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West Bank and Gaza

NETHAM

Rule of Law Program

Justice and Enforcement

DFD-I-01-04-00173-00

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**Diagnostic and Analytical Report for the Administrative
Department of the Supreme Judicial Council**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This initiative of the Supreme Judicial Council (“The Council”) is a result of cooperation between NETHAM, financed through the United States Agency for International Development, USAID, and the Council. The main goal of this initiative is to provide technical assistance to the Council at the operational level to better support and enhance the operation through upgrading the planning procedures, policies, employment rules and regulations, and the performance of the employees at the Council’s Administrative Department.

A contractual agreement with Dr. Amjed Al Ghanem was signed for the execution of this initiative to provide the best possible outcomes, inclusive of identifying the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. This report is a summary of the diagnostic analysis that was completed on the administrative department of the Supreme Judicial Council and highlights the most important recommendations needed to enhance the level of service provided by the Council’s Administrative Department.

According to the Terms of Reference for providing technical assistance for enhancing the Administrative Department of the Supreme Judicial Council, the diagnostic analysis includes the following:

- Assess the operational components, including laws and bylaws, personnel, internal infrastructure, communications and coordination, archiving, and internal regulations and control.
- Upgrade and develop the operational systems, including: Human Resources, Verification and Archiving systems, internal and external communications, an internal controls system.

The Diagnosis was done based on the following approach:

First: Review, examine, and analyze all documents relating to the Supreme Judicial Council and its internal system, strategy.

Second: Field visits, meetings, and focus group sessions with employees and management personnel, including several meetings with the Administrative and Financial Manager.

Third: Design a questionnaire and distribute it to all employees to get a better feel for the operations in the Supreme Judicial Council.

Forth: Analyze existing data, examine content, and provide recommendations.

Through adopting this approach, and through the many sources of data and information gathered, a comprehensive set of documents was produced on the Council’s internal systems, organizational structure, strategies, in addition to many statistical surveys with respect to total number of employees and their actual distribution.

2. DIAGNOSIS OF THE OPERATION WITHIN THE COUNCIL

2.1 CURRENT CONDITIONS

1. The Administrative Departments performs all follow ups for their administrative operation in the council (26 employees) and all other judicial employees (totaling 272) in full coordination with department head officials, in addition to the follow up of all court paperwork, judges, and court civil employees.
2. Operations personnel in the Council follow the General Personnel Council, same for the judges; however, those are placed on a different pay scale.
3. Average requests channeled to the Human Resources department comes close to 20 per day, ranging from vacation requests, social status updating, service and maintenance requests, etc.

4. The overall management structure of the administrative and financial affairs departments includes the following units, based on the approved organizational structure: Administrative Affairs Department, Engineering and Maintenance Department, Logistics Department, and Financial Affairs Department.
5. Currently, all vacation requests are hand administrated and input into the system, it is expected that in the near future, an automated system would allow for a better monitoring and calculation the vacation time and requests.
6. With regards to the hiring procedures, a committee is formed from members of the council responsible for the selection criteria, conducting the interviews, and providing recommendations to be presented for final decision and approval by Chief Justice.
7. There is no clear or established mechanism for training. The training needs are based on senior management recommendations and sometimes the staff themselves. There is no established budget for training and it relies heavily on donor assistance at this stage.
8. Certain other services are given to employees of the Council and court personnel, such as special deals from Jawwal mobile telecommunications company.
9. Transfer/shifting of staff is either due to official complaint, where an investigation will be performed by the council, or for advancement and developmental purposes, and transfer of know-how.
10. There is no code of conduct for Council staff.
11. Promotion starts from within each department of the Council through the employee affairs, and there is an unorganized review and evaluation of employees' files, done in a nonsystematic basis.
12. Employees' yearly assessments are based on a standard generic document provided by the General Personnel Council; this document in most cases is irrelevant to the work performed by the Council's employees.
13. Evaluation of new staff is done on a monthly basis for a period of one year, following the Civil Servant laws and operational charts.

2.2 IDENTIFICATION OF KEY OPERATIONS

The key administrative duties of each operation are shown in the following table.

