

**Achievement of Market Friendly Initiatives and Results
(AMIR 2.0 Program)**

Funded By U.S. Agency for International Development

March - April 2002

**Business Association
Training and Technical Assistance**

Final Report

**Deliverable for Business Management Initiative Component, Task No. 232.2
Contract no. 278-C-00-02-00201-00**

April 2002

This report was prepared by the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) team of Jean Rogers, Stephen Bower, Fred Whiting, and Lee Weimer in collaboration with Chemonics International Inc., prime contractor to the U.S. Agency for International Development for the AMIR Program in Jordan.

Table of Contents

S.O.W. 232.2 Strategic Planning Workshop/Retreat.....	1
S.O.W. 232.2 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE	4
Int@j.....	5
Jordan Exporters Association.....	10
Amman World Trade Center.....	13
Jordanian Association of Manufacturers of Pharmaceuticals & Medical Appliances (JAPM)	19
Jordan Hotel Association.....	23
Jordanian Intellectual Property Rights Association.....	24
Jordanian-American Business Association (JABA)	26
Young Entrepreneurs Association (YEA)	27
Annex A - Strategic Planning Workshop PowerPoint Slides.....	29

Report to Chemonics International

CIPE Business Association Training and Technical Assistance

S.O.W. 232.2 Strategic Planning Workshop/Retreat

This consultancy focused on developing the associations' strategies and work plans through workshop for business association executives. Held at the Dead Sea, the workshop provided an opportunity for participants to focus on their organizational missions, objectives, and strategies for program implementation. Before the workshop, trainers received voluminous documentation about the organizations' past plans and performance. This was extremely useful in setting the stage; as is often the case, however, the paper could only reflect part of the picture, which emerged as discussions gained depth over the course of this and the following consultancies.

Presentations by each of the four trainers effectively set the stage for the hands-on planning and triggered good discussions among the attendees and trainers:

- Strategic Planning (Rogers)
- People Dynamics of the Planning Process (Weimer)
- Developing a Program of Work (Whiting)
- Putting the Plan in Action (Bower)

Each presentation was a set-up for hands-on work by the participants in which they worked on their individual mission statements, objectives and AMIR workplans. The hands on portion of the program seemed to be very effective in affording participants the opportunity to receive one-on-one guidance from the trainers, to discuss the planning strategies and mechanisms among themselves and to present their 'works in progress' to the group for discussion. While there was an early push to get right to "the work" (ie: USAID funding forms and grant requirements) the interest in the training program topics grew steadily once participants realized how much they could gain from the expertise of the various instructors in helping them to create *additional* success with the wise use of resources and technique. Work plans were developing on site; the dialogue and questions during sessions indicated that participants were thinking through the process and laying out the fundamentals of a work plan. A significant amount of time was spent, however, with wording/language terms both to describe action steps in their plans, and to adapt wording, format, and layouts of work plans so as to conform to the request of the donor. In order to focus more on USAID grant requirements for these workplans, sessions on coalitions and Jordan Vision 20/20 were dropped, placing more emphasis on the draft plans and monitoring indicators forms. On paper, the majority of the participants understand how to prepare a document detailing the activities of their organization, though some of them have not yet taken advantage of the management and marketing advantage this kind of planning can engender in an organization. Most of the associations present do need to work through a more thorough longer-term planning process with their boards if they are to move beyond annual staff-driven work plans to develop real strategies driven by the member needs.

The fact that some of the attendees had gone through these subjects at one or more previous BA Management Training Workshops posed only minor difficulty in that some of the matters covered to establish a common baseline for newcomers were somewhat redundant for “veterans.” Nevertheless, even in areas as basic as Mission Statements, there was good discussion and significant revision of existing mission statements, even those of previous attendees. Increasingly, it would seem that AMIR will have to attempt to segregate, to some extent, the associations that have been in the AMIR program for several years vs. those new to the program, perhaps grouping associations into “streams” that recognize their varying exposures to AMIR training and assistance. Earlier attempts to divide the groups at a common setting, however, indicate that this streaming is best undertaken at separate times and venues to avoid confusion or envy among the groups.

