

**Access to Microfinance & Improved Implementation of Policy Reform
(AMIR Program)**

Funded By U.S. Agency for International Development

e-Government Fast Track Projects

Final Report

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this memo is to document the technical assistance visit, review requested deliverables, highlight key issues, and propose a strategy for follow-on phases. The two Fast Track initiatives [Telecommunications and Regulatory Commission (TRC) and the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Companies Controller Directorate (MIT/CCD)] were the primary focus and, secondarily, some input is provided on issues related to the “Portal” activity and “E-gov” in general.

- A schedule of meetings and key contacts, as well as a list of documents reviewed, is attached.
- The primary purpose of the visit, technical input for the two Fast Track RFPs, will be provided in draft documents finalized upon return to the US. Martin Hudson and Chris Kagy at devIS will review and finalize the draft contract language and forward via email by COB Tuesday 4/17. Several decisions leading to the use of several different procurement vehicles is further described below. A draft summary implementation schedule will be forwarded for review also by 4/17.
- In reviewing the two Fast Track projects it was clear that the desired Web transactional functions need a more solid database foundation. That is to say that the existing TRC and MIT/CCD application environments are not capable of exposure via Web interface to Jordan citizens/businesses without significant modification and re-design.
- The devIS Subcontract SOW has been reviewed and planning for follow-on Assignments has been initiated. It was not possible, or realistic, to develop specific follow on assignments without a completed RFP strategy and actual procurements. While objectives have not changed from those outlined in the devIS subcontract SOW the process management support could vary significantly depending on which local firm is selected for the bulk of the software development tasks and to what extent Microsoft Consulting Services agrees to participate in supporting the two Fast Tracks. Fortunately, the initial contact/review afforded by this visit will make it possible to quickly finalize Assignment objectives and schedules once procurements are in place.

Special thanks go to AMIR staff who responded quickly to enable the visit to go ahead on short notice. The willingness of local staff to be flexible in scheduling their time and arranging appropriate interviews and meetings helped make the one-week visit highly productive. And the leadership of Roger Guichard in coordinating the visit is also greatly appreciated.

2. Procurement Decisions/Approach

In order to jump-start the Fast Track projects while minimizing risk several decisions and trade-offs had to be made during the week. These decisions were made with the input of many AMIR staff including Roger Guichard/MoPC staff, Brian O’Shea, Andy Grimminger, Karen Roland, Abdelmajeed Shamlawi, and Steve Wade. Given that there are only about 6 months of work-time, from planned Fast Track RFP award in early May until AMIR is in close-out mode, all efforts must be made to accelerate the activities.

- **Combine Fast Tracks:** The first key decision was to agree to combine the two Fast Tracks into one logical project. That is, the same firms will perform the work for both organizations (MIT/CCD and TRC). This should simplify procurement as well as management tasks.
- **Split Combined Fast Tracks into 5 Procurements/Parts:** The five parts and suggested subcontractor/vehicles are:
 1. Process Reengineering (IMI - existing MIT/CCD Subcontract with modification to address TRC needs),
 2. Web Design/Informational Content (Primus/CNS – Existing subcontract with new Task Order),
 3. Application Requirements Analysis/Design including Hardware and Software requirements (Fast Track RFP Part I Fixed Price),
 4. Application Development and Implementation (Fast Track RFP Part II probably with Fixed Rates/T&M),
 5. Hardware and software procurement as identified via item 3 above (note: because the GoJ has unlimited Microsoft licenses it is not anticipated that software purchases will be needed).

Phases 2, 3, 4, and 5 must be implemented and managed as one logical project. Of particular note here is the recognition, confirmed by a site visit to One World Software, that most developers are unwilling to provide fixed price services for systems development projects that have not been fully defined. As the two Fast Tracks, particularly the MIT/CCD, do not have a fixed set of verified requirements it is necessary to first do the typical analysis and detailed design before being able to fully scope the development effort. And it is clearly a “best practice” to have the same firm do both the requirements analysis, design, and development since modern development methodologies are based more on an iterative repetitive cycles rather than a linear “spec and build” process. The combined contractor and GoJ organization Project Managers can be identified as an AMIR Fast Track Team or something similar. Linking Team performance across organizations increases visibility and may lead to important sharing of technical skills/ideas.

