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**Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza**  
**Quarterly Report**  
**October – December 2008**

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Under Leader Award No. GEG-A-00-01-00005-00

Submitted by Pact on behalf of Internews Network, Inc.

## I. Executive Summary

During the ninth quarter of *Aswatona: Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza*, Internews Network conducted several in-house trainings. These included: those that had been postponed from September; a joint training with the BBC Trust; a business development training on financial planning, marketing, and sales; and a workshop in partnership with the USAID Netham Project. Aswatona also sent three journalists to a workshop in Jordan on investigative journalism, and worked with stations on their productions. The end of the quarter witnessed large-scale violence in Gaza that resulted in mass demonstrations in the West Bank. These events lead Aswatona staff to cancel two in-house trainings that were underway; one in Hebron and one in Tulkarem.

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

Activity	Activities of This Quarter	#s	Planned	Actual
1.1a	open workshops - media and community - on issues of democracy, governance, and the role of media	23 journalists TV, radio, print, electronic	September	December
1.1b	open workshops on reporting on specific issues/topics		November	Delayed
1.1ci	radio - interviewing, story creation (r&d), production technique and formats		November	December
1.1cii	television - interviewing, story creation (r&d), production technique and formats		August/Sept	October and December
1.2	Production Support		Oct-Dec 2008	Oct-Dec 08
2.1a	in-house training for radio in West Bank and Gaza on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories		September	October
2.1b	in-house training for TV in the West Bank on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories		September	December
2.1c	Specialized training in safety, interviewing, fieldwork		October	Delayed
2.2a	Financial, sales and Marketing		November	November
2.3a	Focus groups with media owners/managers on the Media Environment to explore issues of law, ethics, standards, professionalism, and interactions with each other and with government		November/December	October & December
2.3b	Focus groups for licensing and other regulatory issues		July	Continued delay

## II. Background

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

The three main components are:

- 1) Strengthening the local media by creating self-sustaining business models, enhancing reporting and production capabilities, and skill-building on investigative and issue-specific journalism, and re-connecting the media outlets with their local communities by reporting on and working with local civil society organizations (CSOs) on field reporting.
- 2) Strengthening the knowledge base and awareness of the media and CSOs regarding each other's work, as well as strengthening the legal and regulatory sector that govern the media, and strengthening the networking and informal association of the media sector in order to professionalize the field.
- 3) Funding innovative program productions combined with training to build more cooperative, responsive and professional production capabilities, and implementing a small grants program focused on CSOs' communications and work with the media and community outreach to their.

## III. Key Results by Objective

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

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

#### **1.1a – Open Workshops: media and community on issues of democracy, governance, and the role of media**

#### **Media and the Courts: Joint Workshop by Aswatona and Netham with the Supreme Justice Council, 23 December 2008**

On 1 November 2008, the Supreme Justice Council (SJC), which is the Palestinian High Court, backed by President Mahmoud Abbas, issued regulations allowing broadcast media to cover the courts and legal system. These courts have been open to the public so journalists, by default, are entitled to attend sessions, but to publish or record or not?

The answer was relative until the new regulations were issued by the SJC. In the past, local newspapers that published or broadcast news of the Israeli military courts rarely considered approaching the Palestinian legal sector. Some did but only on general issues and problems, not on specific cases or legal issues. Due to the chaos and lack of rule of law during the *intifada*, the legal system was almost paralyzed. Instead of official enforcement, the factions and even military wings played the role of solving cases and social problems, and carrying out justice. The SJC, Chief Justice Issa Abu Sharar, with the full backing of the President, pledged to implement the rule of law, activate the courts, and to modernize the legal system.



In coordination with the Ministry of Interior, the legal system began to re-organize and operate again, albeit slowly.

Based on the new order and the regulation allowing broadcast media, the Aswatona and Netham projects organized a joint activity based on bringing the SJC together with the local media decision makers so that the latter could have a stronger understanding of the system, the steps needed to access information and the courts themselves, and their rights in reporting.

Twenty journalists representing seven TV stations, eight radio stations, the three main daily newspapers, and representatives from the electronic media and a radio and TV network attended the workshop. The activity was coordinated with the SJC, whose new PR representative created a visual guide on the new regulations to assist the media in covering the courts.

After the opening remarks, made by Aswatona staff member Abed Samara and Netham's Hussein Sholi, Mr. Majed Arouri, PR and spokesman of the SJC, gave a power-point presentation on the Council. He explained the goal of the PA in establishing the council, the tasks of the council, and the rules and regulations related to media coverage. Arouri pointed out that the workshop was an opportunity for both the media and the Council to discuss the best ways and means of covering the court sessions. He urged the media to fulfill its duty without fear or threats by any party. He also urged journalists to be very accurate in their reporting and to abide by the law in referring to suspects or those charged. He insisted that using the correct and relevant terminology is a must.