While the skill level and experience in association management of the participants clearly varied, the first observation was one of openness, willingness to share and listen, excellent capabilities on the language front, and a very positive attitude. There is a bond in the association staff leadership and that as individuals they recognize each other as being in the same business, willingness to share challenges and victories, and outwardly there was little evidence of a clique mentality or divisions. This is particularly striking among those who participated in AMIR I and is one testament to the work done to date. A strong new culture for successful association management appears to be present in marketplace. For the veteran AMIR consultants, it was very satisfying to witness (a) the very significant progress that has been made by the original core associations and (b) the entry into the program of a number of additional associations. This is an indicator of significant program success.

Notwithstanding the overall favorable impression given by attendees, there are obviously some who are stronger association executives than are others. It is apparent that progress among the original associations has not been even. INT@J (a new association but with an AMIR-trained executive) seems to be streaking ahead, with its executive able to deliver a presentation on project tracking software to the group. JEA, JABA, INT@J, AWTC, and JAPM were clearly leaders, and their work plans and ability to articulate their mission/objectives were on target. At the same time, even from these stronger organizations, revealing statements -- such as inquiries how to calculate cost/benefits of membership, presentation of programs not reflected in their implementation, and lack of member-driven focus -- indicate continuing needs. The BPWA was clearly floundering, and a separate consultant intervention was undertaken for it as a result of discussions with AMIR staff at the workshop. Ms. Lee Weimer followed through with BPWA for two weeks in an intense effort to mediate serious structural issues. Her detailed report on that is provided separately to AMIR. The newly-involved associations, including JAPM and JIPA represent key sectors of the Jordanian business community, have clear strengths on which to build, and appear to be very appropriately included in the AMIR program.

While there were a few board members present at the training, the majority of participants were senior staff management/executives. The presence of board members was a positive contribution to the program and enhanced the discussion. The focus of retreat was on staff and planning; the role of board in association management was not explored to great depth but clearly affects association direction/management. Issues from board micro-management on one end to total staff driven operations at other extreme did surface. Balance of staff/board to maximize strengths of both appeared as an issue in need of on-going attention. Participation by board members can be extremely valuable to inform and involve board members in the improvement process, and to enlighten them as to the comprehensive functions and potential of association staff. Continued and

greater emphasis on involving Board and executive staff together in the planning process is necessary as the associations move forward.

The progress (or lack thereof) of several associations relates very directly to the quality of staff, however. Recognizing the critical role played by key association staff, perhaps AMIR should consider offering its assistance, for example, in creating job descriptions, in defining qualifications and in preparing the association staff for candidate interviews. Stepping directly into the association's hiring decisions is not recommended, as it undermines autonomy and places AMIR in internal decisions. However, assisting the associations as they work through the recruiting process will help both the organizations and their performance on AMIR programs. Once an inadequate key staff person is in place, AMIR is at a serious disadvantage in attempting to provide effective assistance.

Since there were different levels of knowledge/skills, some associations need more mentoring and advice than others. There is already a self evident segmentation of the associations and this reflects in the proposed funding. In considering any future training, while you can make a case for fine tuning a well run operation, greater results might come from focusing on specific tasks where there is the most evident weakness: programs that ensure sustainability once donor funding is curtailed, strategies to market programs and services that members will participate in on a fee-for-service basis should be priorities. The long range goal of developing business associations is to offer a support mechanism for a growing business community. The associations themselves have to be viable and be providing value. Services in the non dues income generation area need to be developed, tested and built into the future plans of business associations if they are to play a viable role in future of Jordanian development.

Recommendations :

- for future workshops, continue combination of presentation and “hands-on” work as a method for ensuring that participants are well-grounded in essentials that they can immediately begin to apply to their situation
- possible topics for future workshops include Coalitions, Board Governance, non-dues income, pricing of services and dues, and marketing.
- to the extent feasible, group participants into appropriate “streams” in separate programs
- develop means of bringing board members into the planning process and provide more in-depth training on board/staff roles and balance
- focus continued AMIR assistance on specific weaknesses of individual associations, with emphasis from members' needs and perceptions
- AMIR could provide advice on the process of recruiting qualified staff for associations, including sample job descriptions, selection criteria, and interview guides

