co-Sponsors: Lending Institutions

Timeframe:

In-depth news and feature stories, and participation in call-in programs by AMIR staff, financial experts, lending institutions, or media-trained third party borrowers. AMIR will identify and proactively seek to arrange opportunities for such in-depth media coverage. Talking points and Q&As will be prepared for the interviewees. Examples include a feature story on women borrowers and the opportunities for women in a women's magazine like Sharqiyat; a radio call-in program on borrowing with lenders and financial experts; and an in-depth newspaper interview with an international microfinance expert on the impact on unemployment of lending programs in other countries.

Influential Op-Eds.

Responsibility: D.Farwagi/AMIR Writer

Co-Sponsors: Lending Institutions

Timeframe: Periodic

Opinion pieces by influential supporters on the value of sustainable microfinance in economic development, submitted to leading newspapers. Op-eds will be drafted by AMIR for the "author", who will then edit the piece with his/her own writing style. Suggested topics include the role of SMI in solving unemployment and raising incomes for the disadvantaged, countering criticism of interest rates, and the importance of bringing woman into the workforce through SMI.

4. Expanded Program Options

"Successful Entrepreneur" Seal of Approval.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/Communications Firm

Timeframe: July

A seal of approval that identifies microfinance borrowers as successful business people, and is a source of pride among them. The seal itself is a colorful, official-looking logo built around the words "Successful Entrepreneur". AMIR will produce rolls of stickers with the logo, distributed free to borrowers to adhere to their products, and placards to be placed in storefront businesses. A major campaign (below) will introduce the logo to the public, and establish the logo as a mark of good business practices. The growth in businesses and products displaying the seal as the number of borrowers increases will create a sense of momentum, visibly reinforcing AMIR's message that sustainable microfinance contributes to economic growth. The seal will be tested in focus groups to assure positive acceptance and impact.

“Successful Entrepreneur” Campaign.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/Communications Firm

Co-Sponsor: JWDS, CHF

Timeframe: July onward

A series of activities to promote the image of the “Successful Entrepreneur” seal and leverage it to highlight the benefits and effectiveness of sustainable microfinance lending. Borrowers will willingly use the seal as they perceive the positive recognition of the campaign. AMIR will partner with existing lenders, who will select borrowers from their programs to participate in activities.

C Business Showcase/Press Conference: A showcase will feature local entrepreneurs and their products, and provide the backdrop for a press conference/award ceremony to “award” the seal to participants and introduce it to the public. A brief speaker will explain the concept and benefits of SMI. In addition to the media, AMIR will invite guests from national and local government, financial sector, academia, NGOs/PVOs, business and professional groups, and other target groups. Brochures and fact sheets will be distributed to guests, and media will receive a press kit. Journalists will be encouraged to interview the award recipients.

C “Successful Entrepreneur” Ad Campaign: A weekly ad campaign will feature a photo and brief description of a different successful micro-entrepreneur each week. The seal will be prominent in the ad. The ad will indirectly promote sustainable microfinance throughout the text, and offer a phone number to call for more information. The ad will be placed in the same location on the same page of selected newspapers, on the same day each week to create a sense of expectation and continuity. Reprints of the ads will be distributed in press and information kits. The borrower will receive a framed enlargement to display in his/her business or home.

C “Faces of Success” Poster: At the end of the first year, a poster will be created with the faces from the ads. Brief text will credit sustainable microenterprise lending for supporting the successful businesses, listing the number of borrowers to date and the number of jobs created/supported. The poster will be sent to GOJ officials, lenders, and everyone on the SMI targeted audience database, as well as distributed to entrepreneurs to display in their businesses. A full-page newspaper ad will reprint the entire poster. It will then be included in info/press kits and disseminated at SMI events.

Video News Release.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/Communications Firm

Co-Sponsor: JWDS, CHF

Timeframe: November

A video news release on SMI and the positive impact lending has on employment in disadvantaged communities. AMIR will basically hire a news team to create the ultimate news story, according to AMIR’s script. The VNR will be presented to JTV for airing, and can be shown at meetings and events. Copies will be given to lending institutions for their own educational use.