Next, the Chief Justice, Issa Abu Sharar spoke, beginning with a brief history of the creation of the SJC, its goals, achievements, and future. He listed the challenges and achievements of the SJC in their tasks.



He noted that the political split, as well as inability to convene the Palestinian Legislative Council has weakened the justice sector in Palestine. He also mentioned that corruption exists within the court clerks and the administrative staff and they have been trying to deal with that as well. He said that all these reasons had contributed to the weakness of the judiciary sector. Despite all that,

some achievements were made with the assistance of such foreign donors as Canada and Japan. For example, the court infrastructure was improved and the customer service department was upgraded in different places.

He concluded by saying that the Executive body has launched “an attack” on the judiciary and is trying to turn it into a “security arm” for security forces. He praised President Abbas for not interfering in the justice sector and for maintaining its independence and that the media role should be a “supportive one” for the judiciary so that the latter can maintain its integrity and independence.

Attached are the stories on the workshop that appeared on the PNN and Ma’an websites, in Al Ayyam the next day. Wattan TV also did a story that it aired the same night.

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

After conducting an in-house training on storyboard creation, interviewing techniques, producing mini-features and news packages, Aswatona received many requests to do technical training with the staff of its partner stations so that they would be able to use the equipment to its fullest in producing high quality programming. The following series of in-house trainings focuses on that.

#### **Tariq al Mahaba, Nablus, 5-7 December 2008**

Trainer Emad Ghunaim spent three days working with six staff members of the radio station working on improving their editing techniques, production quality, and use of equipment. The participants included two sound engineers, one editor, one presenter, and two reporters.

The first day was spent on improving the sound quality of the broadcasts both from the field and in the studio. The second day was dedicated to the work between the sound engineers, the reporters in the field and the presenter in producing the programs and news packages. They then practiced by going to the street for interviews recorded on the Fostex and downloading directly to the editing unit to create three vox-pops for broadcast.

On the final day, the trainer worked with the staff on different audio formats. The staff and manager of Tariq al Mahaba felt that the training was very beneficial for them and the station. They were all very active in the training and wanted to learn more. As one of the trainees said, “The training was excellent and we learned many things that will help us in our work. The in-house training is more useful for us than the open workshops because we do practical training which helps us more.”



In the evaluation of the training and trainer, the staff rated the training as either very good or excellent and the trainer as very good. The only complaint was, as usual, not enough time.

### **Palestine News Network (PNN), Bethlehem, 20-23 December 2008**

Trainer Imad Ghunaim worked with three of the PNN staff members. Because two of the three were sound engineers and quite professional, they focused the majority of the training on more advanced software and new technology of sound, editing, and producing.

The second day focused on the analogue and digital variations of different audio formats. Then they tested the various functions of



of sound theory, frequency response as well as phasing between channels. He also examined the compression and equalization needs of the future. They practiced on the mixing console and the software as well as working on the editing process. They started to play with and use Adobe Audition.

The staff requested training in making sound logos and jingles as well as electronic effects, so the trainer spent the third day working with them on this issue. They created a small electronic library of natural and electronic affects and music that they think will be useful for making jingles, ads, and spots. They also worked on setting up a music library with software for archiving.

Finally, the trainer discussed automation software that could be installed. He showed them the Jazler software for radio automation and explained how to use it to import audio files and arrange them for instant live broadcasting and creating automated playlists.

### **Radio Dream, Hebron, 24-27 December 2008**

The two staff members that the trainer worked with at the station were new and inexperienced. However, unlike the previous in-house training, the staff was committed to learning, was participatory, and did not act as if they knew everything already. Therefore, the trainer concentrated on the basics of using and calibrating the equipment, editing, and creating quality sound packages. Most of the three days was spent going over the sound mixing console, its various capabilities and with the Adobe Audition editing software.



### **Minbar al Huriya, Hebron, 28-30 December 2008**

The final training at Minbar al Huriya only made it through the morning session before Aswatona staff made the decision to postpone the rest of the training. With the launch of the attacks in Gaza, clashes broke out in Hebron and the staff felt it prudent to re-call the trainer to his home base in Ramallah. The training will resume once the situation is over and the station returns to its regular schedule.

