



USAID | **WEST BANK/GAZA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**USAID/ Public Awareness, Communication Strategy, and Community Outreach
Project**

Contract #: 294-C-00-08-00227-00
Implementing Partner: Al Nasher Technical Services

Quarterly Progress Report #1

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I Executive Summary

With over \$2.2 billion invested in the Palestinian territories since 1993, USAID has been instrumental in providing assistance to Palestinians in a number of sectors including education, health, infrastructure, economic development, and legal reform. Until recently, the USAID West Bank and Gaza Mission devised and implemented a communications strategy designed to inform the Palestinian public and the people of Arab and other Muslim nations of the contributions the American people have made to the well-being of the people of the West Bank and Gaza. Therefore, and as proven by a number of studies conducted in the past 2 years, a large percentage of Palestinians are still unaware of USAID assistance and project. In addition, a large percentage of those aware of USAID carry a negative perception of USAID and associate it with the United States Government political positions.

Although the recent three years witnessed enhancing awareness of USAID and its projects and improving, to some extent, the Palestinian perceptions of USAID. A sound communication strategy will be developed as part of this project to enhance these efforts considerably over the next three years.

This report will summarize the activities conducted under **USAID/WBG Public Awareness, Communication Strategy, and Community Outreach Project** for the first quarter of the projects life.

It summarizes the objectives of the project through developing a communications strategy which defines key messages in Arabic, the target audiences, and the main communication methods that will most effectively inform the Palestinian public of USAID development projects funded by the American People.

As a result of each Public Awareness Campaign, at least 65% of the Palestinians are aware of USAID assistance in the West Bank and Gaza.

- At least 60% of the Palestinians think that USAID assistance is important.
- At least 50% of the Palestinians recognize the USAID logo
- At least 60% of the Palestinians find the campaign messages and themes effective and appealing.

The first quarter of the project was consumed in conducting the following main activities:

- Project deployment activities including kick-off meetings, training session, team meetings, staffing, and technical setups.
- Finalization of the first year work plans.
- Responding to urgent USAID/WBG needs in conducting six public relations activities across the West Bank.
- Commencement of public outreach activities with three Eid Holiday children fun days.
- Weekly media monitoring reports
- Drafting of the first monthly newsletter covering USAID/WBG for electronic distribution.
- Development of initial draft of communication strategy document and suggested creative theme ideas
- Preparations for conducting the project baseline survey.

2 Activities

2.1 Strategy Development

The primary activity that needs to be completed before starting large advertising campaigns and extensive outreach activities is the development of the communications strategy. Al Nasher will work with USAID DOC office to develop a communication strategy for USAID/WBG. Al Nasher believes that a participatory approach which involves USAID technical offices will deliver a much stronger communication strategy.

For the development of the communication strategy, we will implement the following strategy:

- Reviewing past communication successes and lessons learned
- Review available literature as well as research results on USAID/WBG communications and public perceptions.
- Conduct a baseline research study including a quantitative survey research and qualitative focus group discussions and interviews. In addition, trends from last few years of researches conducted by USAID should be taken into consideration.
- Identify target groups and their information requirements.
- Identify the key events and milestones for the project from a communications viewpoint.
- Develop campaign main theme and slogan.
- Develop the intent and content of key messages for each of the target groups.
- Determine appropriate tools and timing for each of the key messages.
- Conduct message testing including focus group discussions, interviews, and snapshot profiles.
- Develop a public relations plan
- Provide guidance on the timing and nature of community outreach activities in order to match the communication strategy campaigns and activities.
- Finalize the project timeline in accordance with the strategy.
- Finalize monitoring and evaluation plan including indicators, tools used, timing, and expected results.

Al Nasher has prepared an initial draft for the strategy document for discussion. This draft will be refined in light of USAID DOC comments, new research results, and brainstorming session results.

- Project deployment activities.
- Hiring specialized staff for implementing project activities.
- Kick-off meetings, training session, team meetings, and technical setups.
- Finalization of the first year work plans.

2.2 Baseline Survey

In light of discussion with USAID DOC it was decided that there is a need for a baseline survey due to the following reasons:

- To continue with the trends of previous years since latest research was conducted in January, 2008.
- Since most performance indicators of the project are based on the research results it is important to update these indicators with new research in light of the continuously changing political and socio-economic conditions of WBG.
- Trends established from years of research will suffice for the purpose of the development of the communications strategy, but updated research results will be essential to develop a more sound strategy.

Preparations for the survey have begun through analysis of previous questionnaires in order to draft a new questionnaire which includes and improves on previous indicators. Meetings with Jerusalem Media and Communications Center (JMCC) the survey research subcontractor were held to discuss the work plans and JMCC's role.