- **Simplify Process Reengineering Procurement for TRC:** IMI, the firm performing the analysis at MIT/CCD, has provided draft simplifications that look promising. The various forms of business registration and supporting paper documents, as well as procedures, could change significantly if the Controller elects to fully implement the IMI recommendations. However, in the TRC it was determined that the process reengineering was much less complex than is the case at MIT/CCD. And, because the two organizations are linked in terms of support for private sector as well as E-gov activities, that it would not be unreasonable to expand the existing IMI subcontract to include the TRC review. Therefore the Fast Track RFP will now assume, for both the MIT/CCD and the TRC, that the results of the process reengineering will be readily available when the E-gov requirements analysis and technical design are initiated.
- **Quick Start Web Design/Informational Content:** It was determined that it would be beneficial on several fronts if the existing local AMIR IT services firm was retained as a member of the Fast

Track Team for these appropriate tasks. A suggested Task Order SOW will be provided. This work will likely be somewhat different for Primus/CNS as it will require more process management of the Web design process (see 'Create GoJ E-gov Web Design Standards' below) and may involve new technology for content management if Microsoft can produce a workable solution.

- **Postpone Portal:** The development of a Portal has been mentioned in several documents and is being actively pursued by AMIR staff at the MoPC. A decision on whether to give this site a focus on GoJ E-gov activities and best practices versus the more ambitious citizen/business focused central portal for linking all GoJ sites and services had not been made. Additionally the objectives were complicated by the role of the NIC (National Information Center) in MoPC and GoJ E-gov in general given that the NIC site already delivers some portal features. Therefore the "portal" will not be addressed in the RFPs/planning although a related issue is of great importance and should be addressed as an immediate Fast Track concern (See below).
- **Create GoJ E-gov Web Design Standards:** A common best practice is to develop a template standard to encourage all E-gov sites to have a similar "look and feel." Design standards also allow the sharing of tools and techniques across organizations and give users a standard way to approach a site. These standards most often consist of a common "banner," menu structure, bi-lingual content access, and feature set (i.e. ContactUs, Search, Print, etc.). This work can and should be accomplished by AMIR as part of the ongoing effort by MoPC (Emile Cubeisy). The two Fast Tracks will provide ample practical opportunity to develop a suggested design framework for E-gov in general. Language to this effect will be included in the draft Task Order to be performed by Primus/CNS and, if successful, will give AMIR even broader exposure in the E-gov support role.
- **Define Microsoft Role:** The GoJ has purchased licenses for MS desktop software and, as part of that deal, has obtained enterprise wide licenses to all MS tools including server environments. The Fast Tracks will be done primarily using MS tools with the exception being the MITs centralized Oracle database that is unlikely to change and may even need to be upgraded from Oracle 7.3 to 8i (according to comments by the MID Director of IT). MS Consulting Services representative promised verbally to play an important role in ensuring that these two Fast Tracks are built on a solid technical foundation. Of course, the hope is that these two applications can serve as examples for what the technology is capable of achieving. A preliminary list of hoped for MS Consulting Services support is attached.

3. Key Issues

Several issues, some technical and some managerial, are noted below along with action taken or pending if applicable.

