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**Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza**  
**Quarterly Report**  
**January – March 2008**

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Submitted by Pact on behalf of Internews Network, Inc.

**Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza**  
**Quarterly Programmatic Report**  
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## I. Executive Summary

During the sixth quarter of *Aswatona: Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza*, Internews Network successfully continued the two year project by accomplishing the following:

- Internews Network trained two partner television stations, Al Fajr Al Jadeed and Roa'ah TV, on storyboard design, filming, coding and editing of rushes for a jointly produced documentary. The three editors, two cameramen, and the director were involved in the training from January 21-25.
- Internews Network conducted in-house trainings at television stations focusing specifically on story development and program design, improving and using reports and from the field, editing techniques and production for:
  - 1) Baladna TV – 26-27 January  
Number of journalists: six journalists
  - 2) Farah TV – 28-30 January  
Number of journalists: eight journalists and the station ownerA total of fifteen media professionals received training on these topics.
- Internews Network conducted in-house radio training focusing on either current or future productions (morning magazine shows) and on local news bulletins.
  - 1) Tariq al-Mahaba, Nablus – March 8-10  
Number of journalists: eight journalists (F:3, M:5)
  - 2) Al Balad Radio, Jenin – March 11-12  
Number of journalists: seven journalists (F:3, M:4)
  - 3) Amwaj Radio, Ramallah – March 13-15  
Number of journalists: twelve journalists and one news manager (F:7, M:5)
  - 4) Al Qamar Radio, Jericho – March 17-18  
Number of journalists: four journalists (F:1, M:3)
  - 6) Radio Bethlehem 2000 – March 19-20  
Number of journalists: seven journalists (F:4, M:3)
  - 7) Marah Radio, Hebron – March 22-23  
Number of journalists: nine journalists (F:4, M:5)
  - 8) Minbar al Horiya Radio, Hebron – March 24-25  
Number of journalists: six journalists (F:3, M:3)
  - 9) PNN, Bethlehem – March 26  
Number of journalists: four journalists including the editor-in-chief (F:1, M:3)
- Internews ran three workshops on “Getting the Story: Covering Press Conferences and Conducting Interviews for New” in Ramallah, Bethlehem, and Nablus from radio, television, print, and electronic news agencies.
  - 1) Ramallah for media outlets in Ramallah and Jericho – March 1-3  
Number of journalists: thirteen journalists (F:3, M:10)
  - 2) Bethlehem for media outlets in Bethlehem and Hebron – March 8-10  
Number of journalists: thirteen journalists (F:7, M:6)
  - 3) Nablus for media outlets in Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem, and Qalqilya March 15-16 & 19

Number of journalists: seventeen journalists (F:4, M:13)

- Internews Network worked with the broadcast media association with their initial board meeting to set the agenda and activities for the association membership.
- Internews Network began work on the Media Laws by translating and discussing with various parties the 1995 Press and Publications Law, the 2004 and 2006 reform suggestions, as well as the proposed 2004 Audio-Visual Media Draft Law proposed by the Ministry of Telecommunications.
- One additional subgrant agreement contract with Tariq Al Mahaba Radio in Nablus was signed on 6 February 2008.
- The total number of program productions funded by *Aswatona* was nineteen, and the total number of episodes produced in this quarter was two hundred and thirty-four (234). The number of partner stations receiving new grants in this quarter was one. Six partners finished their first grant this quarter.
- Mentoring on marketing for station owners. *Aswatona* staff has been assisting in marketing and sales strategies for the programs currently funded by the project, as well as assisting in those who have submitted proposals for the second round.

## **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.



*Aswatona: Independent Media Program in the West Bank and Gaza* runs from 24 October 2006 through 20 September 2008 with a sub-grant of \$3,884,026.

### **III. Key Results**

*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 - Workshop on Media Access to Information - pending

This workshop, in partnership with DAI was to have been done in November but was postponed due to the change of the COP at DAI and to the needed changes in the agenda. *Aswatona* has been in discussion with DAI and had planned to hold the workshop with journalists and CSOs in late January or early February. DAI subsequently requested a change of date to April 6-7, 2008.

#### 1.1b – Three topic specific workshops: “Getting the Story: Covering Press Conferences and Interviews for News” in the West Bank

From the beginning, *Aswatona* has been following the news on broadcast media as well as the print and electronic news agencies. It became evident that the local journalists lack the tools to handle press conferences and news interviews. They do not know how to extract the real story behind these topics; they rarely ask questions and end up just running with the recording of the entire press conference or interview. They did not ask themselves the important journalistic questions: What is the best quote? What was the reason for the event? What was not told or what is hidden? In other words, what is the STORY?

To highlight the problem and to raise the journalistic standards and skills, the *Aswatona* project held workshops for selected broadcast outlets, news papers, and electronic news agencies. Three different workshops were held in order to focus on the issues in each area - central, north, and south West Bank. *Aswatona* contracted three experienced local trainers, who are themselves, seasoned veteran journalists and affiliated to foreign news agencies; Hisham Abdullah (AFP) and lead trainer, Mohammed Saadi (Reuters), and Ahmad Zaki (PBC and Oman TV) to conduct the training. In preparation for the workshops, the *Aswatona* team, together with the trainers, agreed that the workshops should be practical and story-oriented so that the journalists could practice what they were learning and could use the result immediately in their media outlets.

The team selected broadcasts and news articles already written from press conferences and news interviews as case studies. The team also set up a real press conference in each of the three areas so that the participants could practice what they were learning. It was also agreed that the participants would be asked to line up interviews based on the stories from the press conferences. The media outlets were then selected to include local television and radio stations as well as the newspapers and electronic media. The workshops were planned and venues set for the first in Ramallah for the media in Ramallah and Jericho, the second in Bethlehem for the media in Bethlehem and Hebron, the last in Nablus for the media in Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem, and Qalqilya. The selected outlets in each area were invited to nominate one news journalist and to send a cameraman the second day for the televisions and a field recorder with the radio journalists.

### **The Agenda:**



### **Getting the Story: Covering Press Conferences and Conducting Interviews for News**

#### *Saturday, Day One*

- 9:00-9:15: Registration Attendance
- 9:15-9:30: Welcome by Aswatona staff outlining the goals of the workshop and introduction
- 9:30-10:45: Lecture on the theory of press conferences and question development
- 10:45-11:00: Coffee Break
- 11:00-11:45: Evaluating previous press conferences
- 11:45-13:45: Lecture on press interviews, and how to conduct and questions
- 13:45-14:45: Lunch
- 14:45-16:00: Exercises (case studies, role plays)

#### *Sunday, Day Two*

- 9:30-10:00: Review
- 10:00-11:30: Participants divided into two groups for role play

Group I: Press conferences, prepare questions for the person holding the press conference (Mayor, a member of a Legislative Council, Governor, Director of the company, or other) trainers will assist in question development.

Group II: Interviews for news, group is divided into two parts, the first group to develop the question for the interview with the agreed upon (as is the case in the first set) and the second group will be the interviewees.