S.O.W. 232.2 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Technical assistance was provided to selected associations based on a schedule finalized on site in conjunction with AMIR staff, the CIPE consulting team, and the association executives themselves. Consultants were provided with any available previous reports on the associations, including prior CIPE diagnostics. As the strategic planning retreat was the first item in the larger schedule, the consultants had an opportunity to observe most leaders from the associations in a group setting and begin individual discussions which helped prioritize issues for the technical assistance meetings. Though the assistance was originally slated to be exclusively with one consultant and to focus primarily on developing workplans that could be submitted as part of the planned AMIR grant competition, due to the interests of the associations and early interaction during the retreat, it was agreed with AMIR staff that the sessions for several of the organizations would be conducted by more than one consultant and cover a wider variety of topics, with some emphasis on weaknesses identified during the recent round of diagnostics (see separate report by CIPE consultant Larry Milner). This was clearly beneficial in identifying specific areas for focus to strengthen the organizations' member services, marketing, etc., and laid the groundwork for the organizational development plans which are to be part of AMIR's assistance.

Preparation was necessarily not as in-depth as if the final schedule had been known prior to the consultancies, but the flexibility allowed the associations to tap specialties of the consulting team and was ultimately helpful in identifying more specific areas for future focus. Furthermore, by focusing on issues from the association management standpoint rather than walking the associations through workplans, it placed more onus on the associations themselves to take ownership of their plans and develop them within the context of a full management review. This may make the workplan process a bit slower, but will be beneficial to the associations as they move into implementation and should increase their performance. Those organizations which participated in AMIR I, in particular, should be ready for this step if they are to become increasingly self-reliant.

One idea which surfaced during several of the consultations was to facilitate greater cooperation and resource-sharing by the associations. To this end, AMIR may want to consider working with the organizations to provide a central location for the associations—to pool resources such as equipment, meeting facilities, reception, etc.). Such a facility, a kind of "association house", would allow the associations to focus more of their resources on the services that set them apart and meet member needs most effectively.

It should be noted that many of the associations have shown significant progress during AMIR I and that new associations considered for AMIR 2 have some clear strengths on which to build. This consultancy and report were focused on targeting areas for improvement or assistance, and the comments and recommendations must be taken in that light; the successes of these organizations is well documented by other efforts.

Int@j

Int@j executive Raed Bilbessi participated in the Dead Sea strategic planning retreat, interacting with the consulting team there, then individual meetings were held with Stephen Bower and Fred Whiting at Int@j's offices in Amman. In addition to Raed Bilbessi, Mr. Bower met with the PR/Communications coordinator Dalia El-Farra and administrative manager Rania Abu Shukor, while Mr. Whiting also met with Int@j Chairman Karim Kawar.

Overview:

Int@j is a powerhouse run by a dynamic individual who is self confident and highly successful. The IT sector is one of strongest in country, membership is booming and the organization is self funded. Clearly staff understands how to run profitable business operation providing information on the IT industry. The staff is competent, hard working, motivated, and show great initiative to develop programs. This staff strength is also Int@j's potential vulnerability, should staff become too dominant, not have enough timely feedback from members to adapt as needed for the future, or be thrown into crisis by turnover. Deepening involvement from members companies by a variety of their employees, working more closely with committees, and ensuring that Int@j has both Board and staff succession plans will help Int@j remain strong.

Membership: Current membership is 109, with 19 full members paying JD 5,000/ year dues and 90 affiliate members paying JD 500/year. Some full members have down-graded to affiliates. Affiliate members cannot serve on the Board. However, the next General Assembly will consider a third membership category paying JD 1,000/year, giving them voting rights in the Assembly. The possible dissention that this could cause was discussed. The Chairman of Int@j indicates that he foresees elimination of the tiered structure within the next five years, though its strategic plan foresees membership by the year 2006 as 51 full members and 453 affiliate members. Int@j income for 2000 was 188,000 dinar, of which 120,00 were from dues; in 2001 it was 375,000, of which 115,000 were dues. Some income is generated by programs, the majority of the non-dues income is from donors (approx. 192,000 dinar in 2001). While membership is now limited to organizations adding value to IT, future membership may include ancillary organizations (including foreign) – law firms, PR firms, investment companies, etc.