- **Manage Risk:** At the Thursday TDY briefing with USAID concerns were raised that the time remaining and the difficulty in implementing any IT project could expose AMIR to incomplete tasks. It was explained that the management resources (devIS subcontract) and a two-phase development contract would mitigate such risk and, in a worst case scenario, allow AMIR to postpone or cancel development of modules and reduce the scope of one or more Fast Tracks. Also, the way the work is being subdivided such that the existing AMIR IT contractor (Primus/CNS) performs the “informational” and Web layout tasks will ensure that valuable and visible progress is made regardless of the progress of the more risk-prone, and less well defined, systems development/web transaction tasks.
- **E-gov Timeline Definition:** Additionally, further evidence indicates that short-term expectation management is a critical factor in how E-gov results will be viewed. Consistent efforts must be made to differentiate between
 - long-term benefits of E-gov re. efficiency and transparency,
 - medium term government-wide E-gov infrastructure improvements (i.e. data center, high speed connectivity, and GoJ-wide directory services), and
 - short-term potential of Fast Track projects.
- **Arabisation Best Practice:** Along with the GoJ push towards e-commerce and globalization it is clear that the bilingual nature of business must be made explicit. Storage and updating of content that needs to be bi-lingual must be made clear and should be standardized as much as possible. MS Consulting Services has promised to provide input and it should be emphasized in the Fast Track RFPs.
- **Content Management Best Practices:** The TRC and MIT/CCD sites have volumes of content and update requirements that make ‘hard coded’ HTML pages less than ideal. Content management systems allow information owners to maintain, control, and publish their information without significant input from technicians (i.e. Web masters, etc.). Hopefully MS can provide a tool, long promised, that makes content management easier. MS Consulting has promised to advise on this issue.
- **Scope of MIT/CCD Reengineering Review:** IMI reengineering study addressed only needs of the initiation stage of business registration. The Controller of Companies however has a full lifecycle responsibility and counts approximately 20,000 updates per year to existing business records. There was some concern that any effort that does not address most of these lifecycle transactions will have difficulty succeeding. IMI was to be requested by AMIR management to scope these life-cycle transactions such that AMIR can make a determination as to whether these issues need to be addressed in more detail. As the MIT/CCD requirements are not yet established at some point prior to beginning system development it will have to be decided whether other than business registration initiation/application needs to be included.
- **XML/Standards:** The Fast Tracks need to take into account the leading international standards for transferring data. For instance in the B2B environment cXML (DTDs supported by UN and SUN) and Biztalk (schemas supported by Microsoft coalition) are clearly recognized XML standards that the Fast Tracks will likely want to imitate in the redesign. This would allow the company registrars database to serve as a base to begin exposing Jordanian firms via B2B channels. The objective of XML schemas is to enable the full power of data exchange by having a common definition of key entities, like “company” or “GoJ Employee.”
- **E-gov Portal:** The notion of a site specifically to support the needs of GoJ and contractors makes good sense and should be pursued when possible. This would allow others to benefit from the experiences of the Fast Tracks and provide a focal point for E-gov projects and data standards development.

These projects will be challenging and a good deal of flexibility and creativity will be needed do bring them in on time, with a rich feature set.