2.3 Media Monitoring Reports

Weekly media monitoring reports have been submitted to USAID/WBG. These reports included local newspapers, local news websites, and some international coverage over the internet. News related to USAID, US Government, and related news have been reported. A total of 10 reports were submitted during this period. The reports are important tool to keep USAID DOC updated with the media coverage of USAID/WBG in the local media.

2.4 USAID/WBG Monthly Newsletter

One of planned media outreach tools is the development of a bilingual newsletter in English and Arabic. The main target audiences for the newsletter are the media, partners, NGOs, and USAID offices around the world. The newsletter will be distributed via a mailing list over email. Printed copies of the newsletter will be placed at partner offices. The format and content of the newsletter has been discussed with USAID DOC and the first issue is under development.

2.5 PR Events & Outreach Events

As part of public relations strategy, Al Nasher has been representing USAID in assisting various partners plan and implemented a number of public relation events. USAID role, through this project, include assisting in the logistical arrangements, production of necessary items, media coverage, and providing necessary technical requirements for the event success. Responding to urgent USAID/WBG needs, we conducted six public relations activities across the West Bank. In addition, we have started commencement of public outreach activities with three Eid Holiday children fun days. Following is a brief summary for each activity.

2.5.1 Inauguration of the Beta Youth Resource Center

Date: Nov 17, 2008

Location: Beta Youth Club, Beta, Nablus

Event Type: PR

Brief description about the event:

The ceremony was held for the purpose of inauguration of Beita Youth Resource development center, where USAID took a part in the event preparations as follows: USAID participated in providing part of the publications that were distributed in the event; Invitation cards, Newsletters, fact sheets, folders and banners.

The importance of USAID to be part of this event comes from its interest to support the youth sector in Palestine



through providing different locations that can play a big role in the youth development in different areas through providing places where they can meet for their purposes to discuss and implement different activities.

2.5.2 Hisham's Palace Project Inauguration

Date: Nov 20, 2008

Location: Hisham's Palace, Jericho

Event Type: PR

Brief description about the event:

With funding made available USAID, ANERA's project interventions focused on the Rehabilitation of the Road of Hisham's Palace and Bridge leading to the Palace and Development of the archeological site itself. These project activities were implemented in close cooperation and partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) and the Municipality of Jericho. USAID participated in providing publications that were distributed at the event in addition to signage, refreshments, sound equipment, event location setup, and logistic support provided through Al Nasher.



2.5.3 Sesame Street New Season Launch Event

Date: Nov 25, 2008

Location: Ministry of Education Hall, Ramallah

Event Type: PR

Brief description about the event:

The Ministry of Education launched with Pen Media foundation and with the support of USAID the new season of the Children program the "Sesame street", with the presence of Dr. Lamice Al Alami the minister of Education, and Dr. Howard Sumka-USAID Mission Director.

USAID participated in providing part of the publications that were distributed in the event in addition to the logistic support provided through Al Nasher;



2.5.4 Flagship Project Launch Ceremony

Date: Dec 2, 2008

Location: Public Health Labs, Ministry of Health, Ramallah

Event Type: PR

Brief description about the event:

USAID and the Palestinian Ministry of Health launched the Palestinian Health Sector Reform and Development Project, which aims to strengthen the Ministry of Health's ability to respond to the priority of the health needs of the Palestinian people.

USAID participated in providing banners, flags in addition to the logistic support provided through Al Nasher;



2.5.5 USAID Funded Women Center Inauguration (Through CHF/EJP)

Date: Dec 3, 2008

Location: Women Center (Village Council Building), Biddo, Ramallah

Event Type: PR

Brief description about the event:

Biddo's people participated in the launching ceremony of Al Eid Exhibition which was organized to celebrate the opening of the new women center in Bido, through the inauguration of the EJP implemented by CHF and funded by USAID.

USAID participated in providing banners, flags in addition to the logistic support provided through Al Nasher; The women sector in Palestine especially in villages is a very important sector to be supported according to USAID's belief in the women's role especially in such places.



2.5.6 Rafeedia Hospital Project Inauguration

Date: Dec 4, 2008

Location: Rafeedia Hospital, Nablus

Event Type: PR

Brief description about the event:

The Ministry of Health and USAID celebrated the inauguration of Rafidia governmental hospital, where Dr. Fathi Abu Moghli Minister of health thanked USAID for the support it provided to the Ministry of health generally and to Rafidia governmental hospital specifically.