Governance: The Board consists of 11 members who serve 2-year terms, with a two-term limit. The Board sees its role as broad issues and policy and relies on the staff for follow-through and implementation. This has worked well for the association with a dynamic executive and is less cumbersome than the tendency to micro-manage observed in other Jordanian association boards. There is open competition but little recruitment of new Board members. A Board election will occur in June 2002, with some turnover, after which the CEO plans an orientation session for Directors. This will be a 2-day retreat – first day for newly elected members, followed by a second day for all Board members at which the strategic plan and annual reports will be reviewed.

Staff: Int@j currently has 7 full-time staff. The chairman places great importance on staff work and sees the need to increase staff in order to minimize "pro bono" time spent by the Board on

association work. The CEO clearly sets the tone, energy, and pace for the organization, but is not backstopped by a clearly designated deputy, and there is no succession plan should the current CEO leave.

Public Policy Advocacy: Advocacy efforts are divided between Int@j and the REACH program, with Int@j pursuing mainly “micro” issues and REACH pursuing “macro” (business environment issues). Issues (other than occasional ad hoc issues) are prioritized by the Board Advocacy Committee and are generally limited to issues impacting the entire IT sector, as opposed to single-company issues (these paid for by the company concerned). Typically, a draft position paper is prepared in-house and then referred to an attorney for review. Issues advocated by Int@j include revision of Jordanian laws regulating companies, securities, labor, associations, etc. Board Chairman Karim Kawar is well placed to intercede at high levels in advocacy efforts, but rarely does. Int@j has developed relationships with key ministers (“e-ministers”) involved in IT-related fields and uses them to advocate with other ministries. Efforts are being made to institutionalize advocacy to minimize, over time, reliance upon specific individuals within the Int@j organization to assume advocacy responsibilities.

Marketing: The CEO described the marketing efforts that are being undertaken by Int@j on behalf of the IT sector. These include numerous overseas exhibitions and presentations. A professional PR firm has been engaged to produce materials. To date, however, there is little marketing material available on the association.

Key Issues

During the meetings, Mr. Bilbessi expressed growing concern that members were tuning out information from association sent to them electronically, the association's primary method of communication. Discussion focused on to why this was becoming an issue, the frequency of messages from association, nature and format of the e-mails, etc. While Int@j appears to be the most dynamic association in Jordan, and the IT sector is one of the leading sectors being developed in the country, the structure of the association appears to be one where staff play the initiating role in providing information to members. The Int@j staff has a very high energy level and enthusiasm, initiating quite a number of programs, information bulletins, meetings, etc., resulting in members being on the receiving end of a lot of information. While the association has a committee structure, with PR, HR, IT, Membership, ECommerce, etc., information on specific topics is currently not always channeled to the appropriate audience, and a significant number of the e mails are of a broadcast nature. Int@j could improve the flow by prioritizing outgoing information, focusing subject lines for e-mails, and personalizing messages so that recipient members can more easily identify and evaluate importance of messages.

The information overload issue is indicative of another issues for Int@j -- that of balancing staff-driven activities with those that encourage greater member participation in the association agenda. It is clearly the expectation of both the executive and chairman that staff keep board "pro bono" work to a minimum. While Int@j has a committee structure on paper, to date they have not been able to make the committee process work effectively. Obstacles they face in this regard

include time constraints, fears that members would not take committee responsibilities seriously, plus questions as to role of staff in servicing a committee. Consultant stressed the benefits of empowering members and how to help committee leadership identify issues and lay out plan of action where staff played a key role in research, recommendations and implementation of work plan. While there was clear understanding of how a committee structure might function, plus the role it can play in running an association, that is currently not the model practiced at Int@j. It seems unlikely the staff will modify their current management structure (since it works) so both initiation of ideas plus implementation will remain in staff hands.

The potential pitfalls of staff-driven efforts were illustrated by an advocacy effort taking place at the time of the consultants' visit. Int@j came out with public statements, published in the newspapers, criticizing a government tender action which seemed to exclude Jordanian IT companies. Only after the statements had been made public did Int@j learn that several of its members were subcontractors on the winning bid. Though the chairman was aware of the position before Int@j went public with it, closer communication and checking with members was clearly needed first. Int@j's willingness to take public positions, defend them vociferously, and call attention to the needs of its sector should be commended -- when coupled with strong communication within the membership, it will be a strong advocacy example for Jordan.