Annex 1 - April 1 – 5, 2001 Technical Assistance Visit Schedule

Date	Time	Description
Friday 3/30	4 PM	Depart for Dulles AP for 5:35 flight to Amman by way of Paris.
Saturday 3/31	9 PM	Arrive Amman AP and transit to Marriott Hotel.
Sunday 4/1	8 AM	Meet Roger Guichard (RG) for overview/backgrounding. Meet with Steve Wade and RG Visited MoPC offices with RG Meet with Brian O'Shea (BO) and RG
	PM	Meet with Integrated Mngt & Info. Consultants (IMI) Nabila Attyani, RG, and BO for overview of IMI re-engineering study of MIT's Business Registration functions. Meet with Emile Cubeisy (EC), MoPC advisor regarding "Portal" and Egov objectives in general.
Monday 4/2	8 AM 11 AM 1 PM	Sit-in on MoPC staff meeting, meet Minister Zu'bi and other staff. Meet with on-site Microsoft Consulting Services rep. Saad Ksheer (SK) Meet with Companies Controller at Ministry of Industry and Trade, Mr. Salem Al-Khazaleh. Meeting also attended by RG, BO, Mahmoud Khasawneh, and USAID's Jamal Al-Jabiri (JAJ). Meet with TRC Director General Mr. Mamoun Balqar Meet with TRC Director Technical & Licensing Affairs Mr. Mahmoud Wreikat (MW) and the TRC E-gov liaison Mr. Mohammed Hamori (MH tel. 586-2020 ext. 348). Return to MoPC offices, review documents and meet with AMIR advisors Rula Barghouty (RB) and Mahmoud Khasawneh as well as Microsoft's SK.
Tuesday 4/3	AM PM	At AMIR office all day Begin outlining RFP ideas. Meet with Abdel Shamlawi (AS) Meet with Karen Roland (KR) Meet with RG and BO Meet with AG and SW
Weds. 4/4	AM PM	Meet SW Meet with AS Meet with BO and KR Meet with RG and Microsoft Rep. SK Meet OneWorld Software Solutions Eyas Shuaibi and Majied Qasem with Microsoft's SK, RG, and EC. Meet Primus/CNS Amer Nasereddin with " same as above " Visit American Computer Show at Meridien Hotel
Thursday 4/5		Meet with BO and AG re. RFP issues. Meet with KR Meet with MIT/CCD and IT Director Atif Hamdan with BO and RB. Meet with AG. Meet with TRC's MW and MH. Meet with USAID,s JAJ and Jon Lindborg with RG and BO.
Fri. 4/6	12 PM	Depart for London, overnight
Sat. 4/7	3 PM	Arrive VA, Dulles airport.

Annex 2 - Documents Reviewed

“Support for the Controller of Companies Directorate, Ministry of Industry and Trade” DRAFT REPORT, March 2001, Integrated Management & Information Consultants (IMI), Nabila Attyani and Ahasan Khahib.

“Ministry of Post & Communications Implementation Plan,” Final Report, October 2000, AMIR/Guichard.

“Jordan E-Government Initiative, Enterprise Service Plan, MoPC,” Version 2.0, March 2001, Microsoft Consulting Services, Saad Ksheer.

“AMIR Fast Track E-Government Version 1, Project Requirement Document,” September 20, 2000, ECI/Casey Wolfe.

“Investor Road Map – Company Registration,” Final Report, May 1999, Southerland Miller and Mr. Greg Price.

“Jordan E-Government - Launching E-Government in Jordan: Readiness and Approach,” September 2000, The Services Group.

Draft RFP for TRC Fast Track, Roger Guichard.

“Unlocking the Bureaucracy at Internet Speed” Sep/Oct 2000, Casey Wolfe and Cecil Schmidt (PowerPoint Presentation)

“Assessment of Opportunities to Streamline and Improve Electronic Government Services to Business and Trade,” Final Report, August 2000, Casey Wolfe.

“E-Government Assessment of the Telecommunications and Regulatory Commission of the Kingdom of Jordan,” Final Report, April 2000, Bobby Henson.

“MIT Registration Department” 2 page informal report by Abed Shamlawi (not dated).

“REACH 2.0 – An Updated Strategy and Action Plan,” January 2001.

Various internal documents relative to Web-site development completed or in progress by Primus/CNS.

Annex 3 - Anticipated Microsoft Consulting Services Input

- What exactly will the TRC and MIT/CCD pilot's have to install to make these pilot's real showplaces of E-gov? Directory services/Exchange? SQL Server?
- MS CS will provide advice on the following:
 - Best practices advice on Arabisation and bilingual content management issues such as data storage standards including database field naming conventions/schema design, Web interface design, etc.
 - Web-site presentation guidance re.
 - Standard placement of controls
 - Persistent language default (i.e. cookies? etc)
 - given that site(s) are intended to be exemplary "cookie cutter" examples for other GoJ sites technical advice re. structure, content management, etc. will be provided
 - Schema and perhaps interface for MIT/CCD application based on prior MS CS projects in Dubai and other countries.
 - Given desire for a multi-tier architecture using the latest MS development tools advice will be required to ensure an optimal and standardized approach to Web-based front-end database access, security, authentication, etc.