- 11:30-12:00: Coffee Break
- 12:00-1:00: Press Conference with an official
- 13:00-14:15: Lunch
- 14:15-15:15: Evaluation and critique of Press conference
- 15:15-16:00: Divided participants into groups (one from each media type) to prepare questions and set appointments for conducting interviews with several figures  
Each Group editing interviews and press conferences by, and under the supervision of the trainer

Note: Participants are requested edit interviews and press conferences registered and bring tomorrow for presentation and critique

*Monday, Day Three*

- 9:30-11:00: Review of the second day, review and evaluate some or all articles that have been edited
- 11:00-11:15: Coffee Break
- 11:15-13:15: Evaluation of productions by trainees, trainers, and Aswatona team
- 13:15-14:15: Lunch
- 14:15-16:00: Final review of workshop material, stories produced – press conference and individual interviews, and workshop evaluations.
- 16:00 Close

**Ramallah, 1-3 March, 2008, Best Eastern Hotel**

For: Ramallah and Jericho Journalists

Trainers: Hisham Abdullah and Mohammed Sa’adi

Press Conference held by: Spokesperson for the Ramallah Police Department Adnan Damiri

**Participants List**

TV Stations:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
1	Ghouson Sabri	Amwaj TV- Ramallah
2	Baker Tariq	AL-Nour TV –Jericho
3	Salam Aldeek	Alsharq TV-Ramallah
4	Nizar Habash	Wattan TV- Ramallah

Radio stations:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
5	Sharef Ali	Amwaj Radio-Ramallah
6	Samer Albetawi	Almustaqbal Radio-Ramallah
7	Rami Zaqout	Radio Alshabab -Birzeit
8	Firas Altaweel	Ajyal Radio- Ramallah
9	Nael Daraghmeah	Al-Qamar Radio- Jericho

Electronic Media:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
10	Hafez Asakreah	Maa'n Network
11	Ziad Alkurdi	Pal Press

Newspaper:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
12	Lama Qandel	Alhayat aljadedah-Ramallah
13	Nael Mousa	Alhayat aljadedah-Ramallah

The workshop opened with an introduction from the Aswatona team about the role and responsibilities of the media, the goals of the workshop, and the reasons for the topic. The trainers then started with theoretical introduction of the subject. Hisahm Abdullah discussed press conferences held by officials, PLC members, Mayors, business firms and/or civil society leaders and why they hold them; after a certain events or meetings or to announce new policies, etc. He explained that there is always a purpose for a press conference whether it is called for by individuals or, at times, by the media itself. The question is why and how a journalist should cover a press conference, what kind of questions should be asked, and what research is needed for before attending.



Trainer Mohammad Sa'adi explained the need for background research, the different approaches of interviewing, the different types of interviews, and how to choose who to interview, as well as the art of developing the questions. After reviewing how the trainees saw themselves as journalists, the group started focusing on the need to use the "professional tools" available for other journalists around the world. The trainers highlighted the importance to ask the "propping questions" to ask why and how, and try to have as much information as possible. It was made

clear to them how important it is to prepare ahead of time for the interview and the conference, to investigate and inquire, before and after the coverage. This was illustrated over and over through examples and through their own work during the session.

Trainees were also shown the importance of "digesting" information by subjecting what they get to the professional questions and by doubting all parties' interest. It was made clear to them how to identify with "information and news environment" through "learning to listen and to keep up to date." The participants were giving "tips and directions" on how to run a fruitful interview. This was illustrated by the critique of example interviews and their own interviews they conducted during the session. Every time an example was used, trainees were asked to identify "what is the story, what is the lead, what is the right quote, did we ask the right questions, do we need more information.

The trainees were given prepared materials from previous press conferences and interviews from the local television, radio, and print productions. These examples were used to open a discussion analyzing and critiquing the stories and examining, first, whether there was a story



and, second, whether the story chosen was the real one. Discussion session enabled the participants to explore, with each other, these two questions before the trainers gave their thoughts and critique. It was evident that the trainees had a difficult time in telling the story in its "simplest direct way" - the most needed in any coverage. A wide range of examples were used to connect them to this requirement. They were asked to re-write leads and to try to listen to others in order to understand and recognize this need.

The second two days were used to work with the participants on specific assignments; each group was assigned a story/interview in addition to the coverage of the press conference with the Ramallah Police spokesperson, Adnan Damiri, which had been arranged by the trainers, together with the Aswatona team. Questions to be asked were reviewed with the participants. They were asked how to prepare for the stories depending on tips that were giving through lectures a practice.

The participants spent time before the event, developing their questions and thoughts with the trainers. During the press conference, all trainees had the chance to direct questions to him about the activities of the police. They asked him about the security plan, about the new women police, about the types of crimes the police are witnessing, etc. Overall, the press conference went well and Mr. Damiri also handed out the newly released statistics on crime in the district. Over lunch, Mr. Damiri commented on the thoughtful questions asked by the trainees. After the lunch, an evaluation of the press conference in general and the questions asked, was done followed by a discussion of what story could be extracted from the 20-minute press conference. All trainees were asked to file a story on the press conference, whether audio, video, or print, and to come back the next day with a final story.



In the meantime, the four different groups had lined up interviews with three different individuals on the various issues of the week. The first group, made up of one journalist from each of the media types, interviewed Qadoura Fares, former head of the Prisoners' Committee, on the issue of the prisoners file and on his resignation from the negotiations team, the second group interviewed Hassan Qureishi, Deputy of the PLC and part of the investigative committee on the death of Majd Barghouti while in Palestinian detention, and the third group interviewed Fathmi Za'arir on the Fateh-Hamas Yemen Initiative.

On the last day, all the productions were displayed, analyzed, and critiqued by the participants themselves before the trainers and the Aswatona team added their assessment and input. Every production was evaluated as if it was going to air or press and many of the stories did after the training. Several of the trainees approached the trainers afterwards to give their feedback as one participant said, "Thanks for every thing. I have benefited so much," and as one summed up, "It was a great opportunity to learn from you. Can I ask you in the future if I have a query?"

Samples of the verbal evaluations of participants:

- Wattan TV, “the trainers were very good; they used realistic examples, from the local press.”
- AlQamar Radio, “the training was very good. We need such courses like this one, especially courses on press conferences and interviews”.
- AlSharq Radio, “Hold more of these important courses of importance; as it added a lot to me”
- Amwaj TV, “the training was successful and gave me a lot of information and knowledge; it is a new experience in journalism for me”

### **Bethlehem, 8-10 March, 2008, Intercontinental Hotel**

For: Bethlehem and Hebron Journalists

Trainers: Hisham Abdullah and Ahmad Zaki

Press Conference: Mr. Salah Al Ta’amari, Governor of Bethlehem

### **Participant List**

TV Stations:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
1	Rasha Alazeah	Al-Rouah TV-Bethlehem
2	Tharaa’ Al-Qawasmi	Al-Rouah TV-Bethlehem
3	Lou’a Zreqat	Bethlehem TV
4	Hamza Al-Qawasmi	Alnawras TV- Hebron

Radio Stations:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
5	Gahder Barham	Mawal Radio- Bethlehem
6	Enass Abden	Radio Bethlehem 2000
7	Maryan Sadeah	Radio Bethlehem 2000
8	Shomou’ Ghareeb	Radio Isis- Bethlehem
9	Taghred Alswaite	Radio Minbar Alhuriya-Hebron
10	Samar Aldebes	Marah Radio -Hebron

Electronic Media:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
11	Fadi jacoub	Pal Press
12	Samer Almoghrabi	Alzaytona Network

Newspaper:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
13	Najeeb Faraj	Al-Quds Newspaper

The agenda remained the same although the examples used were updated from the first workshop. Trainers Hisham Abdullah and Ahmad Zaki, led the work and trained thirteen young journalists working in local television and radio stations, daily newspapers, and



electronic news agencies in Bethlehem and Hebron; most of the trainees were women.

The trainers together with the Aswatona staff arranged a press conference with the governor of Bethlehem on several of the recent important issues in the governorate, (i.e., the strike of bakeries and taxi drivers in Bethlehem, political issues, etc.). The press conference was held by the governor of Bethlehem on the second day and several officials, PLC members, and the Chief of Police showed up for this event and, in fact, the workshop attracted the attention of the city.

Many legislative council members approached the hotel looking for the workshop; some because of the request of the participants for the individual news interviews and others because they express their interest to hear what the Governor had to say. Some of the NGOs and associations, with whom the trainees had also arranged to conduct interviews also came to see the press conference for same reasons.



Sensing the importance of the event, many of the outlets managers also came to the hotel to meet and check with their staff on the quality and importance of the training, which was later confirmed and positively expressed by both managers and trainees. All the reports of the different stations, electronic news agencies and newspapers who covered the press conference mentioned that this was event was part of the training held by Internews Network–Aswatona.



The participants then did the individual interviews. The first group, interviewed Fateh PLC member and the head of the Palestinian Committee for Prisoners, Issa Karraha, and Shawki Al'Eyssa, head of the Prisoners' Club, on the issue of the prisoners and the actions of the PLC in general and in Bethlehem in specific. The second group interviewed Mohammad Allaham, Fateh PLC member on the issue of refugees in the negotiations. The third group interviewed the head of Al-Khalil Bus Company, Mr. Aqoub, about the public transportation strike, the increase in the fares and the government's decision to force the buses to park in a privately-owned parking facility and the fees involved. The fourth group interviewed Isma'ine Abed 'Iyed, Chief of Police on the bakers' strike, the increase in the price of bread, the public transportation strike, and the general state of public security in Bethlehem.