C. Business Associations Initiative

The activities outlined in this plan meet four core challenges:

Promote the credibility and professionalism of business associations,
Reinforce their role in assisting private sector growth to strengthen the economy,
Establish a partnership with government in reviewing and formulating economic and business policies, and
Assist business associations in fulfilling these roles, and promote their success to strengthen their credibility.

A. Internal and External Focus

Each of these challenges requires both an internal focus – within the associations themselves – and an outward focus toward the external environment. On the internal side, AMIR wants to encourage BAs to participate in activities with AMIR as part of their learning process, motivating them to take the initiative in assuming the roles set out for them. Without the desire and commitment of BAs to change themselves, AMIR alone cannot achieve the stated goals. As discussed earlier, skills training and assistance in formulating internal strategies are separate from this plan, but must be closely integrated to support these activities. But this plan complements the training and can be accomplished independent of it, as AMIR takes the lead in organizing and conducting the activities with the participation and assistance of the business associations.

The external aspect of this plan actually compensates for the lack of communications capability within the associations, as AMIR provides the link and organizes the forums for interaction between business and government. In a way, the AMIR-sponsored activities kick-start the role of BAs as policy advocates and public communicators, filling a gap until the BAs assume those activities on their own. At the same time, the activities position the private sector for its enhanced role by establishing a precedent for continued government-business cooperation and media outreach.

B. Crossover with Policy Component

There is a crossover in many of the activities and materials with the policy component, effectively accomplishing the objectives of both simultaneously. The Business Associations Initiative will take the lead in most crossover activities, to relieve the burden on the Policy Reforms component. This will require that the component leaders work closely to keep each other informed of developments in each component that may affect the schedule of the joint activities.

1. Preparation of Core Materials

Core Informational Materials.

Responsibility: AMIR Writer/Communications Firm

Timeframe: March/April

Create basic informational materials on key topics for associations and their membership, and for dissemination as appropriate throughout the campaign. Many of these materials also serve the policy component. All materials will be professionally designed to have a coordinated, high-quality look, allowing them to be combined as needed into information kits. They include:

Fact sheets – single sheets, 2-sided

- What are Business Associations? Intro to their General Role and Importance
- Role of BAs in Strengthening Economic Development and Growth
- BAs and Government: A Partnership for Better Policy Development
- AMIR Small Grants Program – details, goals, winners

Press Kit – for selected events

- Press releases on events, impact studies
- Press clippings
- Speech transcripts
- Impact studies
- Fact sheets as relevant, newsletter, brochure
- Association/Expert Directory

Jordan Business Associations/Experts Directory.

Responsibility: Communications Firm

Timeframe: May

Directory of Associations for distribution to government policymakers and the media, to facilitate requests for comments/participation in the economic process. Includes a Private Sector Experts List that identifies experts/spokespeople on specific policy and industry topics, to facilitate media requests for interviews/comments on policy issues.

Issues Bulletin Newsletter.

Responsibility: AMIR Writer/Communications Firm

Timeframe: Bimonthly beginning April

Newsletter for BA leadership and members to keep them informed of key policy developments (tied in with policy component) and encourage BA development and growth. Features recent developments in WTO/economic issues, coverage of joint policy events such as roundtables, and results of studies. Includes updates on BA activities, training, grants announcements, events calendar. Spotlight feature recognizes BA executives/staff who are extremely dedicated. Disseminated through BAs to their membership, at BA events, and to selected policymakers in government, academia, and key media.

Policy Impact Studies.