Meeting with Dalia El-Farra, a new employee who is responsible for PR & Communications, the consultant reviewed what little printed information was on hand. Due to the nature of the business, almost all information about Int@j is in an electronic format. The association has very little in the way of printed brochures, reports, or marketing pieces, and staff acknowledged that the one membership promotion piece needs updating to reflect the 2002 board membership plus current membership dues. Staff planned to develop a graphics standards manual and begin a process of standardizing all communications the association sends to members. Interestingly enough, the association has just launched a (printed) 4-color newsletter. Rationale behind decision to create a printed piece versus electronic is that they felt it would be circulated/shared amongst staff in member companies. It is also going to be distributed at trade shows, given to prospective members, and considered for other channels of distribution once they are identified. Discussion focused on layout/message strategy, and opportunities offered by the launch of this new communications vehicle. Consultant recommended additional consideration be given to cover/intro page to ensure that the association has a regular and consistent message, and to avoid potential for the front page to become, or be seen to become, a mouthpiece solely for the association chairman. Consultant also suggested consideration be given to committee interviews/reports appearing on a regular basis, focused from the members' point of view, to promote the committee role in an association. Consultant also suggested greater use of testimonials from members, plus inclusion of general membership recruitment activities such as "member get a member" campaigns.

Other PR/Communications discussions focused on a new initiative with the Jordan Times, which will run a regular weekly IT section basis in cooperation with Int@j. This exposure will give Int@j and the entire association community much greater visibility in the leading English language newspaper in Jordan, therefore, Int@j should have a clear plan for its message,

understand its responsibilities to represent all members equally, and explore how this increased exposure might be used in membership development and recruitment.

Discussions on administrative processes were held with Rania Abu Shakor, administrative manager, including issues such as seeking competitive bids on projects in excess of 500 JD, check and balance systems on purchase orders to verify services were carried out in accordance with the contracts, plus the dues invoicing and renewal process. Dues area was discussed at length. Consultant pointed out that the current system allows some leeway for members to avoid prompt payment, plus it does not offer incentives for members to renew on a timely basis. Consultant recommended procedural changes to encourage greater compliance, as well as HR policies from job descriptions to office personnel policies. Since many of these activities are relatively new developments in Jordan, discussion focused on the reasons why associations/business operations need written policies. There was interest in the concept of formalized staff training on an annual basis, including listing that activity as a company benefit. Int@j plans to share their work in HR policy development with member companies as a service.

Recommendations:

Consultants for AMIR were only able to meet with Int@j staff and chairman. As Int@j is clearly a staff-driven association, this presents a somewhat one-sided picture for the consultant upon which to base observations and recommendations. Feedback directly from members may identify additional concrete ways for Int@j to strengthen its services.

- Deepening involvement from members companies by a variety of their employees, working more closely with committees, and ensuring that Int@j has both Board and staff succession plans are key issues for Int@j's future strength.
- AMIR should share more information on best practices in member communications with Int@j executive director and management staff. Specific information on corporate communications, personalization of electronic mass communications with case studies and documentation on the risks associated with impersonal/mass communications would be beneficial.
- Int@j board members could expose more of their company staff to Int@j programs/services with a greater emphasis on building a dialogue with the association, as opposed to a monologue from the association. Consultant recommends more training or exercises with board members to strengthen the member involvement, especially in the committee activities area.