### **1.1cii – TV story creation, production techniques, and formats**

While this series of in-house training was geared toward the techniques of good TV reporting and story creation, it also incorporated the equipment preparation, care, maintenance, and technical elements with the creation of the production. The three-day training course targeted camera people, editors, and reporters and their work together as a team.

**October 2008**

#### **Farah TV, Jenin, 14-16 October 2008**



started the training with production. He reviewed cameramen, the reporter, ideally. He then went simple storyboard the report before going station then brainstormed split into two teams of editor, and cameraman.

In their groups, they were given instructions on camera settings, video formatting, equipment and accessories needed before going into the field. They were taught how to develop a check list to ensure that each crew would have what the needed to do their jobs once they went to the field.

The camera people also received training on the techniques and various types of shots and filming. By the end of the day, they had their stories and equipment ready to go. Each team had their own story; the first on the olive harvest and the second on the Arab American University in Jenin. The second day was spent in field filming their stories.

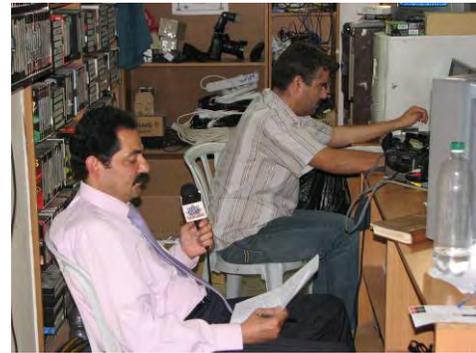


The final day, the trainer worked with staff on editing techniques. As a group, the trainer and the journalists prepared the studio for the program to be aired. When everything was set, they went on air for the broadcast of the show “Panorama.”

#### **Al Fajr Al Jadeed TV, Tulkarem, 19, 20-21 October 2008**

As with the first day in Jenin with Farah TV, Firas Abdulrahman went over the theories and techniques as well as the technical skills needed for story production with the nine staff members of Al Fajr Al Jadeed. He also spent time just with the cameramen to go over the technical issues, equipment and accessories needed before leaving the station for a shoot. With the staff of the TV, he discussed not only the story board but the creation of promotional spots for the program. They explored the use of these type of spots and the type of editing and shots needed to produce such a promo.

On the second day, the trainer and the station staff created the storyboard for a story on Tulkarem Hospital. The reporter and the cameramen then went to the hospital to capture this story, with a list of necessary shots and sound bites in hand. On the last day, the trainer spent time with the editors creating a shot list and selecting sound bites. As with Farah TV, the trainer installed a new version of the graphic software for titling and subtitling for the final story production, went over the studio set-up so that all was ready to go for the next morning's broadcast of "Tulkarem Al-Yom."



The staff believed that the relevance of the session was excellent as was the timing for the training. As one of the trainees said, "this training is new to our station and we learned a lot of things that will help us to improve our work in the future."

### **Wattan TV, Ramallah, 23-25 October 2008**

The trainer, Firas Abdulrahman, used the same technique and information for the training of the Wattan staff. The twelve staff members worked with Firas on the theories, techniques, and technical skills for story production. However, unlike the previous stations, Wattan staff did not work on actual stories but on samples as was their preference. They also worked with two camera for outside filming instead of one, so the techniques of varying shots and the editing of them into a comprehensive production was added to the training. They also worked with different locations and building on the small and symbolic things available in an on-location shot to make the story more interesting visually.

The second day, the staff and trainer worked in the studio with set-up, lighting, and the use of two or more cameras for a live program and the symmetrical coding needed in each one. The third day was dedicated to getting footage from around the city with natural sounds and from various angles in order to experiment with the frames, the timing of the frames as well as the focus, shutter speeds and sequence shots. When they returned to the station with three hours of film, they time coded it and developed the log sheet and shooting list. They finished by capturing the material and organizing the files on the hard drive and then produced a sequence using natural sound and split audio in the editing and the editing of a two camera interview.



At the end of the training, a request was made to do a "team" training so that a crew could act as one whether out in the field or in the studio with the director and for technical training on editing the news and graphics.

### **Jenin Merkezi TV, Jenin, 29-31 October 2008**

During this three-day training, Firas Abdulrahman worked with five staff members at the station in Jenin. Following the same outline and agenda of the first day with all the stations, he discovered that he needed to spend extra time with the camera people because they did not know how to use the camera to its fullest capability. He went over the functions in detail from A to Z, moving them out of just using the automatic function on the camera.

On the second day, they discussed the story board and planned the shooting list to start a report about an olive farmer near the city. They outlined the type of shots, the framing, background, artistic and interview footage they would need. Once they arrived in the village of al Zababdeh, they also experimented with panoramic shots. They then went to a second village and found another family with very old olive trees on their land that they agreed would be good for the story. Upon returning to the station, they logged the footage and discussed the editing for the next day.