Responsibility: Technical Consultant

Co-Sponsor: Crosscutting Activity with Policy Component

Timeframe: March-May

Conduct studies to assess impacts of policy reforms on selected industries and provide data on the expected benefits to Jordan of WTO membership. Studies will be released publicly at press conferences with supporting press releases highlighting key findings, and be included in information and press kits. Studies will be used in policy advocacy training to be provided by CIPE under separate contract. Suggested topics include:

IPR reform and the Impact on the Pharmaceutical Industry/Drug Availability in Jordan
Barriers to Women in Business
Top concerns as identified in advocacy training sessions

2. Consensus Building Activities

Issues Communications Training.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/Z.Ayoubi/Consultant

Co-sponsor: Crossover Activity with Policy component

Timeframe: April/May

Provide selected leaders, members, and executives with communications training on policy issues to respond effectively to media inquiries, prepare them for speaking opportunities, and stay on message during meetings. Communications training ensures that key messages are being delivered accurately and effectively by all spokespeople with one unified voice. This activity is a crossover with the Policy Component.

Impact Studies News Conference.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Z.Ayoubi/AMIR Writer

Co-Sponsors: Crosscutting Activity with Policy Component

Timeframe: May

Major news conference to announce the findings of the economic impact studies. Association executives and business leaders from affected industries will present the general findings, and discuss their plans to adapt. Economic experts will explain the theory behind the findings. Government officials will also participate if appropriate. Press releases, executive summaries of the study findings, and relevant fact sheets will be prepared. Briefing books with statements, Q&As will be prepared beforehand for speakers.

Economic Roundtable Series.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat/Z.Ayoubi/AMIR specialists/Communications Firm

Co-sponsors: MIT/WTO, Crosscutting Activity with Policy Component,

Timeframe: bimonthly June/July, Aug/Sept. Oct/Nov

This series of educational seminars will be primarily coordinated by the Policy Component, and will include other participants in addition to the BAs. Each of the three workshops will be conducted as a roundtable discussion with a professional moderator – possibly a leading economic journalist such as Rami Khouri, with opening presentations by experts and MIT officials. Briefing books will be prepared by AMIR and provided in advance to key speakers. Discussion guides will be prepared with key fact sheets for all participants. Media are invited to cover the series, and it will be videotaped for possible broadcast as a special program in an edited version. The series can be reduced or expanded in number. Suggested roundtable topics:

- Intellectual Property Rights – cosponsored with Jordan Society for Protection of Property Rights, Pharmaceutical Manufacturers association; either a general overview including several industries, or focusing on one, preferably pharmaceuticals
- “Shared Experiences: A Discussion of WTO Impact with Officials of Member Countries” – case studies of pros/cons of WTO membership in other countries, with economic reps from embassies
- “Foreign Investment, Joint Ventures, and WTO Reforms” – cosponsored with IPC; highlight increased attractiveness from reforms, partnering opportunities; bring US state official to discuss foreign investment as key to an economic turnaround

Policy Briefing Series.

Responsibility: S.Qadoura/AMIR Specialists

Co-sponsors: Crosscutting Activity with Policy Component, USJBP

Timeframe: from June, bimonthly in non-roundtable months

Informative briefings on single reform topics to provide business owners with detailed, practical information on changes that will impact their businesses. Briefings are provided by GOJ officials and/or visiting international AMIR consultants on an availability basis. Closed to the press to allow for frank discussion, but press releases will provide highlights to media. Briefings will also serve as the basis for fact sheets, and op-eds drafted for submission by attending business leaders. Topics include customs reforms, antidumping and retaliation mechanisms, enforcement of trade laws, IPR, and IPC partnering services.

3. Ongoing Media Outreach

Regular Press Releases.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Z.Ayoubi/AMIR Writer

Timeframe: As appropriate

Press releases on events, studies, and AMIR training/grants as they occur. Many of these milestones are pre-scheduled, allowing for drafts to be written beforehand and finalized at the time of the event. In addition to the media, releases will be disseminated to a broad contact database that includes government officials, business leaders, other donors/PVOs/NGOs, academics, and other relevant contacts. They will also be included in press and information kits, and briefing books. A press release template with AMIR letterhead will be created on the computer, allowing for email distribution and faxing.

Editorial Board Meetings.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Z.Ayoubi

Timeframe: June

Meetings with the Editor-in-Chief and top economic/business reporters of selected newspapers and magazines to establish a direct, personal relationship with BA executives and provide the private sector viewpoint on key policy issues. The goal is to encourage the papers to cover the impact of reforms on the private sector, and to use the BAs as a source of information and commentary. The results of the impact studies will be presented, with an overview of other steps the BAs are taking to contribute to the policy process.

