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Rule of Law Program - Justice and Enforcement

West Bank and Gaza

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Rule of Law Program

Justice and Enforcement

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**Final Report - Development & Implementation of
the Administrative System at the SJC & Courts**

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1. Introduction

In the context of activities to support and strengthen the Palestinian Judiciary, the USAID-funded Netham Project, implemented a development initiative to improve the performance of the administrative functions at the SJC and courts. The assignment consisted of an assessment phase and a development phase. The assessment addressed the current conditions, and strengths and weaknesses, of the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) human resource functions, administrative support activities, internal communications, documentation and archiving, among others issues. As a result of this phase an assessment report and a developmental plan were prepared, in which the implementation of the second phase is part of that development plan. The second phase of the assignment consisted of developing a comprehensive Administrative Manual that will assist SJC employees to execute their daily work more efficiently and produce better quality services to the public. This assignment has been underway for the past 10 months with the assistance of a specialized consultant in the administrative field.

2. Development of the Administrative System

An administrative functions manual was developed in close cooperation between the consultant and the administrative officials of the SJC and consists of a number of key processes. Each of these procedures defines the necessary steps to perform the work in a most efficient manner, key responsibilities, and forms needed to execute transactions.

2.1 Documents and Records Control (DRC)

DRC addresses how SJC employees should prepare, issue, and modify procedure documents. Each procedure has a name, code, and a number of sub-processes and forms associated with it, and the DRC procedure defines authorities for managing the administrative and financial system documents, so that only authorized and most updated procedures are used by assigned employees.

2.2 Archive Control

The archiving control procedure defines how all types of documents at the SJC should be handled and archived. It shows where documents should be saved, who can have access to documents, how to search for documents, and the retention period of documents. Documents in the scope of this procedure include all reports, systems, records, hardcopies, softcopies, etc.

2.3 Internal Reports and Communications Management

This procedure defines the types of reports and other internal communications tools such as memos, how to prepare them, timing, responsibilities, and actions to be taken.

2.4 Meetings Management

Meeting management procedures define how to organize meetings in terms of: participants, agenda, discussion facilitation, minutes taking, documentation, and follow-up mechanisms. It addresses senior SJC meetings, mid-management meetings, as well as meetings inside each department.

2.5 Correspondence Management



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This procedure defines how to deal with in-coming and out-going mails at all types and levels. The mail document cycle is defined together with responsibilities for follow-up actions until closing.

2.6 Internal Administrative Review

This is an important process that enables the SJC to review its performance in terms of the degree of compliance with the prepared, approved, and issued systems. This procedure defines steps such as review scheduling, preparing review reports, corrective/preventive actions, and follow-up activities for closing needed actions.

2.7 Employee Recruitment

This is an important HR function that defines how the SJC should recruit people according to the applicable Personnel Law of the Palestinian Authority. It clearly shows the steps to ensure that the most qualified individuals are appointed at the SJC and that fair and transparent opportunities and treatment are given to all candidates.

2.8 Employee Attendance Control

The Personnel Law requires that the personnel department at the SJC controls the attendance of employees. This procedure is a detailed process for ensuring that the law is implemented with respect to attendance hours, all types of vacation leave, and sick leave. It ensures that employees use their time properly and clarifies the documentation needed for any employee attendance transaction.

2.9 Employee File Control

According to the law, employee files contain confidential documents pertaining to employee identification information, credentials and employee transactions. This procedure clarifies to personnel people how to handle and maintain employee files, retain documents, or disclose information all with responsibilities and authorities.

2.10 Employee Appraisal and Promotion

This is another important function that defines how employee evaluation is performed in terms of who evaluates who, timing of evaluation, forms to be used and evaluation criteria and weights, needed computations, etc. This procedure contains an updated evaluation form that measures three main employee performance criteria relating to employee professional competency, human competency, and technical competency.

2.11 Employee Training Management

This process defines how employee training is managed in terms of training needs assessment, preparing training plans, scheduling and monitoring the quality of training, and measuring the impact of training on the development of employees.

2.12 Employee Satisfaction Measurement

Employee satisfaction is one important aspect of modern HR management. This process at the SJC will assist in the identification of improvement opportunities relating to human resources.

2.13 Complaints Management System

This process at the SJC will assist in the identification of complaints and assist in taking actions to handle public and SJC staff complaints. The complaints may be handled for beneficiaries from the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) services including citizens, staff, lawyers, etc. The beneficiaries'



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complaints follow-up process includes receiving and registering complaints, complaints follow-up, preventive and corrective actions taken, and reporting.

3. Implementation of the Administrative System

The consultant began issuing the administrative system after development according to the document and data control system. Then, the consultant under Netham's supervision followed-up the implementation of the administrative system.

3.1 Training

In-house training of daily operations was conducted for individuals and groups of SJC staff. Detailed training was also conducted for the Chief Clerks at the Palestinian courts in addition to a one-day internal audit workshop.

3.1.1 First Workshop: Training on the Administrative and Financial Systems

The purpose of the workshop was to increase the awareness of the employees at the courts of the developed administrative and financial systems, and answer all questions related to implementation of the systems. The participants included 19 Chief Clerks from the Conciliation, First Instance, Appeal, and Supreme Courts in the West Bank.

3.1.2 Second Workshop: Internal Auditing

The purpose of the workshop was to train and qualify a select numbers of employees from the SJC to conduct internal auditing on the accuracy of implementation of the developed administrative and financial systems. The participants included 8 employees from SJC's Administrative and Financial Departments.

3.2 Internal Audit Process

An internal audit was then conducted by the consultant hand in hand with the qualified SJC internal auditors and under Netham's supervision to ascertain the level of implementation of the administrative procedures. An audit report was prepared accordingly which illustrates clearly the level of implementation of each administrative procedure.

4. Suggestions and Recommendations

A summary report was prepared by the administrative consultant and submitted along with the overall outcomes of the assignment including the final administrative manual, the presentation material of the internal auditing workshop, and the assessment report that was prepared at the beginning of the assignment. The consultant's summary report included the following suggestions and recommendations:

- The SJC should work on implementing the development plan. Part of the plan was implemented by developing the Administrative Manual.
- The SJC should activate the principle of internal meetings and discussions, all according to set agendas and clear follow-up mechanisms.



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- The SJC should assign one or two staff in the Administrative Department to follow-up system implementation and take corrective actions based on objective feed back.
- The USAID-funded Netham Project should follow up on the implementation of the newly adopted administrative systems with the SJC relevant staff.

The project assignment was closed on August 31, 2008. The overall efforts of the administrative assignment were carried out over 50 working days.