The last day was spent working with the editing software and graphics in the final production of the story as well as filming the final stand-up and interview to be included. In the end, the trainees gave very high marks to both the trainer and the content. As one of the staff said, “this training was very good because it was practical and building the skills we can use right now.”

### **December 2008**

In December the same training was completed with the last two stations, Baladna TV in Qalqiya and Al-Rou’ah TV in Bethlehem.

### **Baladna TV, Qalqilya, 17-19 December 2008**

The Baladna TV training was kept basic as they have many new staff members since Aswatona last did a training there. The trainer focused primarily on technical training on use of the equipment, editing software, and graphics with the five staff members that participated. They went to the field to experiment with the different camera techniques and then to the studio to practice with the cameras, lighting, and set-up. In his report, the trainer commented that they could use more work on the studio set up and on archiving the materials they have in the station.



### **Al Rou’ah TV, Bethlehem, 23-25 December**

This training was outlined to be similar to the others, however, since the second and third days of the training were Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the trainer arranged for the trainees to cover the traditional journey of the Patriarch from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, Christmas Eve day. Working with two crews, Firas Abdulrahman positioned them to two places on the route of the Patriarch's journey. The next day, while the camera crews were preparing, the reporter wrote the story from the night before and the first crew headed off the Jerusalem. The second crew went to Manger Square and shot some panoramic views and other shots they had agreed upon for the sequence of the story. They spent the entire day in the field shooting the different events and the journey. As with previous trainings, they spent the third day finalizing the story and working on editing techniques.



## 1.2 – Production Support

The second round of subgrants, signed on September 28 for a duration of three months, were awarded to five subgrantees. Two major television stations in the West Bank, Wattan TV of Ramallah, and Farah TV of Jenin, were awarded funding for innovative productions, while three West Bank-wide networks, including Palestine News Network, NUR radio network, and Sada Network were provided with essential pieces of equipment in addition to production support.

Thus far all five of the subgrantees have demonstrated a commitment to adhering to the production and broadcasting schedules outlined in the award agreements. Aswatona has placed a greater amount of obligation and responsibility on the second round subgrants, including more frequent submission of produced episodes. The Aswatona team has also been very active in reviewing the submitted episodes and offering the stations feedback on virtually every facet of production including content, camera work, editing, and language.

Some minor delays were incurred over the first two months of the subgrants. Initially there were some issues relating to the wire transfers, as the timing coincided with holidays and some of the local banks changed their wire transfer procedures. Another issue that Aswatona encountered was the discrepancy between the timing of the financial reports submission and the internal accounting system of the stations. As the grants are three months long, the initial rounds of reports were to be submitted on November 15. Some of the subgrantees' accounting procedures have them paying salaries and production costs at the end of the month. To compensate for this, the project Grants Manager and Accountant held meetings with each of the partner stations to determine the best course of action that would not drastically affect the accounting systems in place. The situation has since been resolved.

## Measurement of Project Deliverables

Station	# Eps Scheduled Through	Actual # Eps Produced
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	December	Through December
<b>Wattan TV</b>		
1) <b>Weekly Harvest</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>
2) <b>Life Tour</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>
3) <b>With the People</b>	<b>1 (pilot)</b>	<b>To be submitted</b>
<b>Farah TV</b>		
1) <b>Panorama</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>
2) <b>“If I were...”</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>PNN</b>		
1) <b>News Bulletin</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>NUR Network</b>		
1) <b>NUR Morning</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Sada Network</b>		
1) <b>Sada Filistene</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>

## Current Subgrants Overview

### 1) Wattan TV

**Location:** Ramallah

**Award Amount:** \$45,045.00

#### Programs:

**Weekly Harvest:** The show covers recent political and social news from the week, with analysis provided by established, respected, and objective panellists. Hosted by Wattan News-Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Hassan Abdullah, the show features a variety of guests that complement the stories covered.

**Life Tour:** This 60-minute program, the most popular program of Wattan TV to date, continues to highlight Palestinian figures from ordinary backgrounds that have succeeded in their respective fields and contributed to their community. The second season, however, is being produced in documentary fashion, with interviews with people who know them, narration, and relevant footage of the figure being honored.