News Interviews/Feature Stories.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Z.Ayoubi

Co-Sponsors: Association Executives

Timeframe:

In-depth news and feature stories on association activities or policy issues by AMIR experts, business association executives and members. AMIR will identify and proactively seek to arrange opportunities for such in-depth media coverage. Talking points and Q&As will be prepared for the interviewees. Examples include a feature story on the new role of the private sector in policymaking, and a candid interview with the pharmaceutical manufacturers association on the impact of IPR changes in Jordan.

Influential Op-Eds.

Responsibility: AMIR Writer/Z.Ayoubi

Co-Sponsors: Association Executives

Timeframe: Bimonthly from May

Opinion pieces by BA executives and business leaders on key policy issues, submitted to leading newspapers. Op-eds will be drafted by AMIR for the “author”, and submitted to the executive for final adaptation. Topics will reflect AMIR communications goals, current developments and/or critical issues. Topics include Why WTO is Important for Jordan’s Private Sector, the pros and cons of foreign investment, and the role of customs reform in improving the competitiveness of Jordanian businesses.

4. Expanded Program Options

Influential Letters of Support.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/F.Farhat/Z.Ayoubi

Co-Sponsors: Crosscutting Activity with Policy Component

Timeframe: July

Open letters expressing support for WTO membership and policy reforms, and urging swift government implementation, signed by influential public and private leaders. The letters will be mailed to top government and Parliament officials. They will be disseminated to the media accompanied by a press release from the signatories or business association. Signatories include top business leaders, academic experts, economists, and business association members.

Business Adjustment Survey.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Z.Ayoubi/CDG-Al Jidara

Timeframe: June-July

A comprehensive survey of member businesses to identify areas where businesses will be impacted by policy reforms, and what services would be most effective in helping them to adjust. Survey forces businesses to confront the reality of policy reforms, and provides assurances that they will not be left to adjust to new challenges on their own. A press conference to announce the study both gets this message out to a wider audience, and underscores the important role of BAs in addressing private sector problems and finding solutions that promote economic growth. Op-eds and media interviews by business leaders further promote the messages. Survey results can be used by USAID to plan adjustment programs, which in turn can be promoted.

Association Partnership Program

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Z.Ayoubi

Co-Sponsor: USAID

Timeframe: September

Matches Jordanian business associations with US business associations in the same industry, for an educational look at the PR and advocacy activities of the US counterparts. This is simply a chance for the Jordanian BAs to learn about the types of issues the US associations track, and to receive copies of the publications and materials they produce. The partnerships have two stages: the first stage is a request for materials and review, the second stage is an interactive discussion between the two groups in which the Jordanians can ask questions about the strategy behind the materials, their effectiveness, and follow-up plans. The discussions will be via telephone conference facilities or can employ videoconferencing. USAID will extend the requests to the US associations. This program can be expanded into a study tour.

D. AMIR Program Crosscutting Activities

AMIR Program Newsletter.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Communications Firm

Co-Sponsors: USAID

Timeframe: Bimonthly, beginning April

Bi-lingual newsletter to provide timely information on AMIR component activities and substantive information on selected issues. Relatively light reading in a visually appealing format with photos and basic graphics, 4–6 pages to encourage reading and perusal. Articles would be adapted from press releases, fact sheets, seminars and briefings, and studies. Guest writers could provide “expert opinion” columns. Distributed to the widest audience possible, including government, private sector, business associations, PVOs/NGOs, academia, donor organizations, cultural and local leaders, media, and others. Requires some research for compilation of an extensive database.