These reports were evaluated and discussed on the third day to review the results and effect of training on there stories and reporting approach. The participants were very interactive and responsive. Most of them wanted the activity to last for more than three days. Many of them stated that it was their first time to be trained in both a theoretical and practical way. One young journalist said, "It is the first time that I learned on how to extract a story from a press conference and an interview." An unintended benefit was also noticed – the different types of media started understanding the approach of the other.

Samples of the verbal evaluations of participants:

- AlRou’ah TV: “The training was good, and certainly lifted the program level in all respects. Both in the preparation and presentation, all the information was useful.”
- Isis Radio: “We hope from the Internews Network to hold more such useful courses, which raises the level of press, and improves the programs.”
- PNN Network: “The best training I ever attended in my career.”

### **Nablus, 15-16 and 19 March, 2008, AlQasr Hotel**

For: Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem, and Qalqilya Journalists

Trainers: Hisham Abdullah and Mohammad Sa’adi

Press Conference: Dr. Jamal Mhaisen, Governor of Nablus

### Participant List

TV Stations:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
1	Sura Aqel	Nablus TV
2	Alaa’ Alshanti	Nablus TV
3	Eman Alshami	Gama TV-Nablus
4	Mus’ab Kitani	Gama TV- Nablus
5	Bilal Khamaysa	Farah TV-Jenin
6	Fakhri Abu Alrub	Central Jenin
7	Ayoub Jaber	Baladna - Qalqilya
8	Jawad Turkey	Alfajer aljaded – Tulkarem
9	Raed Amer	Qalqilya TV

Radio Station:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
10	Faysal Abu Saleh	Radio Nagham- Qalqilya
11	Adham Manasrah	Radio Tariq Almahaba- Nablus
12	Raed Abu baker	Radio ALBalad- Jenin
13	Hind Khalifeah	Radio Al-Najah-Nablus
14	Anan Nasser	Radio Al-Najah-Nablus

Electronic Media:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
15	Jafar Ishtayeh	Pal Press
16	Ghazi Abu Khoshok	Palestinian Media

Newspaper:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Station</b>
17	Ghassan Katot	Al-Quds Newspaper



For this third and final workshop, the content of the agenda remained the same with a two changes in the method. In this workshop, the participants returned to their cities to do individual interviews for news (not as groups) and because of this, a decision was made to add two days in between the first two and the final day to allow the participants to conduct the interviews for news in their own towns and to edit them within their own stations. This decision was also based on the comments of the participants from the previous two trainings to have a bit more time for putting the stories together and the

limitations on movement and facilities for editing. As well, due to the tightening of the checkpoints around Nablus during the course of the first two days and the request of the participants who had been held at them for hours, it was decided do to the final day of review and critique in Ramallah.

At the end of the first day, the trainers and staff arranged a press conference with the Governor of Nablus, Dr. Jamal Mhaisen, on the most critical issues of the day - the counterfeit and expired medicines and the ‘bad’ flour that had been discovered on a few market shelves and in storage.



In the meantime, the Director of the Information Ministry in Nablus tried to take over the press the conference to have it be conducted under the umbrella of his office. He asked to take over and control the press conference but the Aswatona staff explained that it was part of training that we were doing for local journalists so the answer could be no other than no. He said he was going to invite the foreign press reporters and again it was explained that this press conference was for the local journalists so they would have the rights

to ask the questions. He insisted so the compromise was that if any time was left, the foreign press could ask questions.

During the morning of the second day a phone call came from the Nablus Governor in which he said he would be accompanied by the Nablus Chief of Police, Ahmad Sharqouwi, the President of the Palestinian Pharmacist Association, Dr. Mahmoud Salaymeh, and the Nablus Director of the Ministry of Health, Dr. Kadri Abed Shunar, to start the press conference at 13:00 pm.

In the end, the press conference was held on time and the Aswatona staff introduced the Governor and explained the workshop being conducted in Nablus. As per the initiative of the Ministry of Information director in Nablus, many other journalists from different media outlets, international stations, and agencies (AlJazeera TV, BBC, Reuters, APTN, Palestine TV, Wafa News



Agency) attended and covered the press conference as well.



It was a very successful press conference for a number of reasons. For the first time the local media representatives (journalists) had the right to ask the first questions and they asked a lot of good ones of the Press Conference participants. They also got to “show off” in front of the foreign press, who had almost no follow up questions to theirs, which increased the local journalists’ confidence. The Governor of Nablus was astonished since, as he said to a friend later, he did not expect such tough, hard questions in this press conference and he asked, “Are they really local fresh journalists?” AlNajah Radio broadcast the press conference live.

The next two days, the participants scheduled and conducted interviews for news in their home districts. For example: the Jenin TV conducted interviews with residents in the village of Nasariya about the difficulties they face with the expansion of Israeli settlements; Gama TV in Nablus followed up the topic of medicines by interviewing a pharmacist and a woman whose son had taken some of the illegal medicine as well as a few interviews from the street; Nablus TV interviewed the coordinator of the Popular Committee for Reconciliation on their work and activities; Fajr Al Jadeed in Tulkarem interviewed the General Director of the Ministry of Education about the teachers strike; and, Nagham Radio in Qalqilya interviewed farmers who are facing hardships due to the wall, among other such stories.

The third and final day was held, upon request of the trainees, in Ramallah since the movement into Nablus for non-residents from other places in the West Bank was very difficult. All participants brought their final stories from their interviews and from the Press Conference. Productions from different journalists were discussed, analyzed, and critiqued.

Samples of the verbal evaluations of participants:

- Al-Najah Radio: “Holding more trainings such as this one in various subjects, such news report, and features story would also be good”
- Gama TV: “This session will raise the quality of programs’, in terms of performance, and the preparation and submission, and the upgrading of news programs.”
- Qalqilyah TV: “It’s a very practical and effective training. We wish it was for longer period to have more chances of doing more reports with more chance of the critiques.”

All in all, the workshops were very fruitful in starting the change in the approach of the local media journalists in conducting their work. A shift started in the minds of many on how to grab the story in the conferences and the interviews, in posing questions, and in honestly using the authorization the public has given them to report the truth and raise the questions which are in the minds of the community. It also gave many, a secure way to overcome their “shyness” when asking questions of officials, whoever they are. (Samples of a few stories at Appedix A)

### 1.1ci – In-house radio training on reporting the local news

Throughout the month of March, trainer Abdelrahman Othman spent time with radio stations that are trying to cover the local news every morning and are primarily relying on the news bulletin that is sent by the Palestine News Network (PNN) that is largely Bethlehem centric. At the request of *Aswatona*, Abdelrahman tailored the training to cover two main items: 1) adding local news to the top of the PNN news bulletin as well as more in-depth morning news reports or mini-features on pressing local issues; and 2) preparing reports to send to PNN for the main daily news bulletin to support PNN's effort to work with local stations in order to cover all the major metropolitan areas. This training was conducted at Al Balad Radio in Jenin, Al Qamar Radio in Jericho, Minbar al Horiya, and PNN.

1) March 11-12, 2008 In Jenin's **Al Balad Radio**, Abdelrahman spent the first of the training on the news in general, their use of PNN as the only source of news and the need to also cover the news in Jenin of concern to their listeners. The discussion focused on the importance of presenting the local news after the PNN bulletin, and the importance of presenting the news before 9:00 a.m and after 4:00 p.m, which are the broadcasting times of the PNN news. The focus of the training was on how to edit the news as well as how to read and present the news. The participants were given assignments for different news stories from around Jenin that they then produced and were critiqued by the group.



A long discussion with the staff and station owner/director was held regarding the programs and the working conditions in the radio station, which are pretty much the same as others throughout the West Bank. The staff suggested and discussed many programs ideas, such as environmental, agricultural, and a daily program that has to do with the news of the villages, since the Jenin district has a lot of villages, that could add life to the station and its program cycle.