**With the People:** This 90-minute weekly program comprehensively explores a wide variety of social, economic, and political issues live on-air. The format of the show, undoubtedly the most technically advanced of any Aswatona-supported programs, features studio guests, field reports, street interviews with ‘vox pops’, and call-in sessions. The complexity of the show requires a two month period in which Wattan TV will implement a research and design phase to ensure that the program will reach its full potential as well as staff and moderator training. This period will involve the creation of a program treatment, detailed formatting, topic selection, and capacity building. Wattan TV intends to embark on an extensive promotional campaign prior to the airing of the show.

**Project Status:** Wattan TV continues to produce and broadcast its two programs on schedule, with the pilot episode of the third program to be submitted to Internews Network in the coming days. As mentioned in the overview, Wattan TV experienced some delays due to their internal accounting system, which sees production costs and salaries paid at the end of the month. To account for this, the station submitted to Aswatona the receipts and contracts prior to their being signed to prove their intention to do so.

## **2) Farah TV**

**Location:** Jenin

**Award Amount:** \$18,000.00

### **Programs:**

**“If I were responsible...”:** This innovative weekly program, comparable to a successful Aswatona supported radio program in the first round of subgrants, engages the citizens of Jenin on issues that affect their daily lives. Hosted by the station’s smart and savvy anchor, Abdelnasser Abuabeid, the show has three segments that together provide the audience with comprehensive coverage of the issues and challenge them to propose creative solutions to them.

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

**Project Status:** Farah TV has been the timeliest of all of the second round subgrantees in terms of the submission of financial and programmatic reports, delivery of episodes, and in the production and broadcast of its scheduled episodes. The episodes of both programs have also been highly received by Aswatona staff and by the citizens of Jenin. The station director, Fathi Nator, has expressed his interest in further cooperation with the project and stated his intent to submit a follow-up proposal in the near future.

## **3) Palestine News Network**

**Location:** West Bank (Headquarters-Bethlehem)

**Award Amount:** \$40,982.00 (including capacity building funds for two online editing stations and outside recorders).

### **Program Description**

**News Bulletin:** The news bulletin gives participating radio stations the opportunity to provide their local audiences with hourly updates of current news items from contributing reporters throughout the West Bank. Utilizing resources from each station and reporters in the field, the news bulletin dramatically improves the capacity of the stations to provide comprehensive, Internews West Bank/Gaza Media Freedom  
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accurate, and timely news coverage. The stations participating in the project are PNN, Mostaqbel Radio (Ramallah), Ahlam Radio (Jenin), Manbar Al Hurriyah (Hebron), Tariq Al Mahabeh Radio (Nablus), and Dream Radio (Hebron).

**Project Status:** All deliverables have been met thus far. The project has experienced some delays due to a change in the wire transfer procedures at the network's local bank in Bethlehem. In addition, there were some production issues in the initial weeks of the project due to one station, Ahlam Radio of Jenin, not having the ability to file reports because they had not received their outside recorder. The issue has since been resolved with the delivery of the equipment and the station currently produces quality reports included in the bulletin. PNN has now added the audio clips from the stations' stories onto their Arabic website. In addition, they also post the Sada Filistene TV program weekly.

#### **4) NUR Network**

**Location:** West Bank (Headquarters-Bethlehem)

**Award Amount:** \$41,860 (including capacity building funds for the purchase of mixers, online editing units, and outside recorders for the member stations).

#### **Program:**

**Exposing the Event:** This 45-60 minute program is produced by a different member station each day and covers issues related to daily life in each community. Through a single point of contact, the program permits listeners to call-in and email, no matter their location, in order to contribute insight into the topics being covered. The program is also enriched through complementary field reporting, such as interviews with municipality officials and people on the street. This program presents local news to a national audience, enabling citizens of each governorate to be aware of the issues affecting people elsewhere throughout the West Bank as well as the solutions those communities may have developed.

**Project Status:** NUR Network has also successfully adhered to the outlined program schedule. Some delays were incurred early on due to the time taken to deliver the equipment. Since all of the equipment is now in possession of the stations, the network has been producing and broadcasting the episodes without problems. The director of the network, George Mesleh, submitted a memo to Internews Network explaining the rationale behind changing the name of the program from *Exposing the Event* to *NUR Morning*, citing that the name is catchier and includes the name of the network.

#### **5) Sada Network**

**Location:** West Bank (Headquarters-Ramallah)

**Award Amount:** \$44,396.00 (including capacity building funds for the purchase of one online editing unit and one DV camera).