Table (1):

Number	Operation	Main tasks
1	Employment	Identify Vacancies. Approve financial budget for vacancies from Ministry of Finance Advertise in newspapers Conduct the interviews. Hiring and Placements.
2	Vacation	Tabulate Employees Vacations. Distribute forms to all departments. Receive vacation requests. Update employees' files with vacation requests.
3	Evaluation	Coordinate with General Personnel Council GPC about evaluation. Receive evaluation forms. Distribute evaluation forms to heads of departments and senior management. Receive filled evaluation forms. Provide the GPC with the results of the evaluations.

4	Employees hiring folders	<p>Receive employees' files in the Council. Opening new folders for new hires. Maintain a copy of all relevant documents for each employee in their file. Follow up on employment changes and report Provide GPC with all relevant employees' documents.</p>
5	Services	<p>Coordinate for movement of Council's manager and staff. Provide logistic support to all members of the Council. Supervise the security, cleaning, and hospitality services for the Council.</p>

2.3 INTERNAL & EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

1. No planned meetings take place at the management level, the meetings are only organized to discuss emergency situation or to review certain projects. Additionally, no minutes of meetings are taken and there is no proper follow up on any recommendations arising from such meetings.
2. Annual progress reports are usually prepared by department heads to be presented to the Chief Justice. No annexes or other documentation are provided in the report to cover topics such as training materials, number of participants, or training hours provided.
3. The relation between the Administrative Department and courts are managed through Chief clerks at different courts.
4. There is direct contact between the staff of the Council and the administrative department.
5. There exists a full computerized system within the Council where internal archiving is kept electronically. However, even though the email application (outlook) has been setup, it has not been used by the employees.
6. External communications is mainly with the General Personnel Council and the Ministry of Finance for following up on issues relating to administration and finance. Meetings are normally held to resolve any pending issues and to discuss sensitive cases, in addition to arranging for meetings between the latter and Chief Justice to discuss pending issues that could not be solved at a lower level.
7. Templates are normally provided for the employees, however, in certain cases, these templates change which adds more pressure on the employees.

2.4 ARCHIVING

1. Most hard copies of court orders, employees' files, employees' salary stubs and benefits are kept in individual folders. There is no mechanism for proper filing and certain files contain information and paper documents that are irrelevant to the individual.
2. Employee files and folders are kept behind locked closets at the employees affairs department, however, the lack of space for proper archiving and savings these folders makes the process of retrieving these files hard, especially, taking into account that these hard copies are reviewed frequently.
3. With regards to old folders stored, access to them is impossible as they are randomly and improperly stored, without any physical documentation as to what exists in these old folders or files.
4. Certain pamphlets, booklets, and factual data are normally distributed through an official memo by the Council.
5. Most electronic files that exist are being processed and created using the main server. There is a plan to further develop an archiving system to be utilized in 2007, pending availability of funds received from donor communities,

2.5 MONITORING AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

1. The bylaw utilized for internal control is based on the Civil Service Law issued by the Palestinian National Authority.
2. The monitoring application is limited to controlling the working hours of employees, usually done by the Department of Human Resources and the Judges; however, it is worth mentioning that due to the employee strike that occurred in 2006, this follow up on monitoring application has been minimized.

3. ANALYSIS OF PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES WITHIN THE COUNCIL

3.1 SUMMARY OF COUNCIL'S PERSONNEL

There are 26 employees within the administrative department. The selection criteria and the positions created within the department are based on the following breakdown:

First: According to Area of Specialization

Table (2): Distribution according to Specialization

Number	Specialization	Number of Staff	Percentage
1	Management	1	4%
2	Legal	2	8%
3	Architectural	2	8%
4	Accounting	6	23%
5	Others	15	57%
	Total	26	100%

The Administrative and Financial Affairs Departments' specializations are not limited to specializations in accountancy and management, but also includes specialization in psychology. Unfortunately, there is no specialization in Human Resources at this stage. Additionally, there are a number of employees who do not have any specialization and lack years of experience, which hinders the professionalism of the employee cadre at the Council. This is due to the fact that the Ramallah office has been a secretariat office to the main office which exists in Gaza.