On the second day, the staff worked to put together a mini-feature report on a home for the elderly in Jenin. Before it was broadcast, the participants listened and discussed the report, and made the suggested changes before airing.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Raed Abu Baker, reporter
2. Mohamad Abu Alrub, reporter/news presenter
3. Ahmad Anzawy, radio engineer
4. Ayman Masaeed, trainee
5. Abeer Hamdan, reporter/program presenter
6. Ruba Aboush, program presenter and radio engineer
7. Reema Faraseeny, reporter/program presenter.

2) March 17-18, 2008. **Al Qamar Radio** in Jericho was very difficult for the trainer due to the lack of equipment and professional staff. Unfortunately, it is the only radio in the Jericho and the Jordan Valley. The trainer was not able to accomplish the planned work because there was no internet connection that morning and the number of the participants was so small. There were no programs broadcast in the morning, even the news, which was stopped for lack of resources and because, as a matter of course, this radio station doesn't broadcast any program before noon.

On the first day the only two participants went to the farmers' sit-in to do a report and although they couldn't finish it that day, it was completed and broadcast on the second day. In the end, it was a good report. On the second day, the number of the participants increased so the training switched to editing and preparing the news, as well as the presentation. Every participant read the news, and all listened to the report and then critiqued each report one by one.



The station had recently done a series of reports about the UNRWA and a discussion was held on how to use the web to rebroadcast. Before concluding the participants discussed with the trainer some ideas about writing local reports.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Ibrahim Daraghmeh, trainee.
2. Ra'ouf Mr'ee, presenter.
3. Na'el Daraghmeh, presenter.
4. Zoulfah Ale'seeleh, presenter.

3) March 24-25, 2008. In the midst of the training in **Minbar alHoriya Radio**, Hebron, the Israeli soldiers confiscated two work stations and cut the cables of the transmitter, thus blocking the transmission. This action, negatively affected the training program, in two aspects, the operating capability and the journalists psychological mode. This happened at the end of the first day.

During the first day, before this event, the training started by getting to know the radio programs being broadcast and a discussion with the administration on how to improve the work. The trainer talked to the journalists about the basics and bases of the news report; its elements, like writing the text, directing questions in the interviews, choosing the quotes, the structure, and the sound effects. To practice, the trainer asked the staff to choose a topic for a radio report. They chose two topics, early marriage for women and the honor killing. They discussed the bases, the elements of the two topics, and created the story board. They then specified the interviewees in each of topics, some in their work places and others in the studio, and the rest by phone.

However, technical problems were faced with the lack of a recording machine in the station, and the inability of phone interviews with those who do not have a land line. The recorder problem was solved by borrowing a machine from another station. A group of trainees left the station to

conduct the interviews while others did them in the studio. In the phone interview, the staff had to use the cellular set, putting the speaker on the phone directly to the microphone. It is a primitive way and should not be used because it distorts the sound and also affects the transmission.



There is only one studio in the station, which is the studio used for live broadcast. This also hampered the training because the staff could not record or conduct an interview when there was a live transmission or Azan or advertisements. In spite of that, the trainees did conduct all the wanted interviews. At the end of the day, before breaking for dinner, all agreed to have another session that night to continue so that the work could be accomplished by nine o'clock the next morning.

During that first day, the trainer also worked with Raed, the news editor, to edit a news brief and discussed how news should be edited and read. It was decided that five journalists should participate in a training session on the news research but only three showed up in addition to the two journalism students who had no experience in the radio work. There was only one trainee who had the experience of filing reports so the trainer, Abelrahman had to start with them from zero.

At 8:00 pm, shortly after the group broke up, the Israeli soldiers stormed the station. This made the training very difficult the next day, since there was only one work station with no audio program in the station. All the staff members were tense but, in spite of this, the trainees wanted to continue the training and they accomplished the two reports. The live transmission resumed but weaker than before due to the splicing of the wires. The trainer also met other journalists who were presenting programs during the day and discussed with them the better ways and approached of presentation.

At the end of the work with the staff, the trainer and Aswatona staff met with the directors of the station, Ayman Qawasmi and Taghreed Sweiti, and proposed the following suggestions:

- forming news editing committee that discuss what is to be broadcast and to review the production and the broadcast material so that the work stops being so disorganized
- enabling as many as possible of the journalism students of Hebron university to be trained in the station
- recording the broadcast programs and keeping them to be re-broadcasted at night or the next day
- broadcasting on time is essential for the station so the news should be on top of the hour and not a minute or two or more after that
- creating a specific style for the news and not to allow each presenter to impose his own style

Finally, the staff and trainer also suggested that there is a need to raise the technical radio abilities and to have a better taste in



choosing the music and the songs as well as to balance the audio of the talk level to the musical background. It was suggested that the technicians do need more training in editing, mainly when cutting the quotes in the interviews and rightly insert it to be appropriate with the text. It is always better that the reporters do edit their reports by themselves.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Raed alSharif, news and programs presenter
2. Raed alAtrash, program presenter
3. Adi Hijazi, radio engineer
4. Taghreed Sweiti, program presenter and co-director of the station
5. Qamar Zahida, program presenter
6. Rawiya Manasreh, program presenter

4) 26 March 2008. The last day of the training was in the **Palestine News Network (PNN)** in Bethlehem. The trainer joined the staff during the course of their work, which was useful in following what they are doing and what are the needs of the network. During the first hour, Adelrahman attended the editing of the eight o'clock news brief with Fadi Abu Sa'ada and gave him guidance on how to search for the news sources and then edit them.



After the nine o'clock news brief, the editors held their daily meeting with the head of the network. It is the only place that was trained where a meeting for the editing staff takes place. They discussed the program cycle that day and distributed the duties among the staff. All issues were of the new events except one that had been postponed from the day before, but there was no talk on the future. So, the trainer proposed several suggestions on the division of labor and the important need for the network to be a news factory and not only a news consumer. This implies the

need for developing a future plan on how to get news events before the others and Abdelrahman gave them some suggestions on how to do that.

He also discussed the background music with the sound technician and assisted them to find a better jingle for the news bulletin, mainly when reading the headlines. The trainer worked with the news readers on reading after critiquing them on their reading style. He had noticed, for example, that they write numbers as digits and not in letters, which leads to mistakes in reading them.

He also worked with them on their cooperation with their partner stations, who are now just broadcasting the bulletins as they receive it from the PNN, while each should develop it to include events taking place in the different governorates and to continuously update the bulletin. The trainer discussed this issue with all the stations he worked with and asked them to make a local news bulletin to be broadcasted directly after the PNN news bulletin – underscoring to them that their strength is in their coverage of news and issues in their local communities.

After listening to the day's news bulletin, the trainer met with all the staff to discuss the program, mainly the detailed news bulletin at noon. He made the following suggestions to them:

- They should prepare the relevant questions before hosting any guest live and to discuss with the guest on the topics and the length of the interview and for the presenter to interrupt the interviewee when e talks more than needed
- In formatting the bulletin, interviews should be separated by news items and not to be successive
- The length of the detailed news bulletin should be fixed; not one for forty-five minutes and another thirty
- News headlines should be interesting and tease the listener so that the audience will be encouraged to stay tuned in order to follow up the bulletin. Headlines should not contradict the content of the bulletin
- Performance should not be boring - the news reader should emphasized certain words
- Levels of the audio should be the same, so that the sound of the presenter should not be high while those quoted are low. Or the opposite. This should be verified before the bulletin is broadcast
- Audio level of the presenter should be measured through the mixer before the news bulletin broadcast
- Correspondents in other areas should be reporting through a land line, to avoid as much as possible reporting through the mobile and it is better to direct more than one question to the correspondent, unless he has already filed a report
- The importance of choosing the bulletin's topics and how to prioritize them
- Division of labor is very essential so that everyone can be better prepared with the writing and interviews



In general, the PNN is more capable than their current partner stations in production, organization and seriousness. This is also valid in judging the equipment and the studios as well as the education of the staff. When discussing the relation between the network and the partner station, the trainer proposed that the network should ask the station to produce certain reports that are not timed, so that they can be broadcast later. It was also propose that they have the reports produced in the station, two hours before the bulletin's broadcasting, in order to edit and to finalize it properly.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Osama Odeh, editor and presenter
2. Fadi Ya'akob, editor and presenter
3. Mohammed Khled, editor in chief
4. Hiba Lama, journalist and news editor
5. Fadi Abu Sa'ada , Owner and Managing Director

## 1.2b - Grants program productions

The initial subgrants awarded in late September 2007 are currently in the concluding phase, with some stations having completely finished their production and reporting obligations, while others have experienced some delays. Generally speaking, the first round of subgrants can be considered a success, based upon audience feedback, an increase in the quality of the productions, the utilization of equipment provided, and, most importantly, an increase in revenue generated through sponsorships and advertising in the Aswatona-funded programs.