USAID participated in providing banners, flags in addition to the logistic support provided through Al Nasher.



2.5.7 Three Eid Holiday Fun Days

Date: Dec 10, 2008

Location: Zababdeh

Date: Dec 10, 2008

Location: Kifel Haris

Date: Dec 11, 2008

Location: Frakh

Event Type: Public Outreach

Brief description about the event:

USAID organized in different villages a day of joy and fun, which is an annual tradition initiated by the USAID for the Palestinian children and was held during Eid Al Adha in the period between 8 to 12 December 2008.

Day of joy and fun was implemented as part of USAID's PR, where many activities were held that encouraged children to be interactive.

It is also important to mention that these



days of fun and joy were held in 3 main villages located in the north part which are: Farkha, Kifel Hares and Al Zababdeh.

In addition It should be noted that the locations in which events were held and funded by the (USAID) were also supported through the CHF International foundation.

2.5.7 Eid Holiday Greetings

**As part of the Eid holiday greetings, special Eid advertisement was designed and published in Al Quds and Al Ayyam newspapers. An electronic version for email was prepared and sent to USAID as well. Following is the design of the Eid ad:



3 Milestones & Benchmarks

Item	Activity	Planned	Completed	Progress	Comments
1	Communication Strategy Development			75%	On track based on updated work plan.
2	PR Plan Finalization				PR Plan finalization has to follow the strategy document.
3	Monthly Newsletter	3	1	33%	Agreement of format and sources for newsletter materials. First edition being developed for month of December. Following editions will follow on a monthly basis.
4	Media Monitoring Reports	12	10	100%	After agreeing on the report format, media reports have been submitted in time weekly every Monday morning.
5	Holiday Greetings			100%	Newspaper advertisements were placed in Al Quds Newspaper and Al Ayyam for Eid holiday. An electronic version was supplied to USAID DOC for email.
6	Public Opinion Monitoring Reports			30%	Report has been discussed with JMCC (research sub contractor) and format and content is being developed for approval by USAID DOC.
7	Event & Project Photo & Video			100%	Photography and video documentation of events have been supplied through Pal Mirror the photo/video subcontractor as needed for the pr events.
8	Thematic Photo Exhibition				The thematic photo exhibitions largely depend on the completion of the communication strategy development as they will reflect the new messages of USAID/WBG. Once strategy is completed we are able to proceed with this item.
9	Documentary Film Production				The documentary film production is dependent on the communication strategy finalization.

Item	Activity	Planned	Completed	Progress	Comments
10	Fun Days on Holidays			100%	3 Fun Days were organized and executed at 3 villages in the North of the West Bank during the Eid holiday.
11	Public Relation Services			100%	Our PR team has been making sure we have excellent media coverage at each one of the PR and outreach events. Press releases have been drafted and translated where needed. In other cases, the press release was drafted by USAID and the project staff assisted in the distribution to the media.
12	Feature Story Writing				Feature stories covering human interest success stories and other project accomplishments on the ground will be part of the coming period once condition in Gaza calm down in order to maximize the impact of these stories.
13	Public Relation Events			100%	Six public relations events were planned and executed in cooperation with USAID partners, local partners, and USAID. Logistical arrangements and event planning coupled with a high level of follow up and supervision ensured that each one of these events was a success.

4 Success Stories

USAID finds it very important to announce success stories on the ground that were result of different projects implementations and activities supported and funded by USAID.

As a result, it is important to highlight a number of these stories that reflect results and affects through the implemented projects, to be added to newsletters distributed by USAID.

Through conducting the various PR and outreach activities, our project staff have identified a number of leads for possible success stories. These stories are being investigated in order to prepare 3 success stories covering the youth, women, and health sectors.

5 Conclusion

In summary, these three months included extensive visibility for USAID. Due to the fact that this period immediately followed the end of USAID's fiscal year, many USAID project were closing up while many others were kicking off. This meant that extensive public relations efforts must be undertaken to ensure all these projects get their proper coverage in the media. Through this project USAID organized and implemented six of these public relation events and many others directly with partners. As a result, USAID received very high coverage in the local and international media as was presented in the weekly media monitoring reports. The coverage was very positive and was well received by the local communities which benefited directly from these interventions.

As for the administrative side of things, the first few months of the life of the project are difficult as many issues have to be organized including staffing, reporting plans, relationships with sub contractors, work plans, and other technical issues. Looking back at the past three months we can say that we have made significant progress on all these fronts and are on our way to get most of these technical details out of our way. In the next months we should have less administrative issues to worry about and more progress on the deliverables of the projects in terms of communications and outreach.