#### **Program:**

*Sada Filistene*: The program, considered one of the success stories from the first round of subgrants, continues to be representative of many of the objectives of the Aswatona project, in that it gives each member station the opportunity to produce a local news segment to be compiled for collective broadcast on Friday evenings. Recently, the network has expanded to include Al Nour TV of Jericho, and Nawras TV in Hebron, thereby increasing the capacity of the program to deliver West Bank-wide stories to local audiences. The original member stations, Gama TV, Al Fajr Al Jadeed, Baladna TV, Al Rou'ah TV, and Jenin Markezi are still active in the network.

**Project Status:** The network continues to produce and broadcast the program according to the schedule outlined in the contract. The network is also eager to continue its work with the Aswatona project, including support for an additional program focusing on more cultural events throughout the West Bank.

### **Third Round Subgrants**

As the second round subgrants are coming to conclusion, the Aswatona project has been working in conjunction with its partner stations who have submitted proposals for a subsequent round of awards, which will ideally be signed in late January or early February. The team has taken a more targeted approach in selecting stations that not only demonstrate a propensity for long-term sustainability, but are also capable of producing programs with heightened quality, innovation, and a clear understanding of the needs of the local communities. It was also decided that the duration of the third round of subgrants would be five months, which will permit the stations to produce and broadcast programs for an entire cycle. This will also allow for more time for trainers and Aswatona input to be implemented into the productions.

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

#### **2.1a – In-house Radio training on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories.**

##### **11-14 October 2008, Bethlehem, PNN and NUR Network stations**

In cooperation with the BBC Trust and its trainer, Tony Howson, Aswatona staff prepared a targeted training for PNN and NUR radio network using the productions being funded by the Aswatona Project. The first two days were geared toward putting together news packages and creating the wrap-around needed for the separate news stories to be edited together for either the headline news or for the 30-minute news broadcast at noon and 6pm. Because this joint production between PNN and NUR network was a new effort, the training focused on how they can better work together to produce news clips of similar quality and with brief intros that could be used for the headline or for the slide and out segments.

Through a session on phone-in program productions, radio presenters and producers acquired the skills necessary to prepare and produce high-quality, interactive programs, such as dividing roles between presenter and producer and improving the relationship with the audience and studio guests. An interactive discussion took place on handling “on-air” calls and important ethical and editorial issues, such as dealing with difficult calls, maintaining balance, avoiding libel, being accurate, impartial, objective and fair with guests, callers and listeners.

“I greatly benefitted from this training, especially regarding ways to encourage listeners to participate in our show and how to use trailers. I was also encouraged to ask myself important editorial questions and find ways to address such problems within the Palestinian context,” said trainee Dana Al-Alem presenter of daily morning phone in program in Tariq Al-Mahaba FM in Nablus.

The second part of the training course focused on the NUR network productions including mini-features and short documentaries for radio in order to strengthen the NUR program cycle and the production segments of each of the member stations. Through the documentary-making sessions, radio reporters explored the differences between a news package and a mini-feature/short documentary, including the various styles, the need for greater planning and research and the use of sound to create mental pictures listeners can relate to. At the end of the course, trainees produced 10-to-15-minute documentaries on various community issues.

The participants underlined the uniqueness of such a course, as documentaries are rarely produced by the Palestinian radio. “We have learned a new style of radio report, which is not yet



being used by local radio stations in Palestine and has never been approached in previous training courses I participated in. We also learned new ways of writing for radio, including how to blend various sounds to attract the attention of the listeners and make them stay tuned until the end of the documentary,” explained Mohammad Abu Al-Rob from Al Ahlam radio in Jenin. “It was also very interesting to learn how to maintain editorial balance and fairness towards all points of view.”

## **2.2a – Development of business/financial structure and marketing**

Building on the previous organizational structure workshop in July, Aswatona held a workshop on financial planning, sales and marketing of the stations. It is the third and final workshop on the business development aspect of the program.

### **Media Financial Planning, Marketing and Sales Workshop, 11-13 November 2008**

Aswatona held a three-day workshop on developing marketing and sales skills for the local media at the Best Eastern hotel in Ramallah. Recognized as a major need for television and radio stations throughout the West Bank, trainers Ali Safi and Munir Habashi worked in conjunction with Aswatona to create an agenda that would cover such key elements as how reach target

audiences, developing an effective marketing plan, and approaching potential sponsors and advertisers.

Munir Habashi lead the twenty-four participants, comprising of station and marketing managers from sixteen stations, through a series of theoretical and practical sessions that utilized role playing, simulated trainings, and exercises that were relevant to the local media. The initial day of the training focused on modern concepts of marketing and advertising, the various components of marketing, and strategies of targeting specific demographics.