That is not to say, however, that numerous obstacles and challenges were not encountered. The waiver request had a significant impact on the stations ability to produce the new programs at a higher quality in that the pre-production and production phases were started without any of the equipment outlined in the contract. While much of the equipment inevitably arrived, at that point many of the stations were nearing the conclusion of their programming cycles. The Aswatona team hopes that the equipment provision process will be expedited in the second round, as the justifications for the purchase of non-American equipment from a non-American vendor have been acknowledged and accepted.

The ongoing depreciation of the US dollar proved to be a considerable issue in the implementation of the grants, as the proposal budgets were often determined in a precise manner to maximize the amount of grants awarded. On September 25, 2007, the week that the nine subgrants were signed, one US Dollar equaled 4 NIS (New Israeli Shekel). Throughout the duration of the subgrant, the Dollar fluctuated to the extent that it fell to 3.8 NIS on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 3.6 NIS on February 15<sup>th</sup> and 3.5 NIS on March 30<sup>th</sup>. The movement of the dollar had a significant impact for our partners with such ongoing costs as the salaries of production staff and actors, the purchase of tapes and DVDs, and the costs of transportation, which was further compounded by the rising costs of oil. Consequently the Aswatona team, in conjunction with the potential partner stations of the second round, was much more mindful of the potential currency fluctuation and hence calculated more realistic figures.

**Wattan TV:** The Ramallah-based TV station is one of the success stories in the first round of Aswatona subgrants, in that the station has produced high quality and informative programming that has been popular with audiences and has earned the station additional revenue through increased sponsorships and advertising. The station has recently submitted a concept paper for the second round of grants in which the station will contribute 45% of the production costs.



**Al Fajr Al Jadeed:** The Aswatona funded program for the Tulkarem-based TV station, titled *Tulkarem Today*, has become the most popular program in the governorate and has generated enough revenue to ensure its continued production.

**Gama TV:** The Nablus-based TV station has completed the production of its news program, *Hadith Al Medina*, but has

experienced delays in the completion of its *Time for Women* program. The delay is primarily attributed to an equipment issue that was not resolved until March. The station is actively working on the production to ensure compliance with the agreed upon terms of the subgrant.

**Baladna TV:** The television station successfully provided the Qalqilya governorate with 104 episodes of *Good Morning to Our Town* throughout the past four months. Trainer Davin Hutchins worked closely with the station to help develop the format of the program and to enhance the skills of its production crew.



**Al Rouah:** The Bethlehem-based TV station has completed its obligations outlined in the subgrant by producing 16 episodes of *Shebab Online* and 104 episodes of *We're Back*.

**Film Project:** Despite a slow start, the two stations involved in this joint production, Al Fajr Al Jadeed and Al Rouah, have recently completed the 34 minute documentary that has been well received by the Aswatona team. The team is now weighing its options for the film, including broadcast on local stations and the potential to submit it to an international film festival.

**Sada Network:** The television network has satisfied its obligation to produce 16 episodes of its *Sada Filistene* program. The organization is still actively developing its Ramallah office, which will serve as its administrative head. Sada Network is seeking to continue its cooperation with Aswatona and has recently added two new member stations, Amwaj TV of Ramallah and Al Nour TV of Jericho.

**Amwaj Radio:** Due to a change in management the Ramallah-based radio station has been significantly delayed in the broadcasting of the popular program *Kawthar & Abdelkader* and in the production of *Let's Swap*. They have submitted copies of the produced episodes of both programs and have been highly reviewed.

**Khalil Radio:** The Hebron-based radio station has experienced some delay in the two Aswatona-funded programs do to the length of time it took to deliver the sound mixer, which was required to edit the rough productions. The station has submitted the initial programmatic and financial reports and is currently waiting for its second wire transfer.



On February 6<sup>th</sup> Aswatona awarded a subgrant to the Nablus-based Tariq Al Mahabeh Radio for support of two innovative productions, entitled *Shebab.com* and *Majallah*, and the provision of some equipment. *Shebab.com* is a lighthearted weekly production with a variety of segments including top ten Arabic songs, recitation of funny letters received, celebrity news, horoscopes, quiz shows, and birthday dedications. The show also looks at issues affecting the population of Nablus, such as traffic and litter, in a humorous fashion complete with amusing characters created by the station staff. The *Majallah* program presents relevant social, political, economic, and cultural stories of the week in an objective and comprehensive manner. Aswatona contracted trainer Abed Othman to visit the station in early March and offer guidance on how to improve the two programs. Othman observed that the

programs are being produced in a professional manner that is being well received by the local audience.

The Aswatona project is currently in the process of developing a questionnaire to be administered by a third party to the partner stations of the project. Part of the poll is to determine the degree of success of the small grants program in the perspective of the stations themselves. The feedback received will be taken into account during the next round of subgrants.

### Overview of Round 1 Subgrants

Subgrant #	Station	Productions Completed	All Equipment Received	Increase in Ad Revenue
B1561 WTV 00	Wattan TV	Yes (except for one)	Not Relevant	Yes
B1561 FJTV 00	Al Fajr Al Jadeed	Yes	Yes	Yes
B1561 GTV 00	Gama TV	No	No	Yes
B1561 BTV 00	Baladna TV	Yes	No	Yes
B1561 RTV 00	Al Rouah TV	Yes	No	Yes
B1561 RTVJF 00	Film Project	Yes	Not Relevant	Not Relevant
B1561 SN 00	Sada Network	Yes	No	Yes
B1561 ATVR 00	Amwaj Radio	Delayed	Yes	Yes
B1561 KR 00	Khalil Radio	Delayed	Yes	Yes
B1561 TMR 00	Tariq Al Mahabeh	On schedule	Yes	Yes

Episode Tracker	January		February		March	
	Planned	Actual #	Planned	Actual #	Planned	Actual #
	Episodes	Episodes	Episodes	Episodes	Episodes	Episodes
<b>Wattan TV</b>						
A) Life Tour	4	4	0	0	0	0
B) People's Rights	4	4	0	0	0	0
C) Weekly Harvest	4	4	0	0	0	0
D) Let's Talk Frankly	4	4	0	0	0	0
E) We See You	4	0	4	4	4	4
<b>Al Fajr Al Jadid</b>						
A) Tulkarem This Week	31	31	0	0	0	0

<b>Al Rouah</b>						
A) We're Back	26	26	0	0	0	0
B) Shebab Online	4	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Baladna TV</b>						
A) Good Morning Our Town	26	26	0	0	0	0
<b>Gama TV</b>						
A) City Talk	8	8	0	0	0	0
B) Time for Women	4	0	4	4	4	4
<b>Sada Network</b>						
A) Sada Filistene	4	4	0	0	0	0
<b>Khalil Radio</b>						
A) Zeman Al Ajayeb	4	0	4	4	4	4
B) Gheir Shekel	4	0	4	4	4	4
<b>Amwaj Radio</b>						
A) Kawthar & Abdelkader	20	20	0	0	0	0
B) Let's Swap	31	0	31	31	31	31
<b>FILM Project</b>						
A) Documentary	0	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Tariq Al Mahaba</b>						
A) Shebab.com					4	4
B) Majallah					4	4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>

## Second Round of Grants

In preparation for the submission of the second round of subgrants, the Aswatona team has been meeting regularly with stations to foster the development of their concept papers into proposals. Like the first round, this has entailed targeting the stations that have completed business proposals, determining gaps in the current partner stations and media types throughout the West Bank, and evaluating the degree of congruency between concept papers and the project mandate. Unlike the first round, however, this round will be on a rolling basis throughout the remainder of the project. Subsequently, the team has prepared six proposals to be submitted to USAID in the near future. Moreover, a handful of concepts are also in the process of being completed, and will be submitted pending the availability of funding.