- Int@j should change its renewal procedures to encourage more timely renewals, sending renewals in advance to allow members processing time without a lengthy grace period in which services are still delivered without payment.
- AMIR/Chemonics should share personnel policy manuals and similar information with organizations like Int@j which are ready for this step but do not have a supply of high quality HR materials locally. This would speed up the implementation step and expose Int@j members to western standards in a short period of time.
- AMIR should offer PR/Communications assistance to Int@j focused on the new newsletter. Currently only one issue has been printed and the association does not have a rationale or plan in place for this one communications tool. Since this is one of very few printed pieces the organization distributes, by default the newsletter may become a focal point of communications issued by the association, therefore the timing and the product are important for the long term image and strategic message of the organization. A key theme for the assistance on this should emphasize assessment of the newsletter items from the member perspective.
- Int@j needs to calculate the cost of servicing each member in order to determine the average marginal profit or loss for each member as well as the actual cost of servicing particular members. This will help it in developing marketing and pricing strategies for services as well as dues levels.
- The need for a crisis management program was discussed, including planning for various scenarios: financial collapse of one or more important members, fire or other natural disaster, public disturbance, etc. This should be done re Int@j, which could then also provide crisis management training to members.
- Int@j should have a clear plan for its Jordan Times feature: focus its message, understand its responsibilities to represent all members equally, and explore how this increased exposure might be used in membership development and recruitment.
- The chairman identified a number of potential new programs for Int@j, including
 - development of an IT incubator program within Int@j
 - development of a grants / revolving loan program within Int@j
 - continued emphasis on training of member staff – strategic planning, quality control, market access, etc., and
 - development of research capabilities, reference source, industry information center.As it reviews these and other new initiatives or membership structures, Int@j needs to be sure to remain focused and consider whether proposed activities are within its scope and are of high importance to a broad section of the membership.

Jordan Exporters Association

(formerly Jordan Trade Association)

JEA managing director Halim F. Abu-Rahmeh participated in the Dead Sea strategic planning retreat, interacting with the entire consulting team there, then individual meetings were held with Stephen Bower and Fred Whiting at JEA's offices in Amman. Topics covered included retaining and recruiting members, the current fee structure, communications materials, non-dues income, trade missions, and a conference JEA is considering launching. At various times, the head of research, Fareez Barakat, and the new JEA membership development specialist Rania Al-Saber joined the meetings.

Overview

JEA serves a broad range of companies engaged in export activities. It has many of the required structures and organizational tools necessary for strong associations, as evidenced by its score on the CIPE diagnostic conducted by Larry Milner. However, several key issues that surfaced during discussions with the consulting team point to vulnerability in the future if JEA does not address them. Most significant of these: board commitment to building a cohesive organization appears to be lacking, and membership response is poor/indifferent. Like many associations, a good number of JEA's services provided are intangible. Other services/programs benefit some of the members while a significant portion of the membership does not appear to see the value of the activity in question. Getting the Board and members involved in developing a program of work that addresses member needs is critical to JEA future strength.

Membership – currently 105 members out of a total estimated market of 250. Membership comprised largely of major companies in principal export sectors: mining, pharmaceuticals, textiles/garments, food/ beverages, chemicals, “Dead Sea” products (cosmetics). 40 – 50% of member exports are within the Region. Other markets include India for cement, potash, and phosphates, the USA for garments and textiles, and Europe for cosmetics.

Marketing services provided by JEA include a needs assessment (twice annually), country surveys and Marketing Manager visits in the Region, and research library, internet, etc. JEA has limited ability to do a world-wide search for particular products – only the developed countries have significant internet data base for specific product market information.

Public Policy Advocacy: Issue assessment is currently done by the Board on a twice yearly basis after polling members. Additionally, efforts are made to respond on a short-term basis to members' issues as they arise.

Board Governance: The Managing Director considers Board governance to be a major issue within JEA. The March 2002 AMIR Diagnostic Report also highlighted this problem area. The Consultant discussed at length with the Managing Director various ways in which greater Board commitment to the organization can be achieved. The role of the Managing Director in keeping the Board

apprised of operational matters while focusing their attention on policy-making was discussed.

Other matters discussed at length:

- selection of Board members
- achieving balance in representation of various membership constituencies
- informing potential Board members of the responsibility involved – Board job description, time commitment, frequency of Board meetings
- new Board member orientation
- techniques for encouraging meeting attendance
- regular (e.g., bimonthly) Board meetings
- interim informal Board meetings (e.g., lunches)
- special meetings with government officials and others
- social meetings/ special events among Board members (and wives)/ retreats
- use of an Executive Committee
- the role of the Managing Director and other staff in Board meetings
- techniques for facilitating Board meetings – agenda, consent calendar
- various approaches to minutes of Board meetings – record of discussion vs decisions

After several unsuccessful attempts to meet with Board members, the consultant did meet with several Board members, who expressed dissatisfaction with the current programs and management. Clearly there is some disconnect between the Board and senior staff regarding the role and future development of the association; both sides appear to see this, but the communication and sense of organizational commitment is not strong enough to change the current situation.