AMIR Program Website.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura/Contractor

Co-Sponsors: USAID

Timeframe: April/May

Website with basic information on AMIR Program, components, key issues, and reports on activities. A Featured Topic promoted on the home page would be changed monthly to reflect current developments and provide a continuous draw to the site. Also includes a News page with program press releases and announcements, a library archiving fact sheets, studies and relevant documents, and links to related sites (with reciprocal links requested from them). Recommend that site not include a chat room or forum, as high costs rarely worth low usage. Website would be created and maintained via the internet by a contractor in the US, who is continuously fed documents/updates by the AMIR communications staff. The site would be promoted through a widespread mailing of colorful announcement cards featuring a tear-off rolodex card with the site URL and AMIR contact information. The cards could also be included in all press kits and information kits, and be distributed at selected campaign events.

Website Unveiling Open House.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura

Co-sponsor: USAID

Timeframe: May

An open house reception for selected friends of the AMIR Program to unveil the new website, show off the expanded office space, and provide a friendly update on the project. A friendly atmosphere would keep the evening light, serving primarily as a networking opportunity for AMIR staff to meet people and reinforce relationships.

Journalist Open House.

Responsibility: S. Qadoura

Timeframe: May

An open house reception and presentation to (re)introduce journalists to the AMIR Program in general, and provide a brief overview of the three components. Establishes/reinforces contact with media. Press kits would be distributed with basic program information (brochure, fact sheets, events calendar). Computer monitors could be set up in one area with the AMIR website on the screen, inviting journalists to explore the site.

Appendix A – Additional Technical Assistance

Proposed Technical Assistance to Organizations in Formulating Communications Strategies

A. Government Agencies

1. Ministry of Industry and Trade

The Ministry will implement a significant number of policy changes in the coming months, as it prepares for WTO compliance. All of these policy changes will impact the private sector and, eventually, the general public. The Ministry should have a solid communications strategy for announcing and explaining the policy changes to the business community and the public, to show that it has the best interests of the country at heart and is responsive to concerns. It also requires an internal communications strategy to inform departments of changes, and ensure proper implementation. While AMIR will take the lead in organizing activities in which the Ministry will participate, there are some topics and issues that AMIR cannot address or on which the government must clearly be seen as taking the lead. Technical assistance would consist of development of a comprehensive strategy, and include teaching basic communications skills to Ministry officials and staff.

2. Investment Promotion Corporation (IPC)

The IPC requires a communications strategy to position the organization as a key player in the economic development of Jordan. The strategy would assist the IPC in promoting the importance of the organization's mission, to establish the IPC's legitimacy and gain the cooperation of government agencies on whom it relies to assist investors through swift processing of licenses and other applications. A complete communications plan would address appropriate goals and challenges, and provide a menu of proposed activities. Technical assistance would include an expanded website and teaching basic communications skills to IPC officials and staff.

B. Business Associations

Internal strategic communications plans for selected business associations would build upon the strategic planning assistance already provided through the AMIR Program. The assistance would be coordinated with the advocacy and communications training AMIR will offer later this year, taking organizations a step further by assisting them in developing their own detailed strategies for identifying and achieving communications and advocacy goals.

Appendix B – List of Meetings

U.S. Government

AMIR	Steve Wade Dr. Zaki Ayoubi Derek Farwagi Farhat Farhat Sam Morris Sameera Qadoura	Program Director BAI Component Leader SMI Component Leader POL Component Leader IPC Investment Advisor Public Awareness and Training Manager
USAID	Jon Lindborg Gerald Andersen Jamal Al-Jaberi Rula Dababneh	Director, Economic Opportunities Office Senior Private Sector Advisor Senior Private Sector Advisor
USIS	Steve Thibault	Press Officer

Government of Jordan

MIT	Dr. Mohammad Halaiqah Tamam Al-Ghoul Nathmi Abdallah	Secretary General Head, WTO Unit General Director, Customs
Ministry of Planning Program	Dr. Ghaith Fariz Nasser Shraideh Mohammad Aiesh	Director, Social Productivity Prog. Unit Coordinator, Micro Enterprise Public Awareness Coordinator, SPPUnit
IPC	Dr. Montaser Oklah Sarah Harpending	General Director Graduate Student Intern