Objective 2: Increased and improved coverage of local news, including local manifestations of broad themes such as rule of law, good governance, and corruption.

2.1b - In-House TV training field work, covering local events, and human interest stories

Davin Hutchins worked with three partner stations, Al Roa'ah and Al Fajr Al Jadeed on the joint production being funded by *Aswatona*, Al Baladna TV on a currently funded production, and one potential partner, Farah TV. At each station he worked with the staff on designing storyboards and camera work, field-work, interviewing and editing. With Farah and Baladna TVs, he assisted staff in designing a “look” or design for the productions.

*21-25 January 2008: The joint documentary production of Roa'ah and Fajr TVs*

As highlighted in previous visits, Roa'ah TV and Al Fajr Al Jadeed had made it clear they wanted to work on a joint documentary project. Hutchins, having experience with major international film festivals and documentary production, helped focus the project during an intensive one day training session in Ramallah which focused on tailoring the project for both broadcast distribution and entry into major regional and European film festivals.

At the beginning of the work with Hutchins, clear documentation of the production was lacking and the first one-day seminar was designed to focus on enhancing the character development, set deadlines for production and equip the stations with resources they needed to create a quality production that could be appreciated across the Arab world.



The documentary focuses on two musicians. The first, Alaa, is a popular singer in Tulkarem who, while not classically trained in music, makes his living as a musician. His songs regularly appear on local radio stations but he has not been able to make a successful living as a recording artist. To make ends meet for his wife and three children, he performs as a singer in local weddings. His father is ill with frequent visits to the hospital and his brother is having legal troubles and facing a prison term. The second major character, Waseem, lives in Bethlehem and performs with his mates at the Sabreen Music Institute. Waseem is much more learned in a formal music education than Alaa and plays multiple instruments – drums, tabla, oud, piano and bass guitar. He aspires to score films.



The original idea behind the production was to have Fajr Al-Jadeed and Roa'ah TV produce segments separately and merge them together in a final production. The director, Refaat Issa Adi, is a very talented filmmaker and production manager who after producing many short films and soap operas was taking a stab at his first documentary. The editors, producer, and trainer identified early that perhaps it would help the story development if both characters met at some point in the film, but the problem was the characters living so far apart did not have a natural link. The director started deliberating the idea whether a local poet, Khalil Touma, might be a link by mailing to the two musicians classic poems of national pride from the 40s and 50s via envelopes to urge both musicians to meet to help him record the words in a beautiful way before it is lost to history. In the end, the idea was rejected. After agreement on the general direction of the film, the team

decided to set solid deadlines for a full-treatment, festival calendar, deadline for 26-minute rough cut, 52-minute rough cut and submission to Middle East festivals as detailed below.

Plan for the joint film by Alroa'ah and AlFajr AlJadeed television stations:

- February 1<sup>st</sup> : production process of the film, including research , shooting and approach reports to be delivered to Internews network *Aswatona*
- February 1<sup>st</sup> : Financial reports on the above mentioned activities to be delivered to Internews network project “Aswatona”
- February 1<sup>st</sup>: a written 5-page treatment on the film to be ready to print, including, one page introduction about the film, it’s approach and rationale, a page on the artistic and media line of the film, then the main and the secondary characters, the director, the co-producers, Aswatona etc...
- March 1<sup>st</sup> : a copy of the “26 minutes- film ” , which can be broadcasted on the local television stations to be delivered to “Aswatona”
- April 1<sup>st</sup> : a rough cut ( offline editing without music) of the “52 – minutes-film” to be ready
- April 15<sup>th</sup> : final cut (online editing) copy of the “52-minutes-film” to be ready



They then set about focusing on the story line and, after looking at almost 50 hours of rushes, it was clear that the video production should continue for another month but with equal focus on logging, cataloging and digitizing the footage that had already been shot. Refaat expressed reservations about the assigned editors Amin and Ismail being able to have the stamina and commitment to see the project through to completion. A decision was made to authorize the purchase of two large hard drives so the documentary film’s video files and edit could exist outside the station’s two editing workstations in case anything went wrong in the future.

For this project to succeed, *Aswatona* dedicated point person to interface with the documentary staff and encourage them on the project. Two days of shooting and two days of documentary-style editing training with the appointed staff from each station and a critique of two Western-produced documentaries, Hutchins felt the team had the tools they need and had gained some momentum. Indeed they did as the worked progressed; the *Aswatona* staff viewed rough cuts, gave advice and suggestions, and ‘Okayed’ a small delay on the final 30-minute cut. It is expected at the beginning of April. After viewing it, a decision will be made on the longer 52-minute version for submission to film festivals.

Participating Staff of Roa'h TV and Fajr in Bethlehem – Joint film:

1. Rifat Al Adi, director
2. Jalal Daoud, camera man
3. Amin Asakra, editor
4. Nader Musli, reporter
5. Isma'in Bilawi, editor (alFajr)

## 26-27 January 2008 Baladna TV, Qalqilya

The trainer Hutchins was sent to Baladna TV to assist in giving additional techniques for importing video, graphics, and field work into their daily morning program as well as to do training on the new equipment. To the station's credit, they had invested in a modest studio redesign. In terms of equipment, Baladna was suffering but the equipment for the station had arrived at the same time as the trainer, so he was able to train them on the use and possibilities of the new audio mixer, new Panasonic camera and various jacks and microphones to facilitate better live call-in programs. However, the station had no blank DVDs for recording programming, no toner in the fax or printer. Frequently, Sabah Al Kheir, Ya Baladna will have correspondents in Ramallah and Gaza who join the presenter on the phone, but the audio is routed through a speaker phone on the presenter desk which is picked up by the presenter's microphone – a terrible way to capture this audio but working with the new equipment will help in this matter. The trainer also worked with them on inserting videos or reports during the hour-long show. The trainer worked with the staff to use new techniques with the new equipment to produce a half-hour test pilot with a new two-camera, call-in format. The staff had fun and it is hoped that they will be able to recreate that chemistry on their own. The staff was very happy with this training because Hutchins made them more active, giving new ideas and approaches for new styles. As one journalist said, ".....he refreshed all my information...I like the field work in this training because we are trying to this in the program everyday."



At the end of the production cycle, the last few shows did manage to incorporate many of the techniques that were learned during this training and incorporated some of the field reports into the morning program. They are trying to continue with the program now that their grant is complete but they lost one of their key staff and have cut the production to two times a week.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Ayoub Jaber, editor/camera
2. Fida' Hantash, reporter
3. Wasfi Yousef, presenter
4. Mohammad Anise, camera
5. Raghrid Sabri, reporter
6. 'Ali Malouh, camera

## 28-30 January 2008 Farah TV, Jenin



*Aswatona* sent Hutchins to Farah TV to help them design the framework for a new production that they want to do with *Aswatona* support. This was the first in-house training that *Aswatona* has done with this station. After one day in Farah TV, the trainer said that "it is clearly one of the best equipped and managed stations by far. Station manager Fathi Natour is a shrewd businessman who runs a relatively tight ship and

demands staff comes early if the news dictates.” After watching a few programs, it was clear to Hutchins that the station could pull off live programming very well both in the studio and remote locations. The delivery of the news was well written and well rehearsed with several notable staffers including host Nasr Abu ‘Abeid, correspondent Raed Abu Bakr, control room engineers Tariq Khourani, cameraman Farook and correspondent Nana. In this station, most of the staff has two skill sets – writing/editing, camerawork/editing. The scripts came in very well polished and needed little copy editing.

The focus of the training was to create a pilot production of a potential Aswatona-funded project, Panorama Farah. The trainer worked with the staff to orchestrate a snappy, three-camera production designed to showcase original reports and provoke lively debate. All in all, the pilot came in very well with in-depth reports and segments on the unusual weather patterns during an unusual snowstorm across the West Bank and a general strike to protest the decision by the Palestinian Authority to withhold key government documents until utility bills in arrears had been paid by even the poorest of Palestinian citizens. The staff felt that they spent good time to evaluate the pilot program and make it better. One staff member said, “After the training I feel that I can send my information to the station and can use skills to create more professional programming.”