Second: According to Academic Credentials

Table (3): Distribution according to Academic Credentials

Number	Academic Credentials	Number of Staff	Percentage
1	Bachelors Degree	15	55.56%
2	Diploma	3	11.11%
3	Tawjihi (High School)	6	22.22%
4	Below High School	3	11.11%
	Total	27	100%

During the analysis, it became apparent that the distribution of the personnel according their academic credentials and specializations was not followed, which resulted in certain departments having employees with no specializations or personnel with only Tawjihi education. This organizational structure needs further analysis to better allow distribution of personnel according to their specialization in a manner that would enable the Council to most benefit from their expertise, especially when adding newly hired staff.

With regards to job description, these were prepared for all employees of the Council through the volunteer work of a number of employees, where every new post and future post was identified and the job title created, conforming to the SJC Organizational Structure developed and approved in 2006. The Analysis indicates that additional work is needed to fine tune this mechanism and further expand it to reflect and include the main job descriptions and responsibilities in addition to establishing some key performance indicators for each post for future evaluation.

3.3 TRAINING

No proper mechanism or system for training exists. Most of the training is done on a sporadic basis with no clear objectives to enhance or further develop the technical competencies of those taking the training sessions. Table 4 below provides a distribution for the number of training sessions that took place at the Council.

Table (4): Distribution of Training Sessions

Number	Training Seminars/Courses	Number of Staff	Percentage
1.	Did not receive any training	9	33.33%
2.	Received One Training Session	9	33.33%
3.	Received Two Training Sessions	9	33.33%
	Total	27	100%

It is clear that training is not a key criterion for the Council, and that the training seminars/courses provided is nothing but a mix of computer based training that are limited to mainly secretariat work. To this end, a training management mechanism needs to be placed in order to better provide training when needed in a systematic way that would allow all employees to benefit from the training components. Additionally, more specialized training courses are needed to address the training needs of the employees of the Council.

3.4 ANALYSIS OF MANAGEMENT ATMOSPHERE

In order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the management atmosphere, a questionnaire was prepared of two folds. The first was an essay type questionnaire and the second part was a closed ended questionnaire, in an effort to get the best snap shot of the management aspect and all its components. The questionnaire was distributed to all personnel and employees of the Administrative and Financial Department as well as IT department.

3.4.1 Analysis of Variables

Table (5): Distribution of Staff according to their positions

Number	Position	Number of Staff	Percentage
1	Senior Management Posts	1	3.7%
2	Middle Management Posts	11	40.74%
3	Technical Posts	8	29.63%
4	Unspecified	7	25.93%
5	Total	27	100%

The Table above shows that the number of posts for senior management is only one, whereas the number of posts for middle management is extremely high, taking into account that the actual job description and number of posts do not match with the organizational structure, especially taking into account that certain units constitute of only one middle management, so in reality, there is no need for middle management posts under such situations. Also, the number of posts for the technical and unspecified is more than half the number of employees at the Council.

Table (6): Distribution of Posts according to Activities/Duties

Number	Activity/Duty	Number of Staff	Percentage
1	Executive	10	37%
2	Executive & Supervisory	17	63%
	Total	27	100%

It is worth noting that around one third of the posts are of executive nature while the rest have some supervisory roles as well.

3.4.2 Management Style

To better assess the management style, a 30 question survey was prepared to examine various aspects of the management style and internal management with specified answers ranging from one—strongly disagree to five—strongly agree, and the results follow below.

3.4.2.1 Strategies and Decision Making

The Questionnaire revealed that there is a limited number of staff who can identify the objective and mission statement of the Council, and can identify the key responsibilities and the type of work that it does, as per the results indicated below:

Table (7): Strategic Analysis and Decision Making

Number	Item	Score
1.	A clear Mission Statement for the council that is visible to the staff	3.56
2	My work has clear objectives that are attainable	4.22
3	Participate in decision making that affects my work	3.04
4	Level of responsibility exists and staff can identify the supervisory responsibility given to them	3.3

Recommendations: Work on developing a clear and more precise mission statement, shared with all employees and linked to overall goal and objective

3.4.2.2 Internal Communications

An internal communications system is not in place, and the actual daily interaction or communication between the various departments is not up to best practice.