NGOs

CHF	Rafael Jabba	Country Director
JWDS	Niveen Abboushi	Executive Director

Business Leaders/Associations

Jordan-US Business Partnership	Lewis Reade Bassam Khatib Arun Walvekar Nayef Stetieh Maha Shawareb	President VP, Client Services VP, Quality and Standards Manager, Firm Level Assistance Business Associations Liaison
BPWC	Rasha Barghouti Hind Abdel Jaber Randa Qunsol	Dir, Business & Prof. Women Club President Board Member
JAMPMA (Jordan Association of Manufacturers of Pharmaceuticals & Medical Appliances)	Maher Matalka	Secretary General
JSIP Jordan (Jordanian Society for Protection of Intellectual Property Rights) intermediate & Artists)	Dr. Bassam Talhouni Murad Bushnaq	President, Professor of Law U of Chairman (Protecting the Arts

Academia

Univ. of Jordan
Business

Dr. Muhsen Makhamreh

Prof., Business Mgt; Frmr Dean,

Media and PR Firms

Jordan TV	Zahia Ennab	Assist. General Director
	Arwa Z'abi	Programs Producer
	Shereen Awamieh	Producer, Program Host
Jordan Radio	Hani Al Farhan	Director, Developmental Programs
Jordan Radio	Juman Mjali	Program Host
	Eisa Erott	Program Host
Arab Multi Media	Maaz Shukayr	General Manager
Sharqiyat Media Inst.	Dina Zorba	Chief Editor
Sherman & Holmes	Joyce Holmes Richardson	Training Consultant
CDG	Ramsey Kawar	President
Al Jidara	Awni Nabulsi	
	Hana Dajani	

Appendix C – List of Publications Reviewed

AMIR Reports

- “Volume One: Technical Proposal,” RFP No. Jordan 97-012, Chemonics International, October 6, 1997.
- “AMIR Amendment,” Chemonics International, December 1998.
- Wade, Stephen P., Quarterly Performance Report for the Period Ending March 31, 1998.
- Wade, Stephen P., Quarterly Performance Report for the Period Ending June 30, 1998.
- Wade, Stephen P., Quarterly Performance Report for the Period Ending September 30, 1998.
- Woods, John L., “Suggestions for Implementing A Communication Support Program for AMIR,” Chemonics International, October 1, 1998.
- Kern, K. Robert, “Report of a Consultancy with AMIR,” December 1998.
- Milner, Larry, “An Overview of Dr. Kern’s Report on a Public Relations Strategy for the Jordan-AMIR Project,” Global Strategy Consultants, December 28, 1998.
- “Jordanian Business Persons Knowledge of Key Economic Policy Reform,” Follow Up Survey #1, Final Report, January 1999.
- “NGO Assessment and Assessment of Bank Interest,” Final Report, June 30, 1998.
- “Policy Environment for Financial Services to micro and Small Enterprises in Jordan,” Final Report, July 1998.
- “Sustainable Microfinance 1998 Initial Survey and Baseline,” Draft Report, January 1999.
- “The Demand for Microfinancial Services in the Micro and Small Scaled Enterprise Sector in Jordan,” Final Report, July 1998.
- “Business Associations Diagnostic Studies,” Technical Report – Appendix One, July 1998.
- “Business Associations Diagnostic Studies,” Technical Report – Appendix Two, July 1998.
- “Business Associations Diagnostic Studies,” Technical Report – Appendix Three, July 1998.

“Business Associations Strategic Planning,” Technical Report, August 1998.

“Business Associations Strategic Planning,” Technical Report – Appendix One, Strategic Plan for Business and Professional Women Club, August 1998.

“Business Associations Strategic Planning,” Technical Report – Appendix Two, Strategic Plan for the Amman World Trade Center, August 1998.

“Business Associations Strategic Planning,” Technical Report – Appendix Three, Strategic Plan for the Jordan Trade Association, August 1998.

“Networking Information Resources Among Jordanian Business Associations,” Final Report, August 1998.

Non-AMIR Documents

“Jordan’s Media Directory,” USIS, U.S. Embassy Amman, Jordan, February 1999.