The trainer noted that Farah could use an injection of a new editing workstation on camera. It should greatly improve their productivity. While their nightly newscast came off as a bit dry because of lack of an on-air personality to present the reports, the opening graphics, music and production values were impressive. While Farah has ample equipment for news production, the trainer noted that the station may want to upgrade field lights and wireless microphones for feature production in the future.

The staff of the station said that the training was beyond expectation and were happy because they were able to do some field reports and felt that the idea for the in-house training was very good. Many said that this was a new training for them and encouraged Aswatona to do more training like this one. One staff member said, “We feel like a partner now with Internews.”

Aswatona has a copy of the pilot production.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Raghib Zakarna, camera
2. Tariq Khourani, editor
3. Razanne ‘Ouda, presenter
4. Nana Abu ‘Abeid, presenter
5. Fathi Natour – owner/manager
6. Farouk Mahameed, camera
7. Bilal Khamaisa, editor/camera
8. Ra’ed Abu Bakr, reporter
9. Naser Abu ‘Abeid, program manager

2.1a - In-House Radio training on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories – West Bank

Aswatona sent radio trainer, Abdelrahman Othman to select stations to work with them on productions either funded by Aswatona or to work with them on creating mini-features on human interest stories and local events for their morning or evening program cycles.

### **1) March 8-10, 2008 Tareeq AlMahaba Radio, Nablus**

This station is a new partner for the Aswatona project and is producing two new programs; Shabab.com and Majaallah, a weekly program that presents relevant social, political, economic, and cultural stories in an objective and comprehensive manner. As soon as the trainer arrived, he and the staff listened to the magazine program and discussed it with the staff, especially with Alaa Albadarneh, Managing Director of the station.



The trainer felt that the program was too long so he worked with the staff to increase the number of the reports under the condition that each report doesn't exceed 3 to 4 minutes to keep it moving and interesting. The program is essential to the radio because of the timeslot, so they focused on that, inserting the news, in addition to the short 3-4 minute reports and the different components that go into the production. He spent time working with the staff on presenting reports and how to improve it, focusing on the presentation from inside the studio and how to perform in general.

They also reviewed the Shabab.com program. After listening to this youth program, Abdelrahman felt that it was perfectly presented with interesting contents. The only problem was the timing - the program had no fixed time. They discussed the importance of setting a time, advertising it and sticking to it in order to grow the audience and to keep them

The trainer then discussed with Samar, the head of the radio station, and with Alaa, the importance of the rebroadcast of programs and which programs lend themselves to that. Tariq al Mahaba offers a large number of programs when compared with other radio stations and it would be useful for the station to rebroadcast popular programs. Overall the station's reports are dependable but not on a daily basis because of the lack of full-time staff.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Amid Dweikat, news chief editor and the radio engineer(technician)
2. Mohammed Qamhiya, technician
3. Adham Mansreh, trainee in the news department
4. Alaa Badarneh, programs director
5. Sahar Malhis, program presenter
6. Kawkab abu Zant, program presenter and technician
7. Suha Rasras, news presenter(reader)
8. Lina Hajjaj, program presenter

## 2) 13-15 March 2008 Amwaj Radio, Ramallah

Abdelrahman was happy to work with the *Aswatona* partner station Amwaj because the radio has a new administration that is looking for ways to “jazz” up the station and strengthen their audience numbers. They also had a good number of participants in the training, although there was a misunderstanding about the timing of the training and many participants were absent on the first morning of training.

The training focused on the two programs that are being supported by Aswatona, Yalla Nbadel and Kawthar and Abdel-Kader. The Yalla Nbadel program doesn't take more than 4 minutes each time it is aired. It's a program that summarizes certain issues and then questions the public with one question about each issue. This question is then being asked to a sample group from the street, voxpops, and after that all the answers are summarized in one episode with the main question still included.

The trainer listened to all the episodes that had been done to date and discussed them with the preparer of the programs how to strengthen it base on the on the following points:

- Direct one question only so as to get similar answers it is easier to measure instead of asking different questions where answers would be harder to measure
- No repetition of the same answers
- Arrange the answers according to the voice, female , male , and not female female and male male
- Technical note, sometimes the time prepared for the program is 4 minutes while the actual timing is less than that
- The idea of the program and how its presented is amazing, beneficial, and humorous - this program should be presented with the morning program and to call the minister or the person in charge in order to discuss with him/her about what was presented in the previous episode

Kawthar and Abdel-Kader program was next. It happened that the actor and the writer were in the radio station during the training, which gave the trainer a chance to talk with them about their program. So after listening to their complemented their program, he had the following suggestions:

- The length of the program was excellent (from six to eight minutes), which allows it to be broadcasted as part of other programs
- Do a series of episodes about certain subject such as the environment, and the cooperation with schools, or the women situation in Palestine and the cooperation with the women union when the program is broadcast.
- The importance of not changing the actress “Ameera Hanania”, just because she is in Bethlehem - there should be only one Kawthar in all of the episodes.
- Sometimes the drama is over after the first three minutes of the program, and so all that follows is repeating. It doesn't help nor support the program, the trainer discussed this with the writer who agreed and would work on rewriting some of episodes

- The episode should be broadcast more than once during the day - 2 or 3 times maximum

Amwaj radio station is the only radio station that has a specialized team for the news with a manager of the news. He wrote down all the notes that were discussed during the training on this topic and now these notes have been posted in the news room of the studio so that everyone sees and follows them. In this way it is easier for the staff to unite the style and mood of the news in a bulletin. It is all about how to start presenting the news and the number of headlines in the bulletin as well as to make them diverse and not only about politics but to also include a bulletin about issues that concern the public, such as weather forecast, sports and some medical issues and to summarize them at the end of the bulletin.



Part of the training also included editing the news: a bulletin of four to five minutes length for every presenter in the news section. The staff practiced this with the trainer, reading and then listening to the recording of them to critique each news item from a presenting point.

On the third day the number of the participants increased, so the group worked on making a fifteen minute news program that included reports and one interview. The staff then worked on the interviews and the agreed upon reports.

A special jingle was made for each of the programs and the title and reports of each program were discussed with great care. The group discussed how to make and choose a jingle as well as practicing how to write the outlines of the report and how to arrange and connect the information. After the program was accomplished, the group listened to it and discussed all the details about its contents and form.

The new administration in Amwaj radio wants to make a change. This is a good opportunity that can be used to improve the whole situation of the radio. However, at the same time there's a disadvantage because the new administration wants to bring new presenters, which puts the old presenters in a critical situation under the mercy of the new administration. The radio's tools and equipments are better than other radio stations, but they need more computers to be able to produce more.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Yazan Taha, the manager of the news
2. Umran Zakarneh, news presenter
3. Mohamad Qubaa, News presenter
4. Ramzy Abu Aljadyan, Trainee
5. Reema Masry, program presenter
6. Areen Araar, program presenter
7. Aleen Zanayed, editor and news presenter
8. Waad Shrouf, program manager
9. Hiba Abu Libdeh, News presenter

10. Ghosoun Sabry, Presenter.
11. Rashe Nabhan, Presenter
12. Amal Marar, Trainee.
13. Huda Alsawy, Presenter

### 3) 19-20 March 2008 Radio Bethlehem 2000

The trainer noted that there was a great deal of activity in this radio station. He began with the staff by discussing the morning program and how to prepare edit the headlines of the news journals, and the importance of presenting the news in a good style, and to focus on the local news.



Abdelrahman also spent time with specific staff members discussing their programs. He worked with Inas on her weekly program after listening to two episodes of this program. He helped her to reorganize the flow and manage the different parts so that some sections could longer than others and to delete some parts that were unnecessary. The total duration of this program is one hour.

He also listened to a whole episode of the nutrition program, which is called “Jayed wdasem” and discussed the presenting style of the program and its contents. He worked with the staff of this program to make lots of changes and then they presented the new pilot episode so that they could discuss what to apply and how to do it with the agreed upon changes.