JEA Training Center for Diplomats: The Managing Director indicated that an objective of the organization is to establish a training program focusing on Jordanian embassy and consulate staff, especially commercial attaches, to equip them to assist Jordanian exporters in the countries to which they are assigned. This could also be an additional source of non-dues income, though JEA should be certain to develop this service within the framework of a strong plan of direct services to members.

Key Issues

In the membership area, the consultant reviewed current materials used by the association and focused on the lack of clearly expressed membership benefits. Current materials stress features from the association's viewpoint rather than benefits from the members' viewpoint. Consultant recommended an upgrade of the selling pieces to reflect benefits for members, inclusion of testimonials, plus the repackaging of the benefits based on perceived needs of members. The membership person is quite new and facing several challenges. She has limited experience and training for the position, yet has some good ideas and a high degree of autonomy. Some guidance on member campaigns and working with board and members to identify prospects and initiate prospect meetings would be helpful to her. An additional hurdle is the current flat fee structure that includes a first time initiation fee for new members -- presenting a higher entry barrier for new members. Consultant raised possibility of a fee restructuring with members buying into several packages of services based on need.

The executive expressed a desire for the association to achieve a level of self sufficiency so as reduce dependency on dues income, citing current programs such as a discount card for members as an area of interest. The consultant cited several examples of non-dues revenue-generating undertakings that included group purchasing programs, and emphasized how an association should evaluate the needs for a group buying program, citing examples of items that might appeal to a broad-based membership association along lines of JEA. The mechanics of group buying was also covered, as well as the importance of managing staff time so that any income derived from activity was not used up in additional staff time managing program. The consultant also stressed the importance of quality/reliability of products and services offered so that complaints would be minimized and the association's downside exposure would be reduced.

The consultant was asked for specific advice and suggestions on a possible conference in Jordan within the year to draw Middle Eastern investors seeking to capitalize on the free trade agreement. This proposed event would also draw US investors who could use Jordan as a springboard for business in the region. The consultant reviewed and assisted in editing a one-page document covering who, what, when, why, where, etc. Funding for the event would come from donors, sponsors, plus offset revenue from the hotel/lodging side. JEA intends to share this draft with AMIR to ascertain if the project might be eligible for USAID funds.

Recommendations:

- JEA needs to strengthen the bond between the association and members so that the value of the services can be further developed/ promoted. It is recommended that more time be spent with association staff to determine costs of services provided to members, plus participation rate of members in association programs/activities. Board training is also recommended to build stronger relationship between the leadership on the member side, and staff.
- Collaboration with other business associations should be considered. JEA is in a position to offer a specialized export component to many/most of the associations, while market research is an area in which is might benefit from collaboration with an international network such as that of AWTC.
- The opportunities offered by the fact that members of other business association require assistance with export-oriented services also poses potential for a cross-membership discount scheme that encourages companies to join JEA as well as other business associations. The possibility of dual memberships would avoid the “either/or” choice companies now make and could enhance the role of JEA.
- It was agreed that advocacy should be a major role for JEA. The desirability of establishing relationships with bureaucrats as well as higher-level policy makers was discussed. It was pointed out that, ideally, JEA should be seen by government as an information resource and

partner in policy determinations. JEA should consider setting up a Public Policy Working Group consisting of members and relevant civil servants to assess Jordanian laws and regulations regarding exports and to deal with export-related issues as they arise.

- In addition to providing assistance on advocacy issues, JEA may develop the ready capability to respond to members' queries on FTA issues, perhaps by hiring a specialist (lawyer?) to become conversant with laws and regulations regarding exports, both Jordanian and major export markets.
- "Dead Sea" products are a current export focus; the Consultant suggested that these offer an opportunity for promotion with a national identification (similar to "Colombian coffee" -- perhaps "Jordan River" products). Jordanian potash apparently also has a unique purity which might be promoted by a national identity.