On the second day, Habashi discussed the importance of strong communication skills, convincing advertisers of the benefits of purchasing airtime and the tactics of being a good salesman. Throughout these sessions the trainer and participants explored and role played real life situations that are often encountered, especially in communications. The third and final day focused on working in the present economy and how to succeed in business by using creativity, taking risks and using good negotiating tactics.

At the conclusion of the training, Habashi remarked that he would recommend a follow-up workshop in the near future to evaluate the progress of the stations in developing sound marketing plans and to cover additional, more advanced issues in this field.

The participants were eager to share their enthusiasm with the Aswatona project at the conclusion of the workshop. Mahmoud Barhma of Nablus TV noted that Habashi “was able to deliver much valuable information in a manner that was easily understood. I hope to have him conduct a special training session for our station in the future”. Dr. Raja Surghali echoed Barhma’s satisfaction, claiming, “the course was able to improve our understanding of marketing strategy. Now I can correct many of the mistakes that our station has made and incorporate new styles in our station’s policy”.

#### **Participants:**

- |                      |                                     |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1) Wattan TV         | Kamal Oudi and Maie Stati           |
| 2) Al Fajr Al Jadeed | Dr. Raja Surghli and Enass alAshqar |
| 3) Rou’ah TV         | Hamdi Farraj and Kifah Frokh        |
| 4) Baladna TV        | Hussam Hantash and Hind Khuraishi   |
| 5) Gama TV           | Abeer Kilani and Hayat Sarrawi      |
| 6) Tariq Al Mahabeh  | Shakir Oudeh                        |
| 7) Isis Radio        | George Misliah                      |
| 8) PNN               | Ibrahim Hussari                     |
| 9) Sada Network      | Omar Samara                         |
| 10) Farah            | Fathi Natour                        |
| 11) Jenin Merkezi    | Shadi Abu Alrub                     |
| 12) Minber Al Huriya | Taghreed Alswaiti                   |
| 13) Ahlam Radio      | Iyad and Ihab Abu Alrub             |
| 14) Alshabab FM      | Jamil Daraghmeh and Rami Zaqqot     |
| 15) Bethlehem 2000   | George Qanawati and Jenny Babon     |
| 16) Nablus TV        | Mahmud Barham.                      |



### Participant Evaluations

Item	xcellentE	Average	Weak
Applicability of Training	95%	5%	0%
Trainers Skills	95%	5%	0%
Timliness of Training	85%	15%	0%
Length of sessions and training	80%	20%	0%
Importance of Subjects Covered	95%	5%	0%
ningOverall Assessment of Trai	90%	10%	0%

### 2.3a Focus groups with media owners and managers to explore issues in the media environment

*16 October 2008*

Aswatona put together a roundtable with eight stations and representatives of USAID to discuss the current media situation. The partners who attended the meeting:

- 1) Muamar Orabi – Wattan TV
- 2) Fadi Abu Sada – PNN (although a new production partner, we have done training with his staff and he has attended the management trainings)
- 3) Fathi Natour – Farah TV Abeer Kilani – Gama TV/Sada Network
- 4) Ala’a Bardana – Tariq Al Mahaba Radio
- 5) Hamdi Faraj – Rou’ah TV/Sada Network
- 6) George Musleh – NUR Radio
- 7) Raja Sourghali – Al Fajr Al Jadeed
- 8) Hossam Abu Hantash – Baladna TV/Sada Network

Four representatives from USAID DG first went to Wattan TV to see the station and to speak with the staff there about their station and its future. They then came to the Aswatona offices to meet with the other partner stations to discuss the overall media environment, the obstacles and

opportunities. It was a lively discussion about the difficulties in the economic environment but also the lack of regulation of the governmental entities and the number of donors who cannot coordinate to target their intervention.

The representatives from USAID suggested that the media owners come together to develop a strategy that could be propagated with the donors at the regular media donor coordination meeting. It was a very frank, open, and productive meeting for the stations, Aswatona, and USAID.

### ***28 December 2008***

Aswatona called a strategy meeting with its keep partners to discuss developing a common approach to media coverage in light of the violence in Gaza.

Having worked with the local media in Palestine over the last year, Aswatona called upon their partner stations to begin mobilizing a move toward positive media. Everyone agreed that we needed to work together to create the collective, combined approach in which the local media could lead the way in helping people, particularly the youth, turn their frustration and feelings of helplessness into working positively toward supporting the people of Gaza. Instead of mobilizing people to take to the streets, they began to mobilize people to take collective actions in their communities through a different type of media message, to counter the daily message of death and destruction.