During the course of the training, Abdelrahman also worked with staff members Osama and Marian on their youth program. They did a report to be broadcast in the next episode of the program about the “hidden talents”. Two other staff members, Maha and Baha, managed to finish a report about the rise in the bread prices. The two reports were reviewed, critiqued and discussed in details. Maha agreed to make another report for the morning program that would include hosting guests from the listeners or the fans of the programs to talk about different topics.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Osama Awad, program and news presenter
2. Baha Jameel, news presenter
3. Saed Ibrahim, Sound engineer
4. Marian George, presenter
5. Maha Yousef, presenter
6. Hanaa Alrabdy, nutrition program presenter
7. Inas Abdeen, presenter

### 4) 22-23 March, 2008 Marah Radio, Hebron

Among the participants in this training were two girls from 11<sup>th</sup> grade and two boys who just graduated from high school and Sahar who will be the presenter a program that may be supported by the Aswatona. The program is a “magazine” that lasts for one hour.

During the training, the radio station had only one recorder and one microphone to record with, which meant that it was impossible to record while the presenter was using the microphone outside the studio for field work. The other tools and equipment were all in their Bethlehem studio.

Despite these difficulties, the trainer and staff managed to make some reports regarding the curing with “Gennies”, which was a big topic that week, about the rise in the prices of the bread, and about an art gallery that was opened by the Hebron-France Association.

In the morning program, the “Gennies” report was used and the staff brought the Mufti of Hebron and also a physician in order to discuss the issue. The program received many phone calls from people who said they were cured this way.

They also worked together to create the jingle as Sahar wrote the outlines of the reports for the magazine. They then worked on producing a 17-minute version of the magazine that was reviewed and critiqued with all the staff to examine both the weak and strong points of the production. The trainer spent extra time with Sahar discussing the program that may be supported by Aswatona in detail.



The trainer noted that most of the staff in this radio station has a problem with the classic Arabic language, so he suggested that some of the programs could be presented spoken street language to give it a local flavor that may be attractive to their audience.

The journalists that participated in the training:

1. Adel Ghareeb, presenter and preparer
2. Malel Natshe, presenter
3. Ahmad Muhtaseb, presenter
4. Hasan Daana, sound engineer
5. Mutasem Daana, sound engineer
6. Saja Khmour, kids program presenter
7. Zakya Alkubs, kids program presenter
8. Sahar Dibes, presenter
9. Hamsa Balout, presenter

### 2.1c - Institute mentoring, organizational development and marketing for station owners

From the beginning of the grants program, the *Aswatona* staff has been working with the stations on using the new programs to generate advertising, sponsors, and to reconnect with the

community. Toward this goal of sustainability, the stations have made progress. Through the programs' field reports, the reporters are back on the streets talking to the citizens throughout the districts. Also, through the marketing of the new programs, the owners have been generating income for their stations; five of the programs are continuing after the conclusion of the grants due to popularity and sponsorship.

As well, during this quarter the *Aswatona* staff has been working directly with two of its partner stations in re-designing their organizational structures in order to strengthen their productivity, communications, and professionalism.

### 2.3 - Support of Development of Professional Broadcast Association

*Aswatona* plans to give more support to the coalition, such as organizing open workshops by hosting foreign (American) broadcast association leaders to train the local Coalition on tasks, duties, rights and all issues related to the work of the Coalition in strengthening the media outlets, regulating the sector within the local laws, and the following the Coalition by-laws. As well, *Aswatona* is working to help in put together a business plan for the Coalition in order to be a strong professional association and to be able to sustain itself in the future.

2.1e - This new Coalition, now duly licensed, is the one capacity-building grant that is being considered for the next round. In the meantime, they have had two board meetings to outline their goals for the Coalition and benefits for the membership. *Aswatona* will also be working with the Coalition in reviewing the media law and making recommendations. The Ministry of Information has also been in touch with the Coalition head, Fathi Natour, to ask for a meeting to discuss the current media environment and the necessary steps towards its regulation.

### 2.5 - Workshop on Media Law with new Association, academics, and CSOs

After the delay from Year One, due to the political crisis, the *Aswatona* team had planned to conduct this workshop in November. However, in meeting with Bir Zeit's Media Center to learn of the work that they had already done and to discuss what was being considered, they suggested that we combine efforts. The *Aswatona* project began discussing a joint effort with Bir Zeit and now also with UNESCO, who has the agreement of the Palestinian Authority to reform the media law. As a starting point, all the relevant laws and drafts, recommendations on reforms, and suggested changes made by CSOs were collected and the important ones were translated into English. An initial meeting will be held in April with a few of the concerned organizations.

## **IV. Comparison of Planned and Actual Accomplishments**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Activities of This Quarter</b>	<b>#s</b>	<b>Planned</b>	<b>Actual</b>
1.1a	Joint Workshop with DAI BAYAN project on Access to Information	N/A	March	Delayed until April 6-7
1.1b	Workshops on reporting	Total of Forty-	February	March 1-3

	specific issues/topics “Getting the Story: Covering Press Conferences and Conducting Interviews for News in WB and Gaza	three journalists: 17 from television 16 from radio 4 from print 6 from electronic		March 8-10 March 15-16 & 19  Gaza delayed
1.1ci	In-house Radio training on covering local news: interviews, fieldwork, techniques, and formats – West Bank	Four radio stations for local news coverage  journalists	April	March
1.2b	Selection/support of innovative story ideas	1 new contract 9 existing contracts	September  July	January  September
1.2b	Selection of innovative story ideas for Production Grants	6 concepts	January	Delayed
2.1b	In-House TV training field work, covering local events, and human interest stories: editing, field work, and format for productions supported by Aswatona	3 partner station and 1 new potential partner  20 journalists	December	January
2.1a	In-House Radio training on field work, covering local events, and human interest stories in the West Bank	5 partner stations  journalists	March	March
2.1c	Institute mentoring and organizational development and marketing for station owners	8 partner station owners/managers	On-going	Jan-March
2.1e	Selection of capacity building concepts for support	1 concept	February	March
2.2c	Media Management and Organizational structure	N/A	March	Delayed until May
2.3	Support of Development of Professional Broadcast Association	32 media outlet owners	Periodically from Jan through March	February (BoD meeting)
2.5	Workshop on Media Law with new Association, academics, and CSOs	N/A	November	Delay as per request
2.6	Industry-wide ethical standards		March	delayed
	Distribute Business planning CDs/booklets		January	Delayed pending USAID approval of text

## V. Activities Planned for Next Quarter

Activities Planned for Next Quarter	Timeline
1.1b Workshops – reporting on specific issues/topics 1 delayed in Gaza and 1 new one in WB	May
1.2b 6 new grants/contracts/partners	May
2.1a in-house radio human interest mini feature	May
2.1b in-house TV local events and human interest	April
2.1d workshop in ethics and standards	May
2.1c Specialized training	April
2.1e 1 new grant/contract	May
2.1f Internship in Egypt	May
2.2a local polling – stations and public	June
2.2c Media Management and Organizational structure	April
2.2ci Financial Planning and Marketing	May
2.2cii Programming priorities	May
2.2d Technical assessment update	April/May
2.2e Media Management follow up Int’l consult	June
2.3a Association Dev – focus groups	April and June
2.4a Audio-visual media law workshop	May
2.4b AV media law regulatory issues workshop	June
2.6a Industry-wide Ethical standards combined w/March Distribute Business planning CDs/booklets	May April

## VI. Success Stories and Recommendations

One of the biggest successes of this quarter was the series of trainings, in different districts, for journalists on covering press conferences and interviews for news. These two topics are the staple of news coverage in the West Bank and Gaza. *Aswatona* plans to do a similar workshop in Gaza but with NGOs instead of officials with more role-playing, once permission is given to do so.

The methodology of blending theory and then practice with real press conferences and interviews really excited the participants to do their best. The importance of the peer and trainer critiques cannot be overstated; the participants wanted more opportunity to do this piece. *Aswatona* is planning to do a follow up or more advanced workshop with the best of all the journalists who participated. The journalists are more of the focus for this year and *Aswatona* needs to provide more training like these as well as to work on developing new journalistic skills training.

*Aswatona* also wants to do a similar workshop for the Editors in Chief or News Directors of the stations on the strategy of covering local news and issues. *Aswatona* needs to push the stations

to be a bit more daring in their coverage of news and local issues; they are still reluctant to stick out their journalistic necks even a little but the environment is ripe for them to test it.