Table (8): Analysis of Internal Communications

Number	Item	Score
1	People recognize and appreciate my work	3.3
2	Good internal communications between the different Departments and the Courts	3
3	Clear line of communications	2.89
4	Frequent meetings do occur between the various Departments and the Courts	2
5	Team work is always encouraged	3.04
6	Clear supervision and follow up exists	3.37
7	Relationship between the various departments is clear with regards to their roles, responsibilities, and follow-up	2.89

Recommendations: The simplification of the process of internal communication is needed between the various departments and work on supporting inter-departmental meetings on regular basis to discuss the flow of work and the responsibilities of each side.

3.4.2.3 Planning and Performance Measures

The table below provides a good indication to the level of dissatisfaction of the performance measures put forth at the Council, with the majority of the scores not exceeding 2.9.

Table (9): Analysis of Planning and Key Performance Measures

Number	Item	Score
1	There are clear key performance indicators to measure the performance of staff	2.37
2	Prepare progress reports on type of work done and major achievements	2.22
3	Perform statistical Analysis for administrative figures	1.78
4	Responsibilities are mostly repetitive in nature with flow between courts, council, and the various departments.	3.22

Recommendations: Develop and create solid key performance indicators that could identify and enhance the level of responsibilities for each duty/assignment. Additionally, create a computerized process where daily, weekly, and monthly reports can be generated to further enhance the outcome of each activity or assignment.

3.4.2.4 Information Technologies

It is expected that there will be a shortage of computers at the council and various departments, due mainly to a lack and improper budget allocations and requests, which hinders the possibility to enhance and improve the quality of work for the staff.

Table (10): Analysis of IT

Number	Item	Score
1.	There are enough computers and software to have an efficient operation	2.33
2.	IT is well established and all office supplies are available for ease of work	3.19

3.4.2.5 Training and Employees Retention

No career development path exists for the staff and the training component is very weak, as mentioned before. The following table provides the results of the questionnaire;

Table (11): Analysis of Employee Retention/Value, and Training

Number	Item	Score
1	Training received was useful and relevant to the daily job requirements	3.11
2	I can see myself and position within the Council in the next few years	2.41
3	Personal relationships and favors go a long way in facilitating work flow	2.67

Recommendations: Continue developing both short-term and long-term training sessions and provide an employee retention system where bonuses or recognition certifications are provided to retain employees and maintain high moral levels

3.4.2.6 Clarity of Working Procedures

The analysis revealed that there is a lack of clarity with regards to the working procedures and the responsibilities of each department. Additionally, promotional processes and procedures are not clear, which in turn, is creating a certain level of disgruntled employees.

Table (12): Clarity of Systems and Working Conditions

Number	Item	Score
1	Clear TOR and Responsibilities for all personnel at the Council	3.54
2	Shifting of staff between various locations is a smooth transition	2.41
3	Working procedures and manuals do exist for better and faster work processing	3.11
4	Administrative and Management components are fully compliant with one another	3.3
5	Internal guides are easily accessible and contribute to the quality of work done	2.93
6	Promotions and placements are done in on proper basis, taking into account the proper bylaws and internal procedures followed	2.56

Recommendations: There needs to be a better review of all policies and procedures in place for better understanding of the policies and methodologies utilized.

3.4.2.7 Initiatives and Change

Table (13): Initiative and Change

Number	Item	Score
1	Highly acceptable and anticipated change for development and coordination	3.78
2	Conducive working Environment	2.85

Recommendations: There is a buy in from all employees on the importance of change and development of systems and procedures.

3.4.2.8 Performance Satisfaction

Table (14): Performance Satisfaction

Number	Item	Score
1	Satisfied with the performance of the administrative department or court I work in	3.44
2	Overall satisfaction is classified as good or very good	3.44

It is worth noting that there is a high degree of loyalty to working within the Council with a need for constant change and improvement, done mainly through checking up on the employees and address their concerns and issues and establish proper lines of communications with them.

4. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

4.1 STRENGTHS:

1. A strategic plan was developed for the fiscal years 2008-2010 inclusive of many items to enhance and develop the competencies and work of the Council.
2. Employees understanding of their current position and situation and their adoption for the change and development strategy is noticeable.
3. Availability of a network at the IT department.
4. Established organizational structure for the Council.
5. Availability of some key technical personnel within certain department with proper training on how to use the computer.
6. Availability of certain software utilized in the administrative and financial duties within the Council.

4.2 WEAKNESSES:

1. Objectives and developmental goals set forth in the Council's strategy are not realistic and not time bound or linked to availability of budget.
2. The Job Criteria and descriptions are not in line with the organizational structure proposed job posts and descriptions.
3. Lack of a clear document that clearly identifies the key responsibilities of each employee's at all levels, inclusive of both the administrative and financial affairs departments.
4. No clear training mechanism available that is based on what is actually needed, with no monitoring or evaluation in place to analyze the effect of training on the employees.
5. No user guides or process manuals for either the administrative or financial department that identifies the operational responsibility of each department, in addition to no inter-departmental follow up.
6. No clear mechanism in place for proper report layout or preparation, when and how often to prepare them.
7. Lack of proper place and location for archiving documents, taking into account the lack of proper registering for what is being archived.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The role of the administrative and financial affairs department must be clarified vis-à-vis the different departments and courts in order to better coordinate the inter-departmental role and responsibility and eliminate repetitive work. This could be achieved by describing the role of each department and the interchangeable work that they do, and the level of involvement and intervention of each one.
2. Transform the strategic plan into an attainable plan with clear goals, objectives, and measurable marks, linked with a time frame and budget in order to achieve all its objectives and strategic goals.
4. Find a new evaluating mechanism to improve employees performance at the council taking into consideration employees actual work and responsibilities , since it is no that suitable to follow up General Personnel Council's standards , which is officially been used in many different ministries, because there are some jobs which have specific standards concerning Courts and Judicial system work.

5. Identify an individual and include in their responsibilities the improvement, updating, and organization of regulations and procedures. This individual should initially focus on amending those regulations concerning the organizational Structure, polices, objectives and its effect on work mechanism.
6. Mechanism should be established to prepare reports in a good, regulated and unified way and including main components. It useful to maximize the use of existing human resources through implementing specialized training courses in different areas.
7. Enhance capabilities of preparing statistical reports, with a scientific basis, to provide data as a performance indicator to measure the efficiency of a specific activity. Furthermore, these reports support the role of senior management and other related departments and help them take decisions supported by the data.
8. Create a new system of communications and archiving, whether it is electronic or even on hard copies, to be applied in all departments.
9. Build a new mechanism for an integrated management for staff training: Identify staff actual needs for such courses, in coordination with various department and other concerned courts, taking into account the following points:
 - Improving the performance in all departments through developing professional and practical capacity.
 - Increasing work quality & services in all departments.
 - Enabling employees to practice work effectively and to allow them to make suggestions, opinions and initiatives according to the scientific and professional mechanism.
 - Enhancing employees capabilities in implementing there work and other futuristic projects.
 - Measuring the impact of training.
10. Implement a training program that focuses on the way and the methodology of changing the administrative behaviors of all staff especially council administrators. This proposed training program should strengthen staff capabilities on all aspects, in order to improve cooperation spirit in applying regulations and modern management concepts. It is also significant to implement training program that takes care of both educational and cultural aspects, and will in turn enhances all interested loyalty in performing council work and services in a very distinguished way.
11. Increase and intensify periodical meetings to include various administrative levels, this would:
 - Raise staff performance and efficiency, through following up there actual work.
 - Enhance staff ownership to there work responsibilities, through involving them in making decisions.
 - Promote work concept, so as to understand requirements in depth, for any possible inquiry about any pending matters.
 - Promote planning concepts and to reduce the occurrence of problems and errors.
 - Motivate staff to participate and express their opinions and suggestions in solving problems and overcoming difficulties.
12. Build a computerized system to manage human resources in an integrated manner and to deal with this program for the implementation of all movements of personnel and development of human resources.



13. Provide an appropriate venue for the archiving system, in accordance with the requirements of appropriate infrastructure.

14. Develop and apply new system for the judicial personnel.