Independently, stations had been trying to assist their viewers; some had psychologists on talking to parents about dealing with their children's trauma and fear, some had programs on the importance of education in arming the Palestinian cause for independence, some had contacted civil society organizations to see what they were doing. Internews called on them to come together to explore a collective strategy. As Ibrahim Husary of United Palestine News Network said, "we have all been doing small things separately but this is exactly what we needed now, an overall strategy for our approach, as local media, to deal with this situation." It was decided that all would combine efforts for a targeted and systematic message; a Positive Media Action. The stations would lead in engaging citizens by asking them to report on their collective actions and donation drives with stories, pictures and video while the stations gave information on activities, locations, and efforts of local civil society organizations.

The Aswatona partner stations are actively reaching out to their audiences. The TVs have set up windows on their screens to highlight activities, pictures, and videos from citizens on the efforts of groups. The radios are encouraging people to call in and tell their stories about help being provided and to give ideas on how assistance can be given. They are encouraging people to reach out to the people of Gaza through SMS and telephone calls to let them know that they are not alone and to share with them efforts on their behalf; and the electronic websites have set up special access for people to send their messages, stories, and activities for posting. They are collecting and interacting with ideas and messages from the Yahoo Youth Group that has humming with efforts for the people of Gaza. "We are very excited with the response we have had so far with the citizen journalist postings and we have activated the radio stations in the network to report on collective actions" Fadi Abu Sada of PNN said.

The efforts, all under the banner of “We are all Gaza” is now being copied throughout the West Bank by other stations.

#### IV. Comparison of Planned and Actual Activities

Activity	Activities of This Quarter	#s	Planned	Actual
1.1a	open workshops - media and community - on issues of democracy, governance, and the role of media	23 journalists TV, radio, print, electronic	September	December
1.1b	open workshops on reporting on specific issues/topics		November	Delayed
1.1ci	radio - interviewing, story creation (r&d), production technique and formats		November	December
1.1cii	television - interviewing, story creation (r&d), production technique and formats		August/Sept	October and December
1.2	Production Support		Oct-Dec 2008	Oct-Dec 08
2.1a	in-house training for radio in West Bank and Gaza on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories		September	October
2.1b	in-house training for TV in the West Bank on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories		September	December
2.1c	Specialized training in safety, interviewing, fieldwork		October	Delayed
2.2a	Financial, sales and Marketing		November	November
2.3a	Focus groups with media owners/managers on the Media Environment to explore issues of law, ethics, standards, professionalism, and interactions with each other and with government		November/December	October & December
2.3b	Focus groups for licensing and other regulatory issues		July	Continued delay

#### V. Activities Planned for Next Quarter

Activities Planned for Next Quarter	Timeline
1.1a open workshops - media and community - on issues of democracy, governance, and the role of media	January & February
1.1b reporting on specific issues/topics	January & March
1.2 production grants	January & February
1.4a Media Law and Regulatory Structures	March
2.1a in-house training for radio in West Bank and Gaza	February

on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories	
2.1b in-house training for TV in the West Bank on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories	January & March
2.1c Joint workshop on Conflict Reporting	February
2.1d Content terminology, and writing	March
2.3a Focus groups with media owners/managers on the Media Environment to explore issues of law, ethics, standards, professionalism, and interactions with each other and with government	January & March
2.3b Focus groups for licensing and other regulatory issues	February

## VI. Success Stories and Recommendations

### West Bank Stations Serving Gaza Community

The Gaza Strip has been deprived of electricity off and on since September. But every since the major escalation of violence started on 27 December, Gaza has been completely without electricity. The independent radio stations in Gaza stopped operating as their generators ran out of diesel and with no electricity TV, so independent information on what was happening became hard to come by. However, people were still able to transmit radio stations being broadcast from the West Bank.

Our staff member in Gaza monitored the transmissions and found that two of our partner stations in Hebron were reaching Gaza and were being tuned into by the people. Until that moment, both Minbar Al Huriya and Dream radio in Hebron had been mainly reporting the events and news as part of the Internews supported radio network. The Internews staff in Ramallah took immediate action to implement a more directed broadcast to Gaza.

Because Internews had been working with UPNN during the attacks on a coordinated “positive media campaign” to cover relief efforts, we contacted them to develop a plan of action with the Hebron stations and PNN. We put them in touch with Internews-trained journalists in Gaza for live reporting on the arrival of humanitarian goods, hours of humanitarian cease-fires and to guide the community on when and where to go for food and other distribution centers.

UPNN started implementing this plan since the first week of January and we are in continuous contact with them to follow up and discuss the plan of action. This effort will provide the much needed and desired access to important information necessary to assist in the delivery of humanitarian relief to the people of Gaza.