Amman World Trade Center

Consultants Stephen Bower and Fred Whiting met with Yassar Toukan, Executive Director; Mr. Bower met further with Nour R. Alkhas, international business development staff member, and Moh'd Rani Hamdan, membership development officer. Major development just after the meetings was the departure of Mr. Toukan as Executive to start his own company. AWTC is losing a thoughtful, well educated leader, and does not have sufficient staff depth at the moment. AWTC is well placed in the Jordanian market and for providing key member services; recruitment of an executive who can manage and develop the staff will be crucial for AWTC's success.

Overview

AWTC is a licensee of WTC-NY, a not-for-profit organization; annual license fee is US\$10,000. AWTC subscription fee for members is JD 150; annual dues JD 250. Owners of AWTC are 23 Jordanian organizations that put up the original capital. AWTC is a for-profit organization; no dividends have yet been paid, despite profit and positive cash flow. Though it is not a true association, many of its services and activities are similar.

Training: This division contributes 50%+ of revenue; expected to be 60%+ in 2002. In addition to training programs for members, in-house training has been done for various organizations, including the Central Bank. Significant training is done on a joint venture basis with a California affiliate of the WTC; also Geneva Branch of Thunderbird International Management Institute (e.g., cross-cultural negotiations). AWTC puts up front-end costs (marketing, logistics, etc.), trainer waives fee and shares 40 – 50% of net profit (net profit = revenue less costs and 10 – 18% overhead allocation). This formula is seen as giving the trainer a stake in the outcome, encouraging the trainer to develop the market and tailor curricula to Jordanian companies.

AWTC also contracted with a Jordanian business woman, Mrs. Asma Huneidi Ma'ani, of the Middle East Management and Consulting & Capacity Building Group (MEMac) to offer HR training during the past year. Three seminars were offered, and a discount was offered to

organizations that attended all three events or sent multiple people to two events. There was a fee differential between member and non member. Member fee per person was 165 JD, non member 200 JD. The three seminars were promoted in one brochure, and much of the copy was provided by MEMac. Brochure was printed and mailed at end of year, with seminars scheduled for mid January, early February, and mid March. Telephone and e mail follow up supplemented the mail effort. Two of the seminars attracted 25 participants, the third one attracted 10. Discussion focused on how seminar was marketed, layout and design on brochure, and profitability of offering.

Consideration being given to expanding short courses, possibly in conjunction with Thunderbird, hiring a training expert, managing training as an independent entity. This may present a possible opportunity for collaboration with AMIR 2 plans to promote a management training program in an academic setting by pairing it with AWTC's practical management training and build on the Thunderbird connection. Furthermore, the executive director indicated that the Jordanian government plans to dismantle (privatize) its training program and that this could have a substantial impact on the training market, as much as \$10 million over 2 years. AWTC is projecting a 30% training market growth in 2002.

Physical Facility: AWTC is locked into a contract with Holiday International (owner of SAS Radisson Hotel) to build a 150,000 sq.ft. building, with AWTC to be allocated 3,000 sq.ft. as consideration for giving WTC name to the building and serving as building manager. It is estimated that the WTC name would result in a 20 – 30% premium for office space rental. Due to recession, pull-out by one investor, and renovation needs for the SAS Radisson, the developer has defaulted on the development contract with AWTC, and AWTC has pulled the \$500,000 performance bond. The contract is now in arbitration; AWTC seeks to terminate the contract to explore other development options, including an existing building. (It is felt highly desirable that a WTC building be adjacent to a hotel property to accommodate renters/visitors). This dispute has impacted membership recruitment and has been a significant distraction for the organization.

The Executive Director pointed out that many WTCs are primarily interested in real estate management and only secondarily interested in membership services. A positive side to the delay in obtaining a property is that AWTC has had to focus more on membership services which it intends now as a long-term focus even if a property is obtained.

Public Policy Advocacy: The Executive Director indicates that AWTC is currently pursuing advocacy on two levels: (1) Behind the scenes, supporting various initiatives regarding improvement of the Jordanian business climate by providing financial support, venue or strategy input; and (2) Taking the initiative regarding specific issues, such as foreign investment laws, labor law and FTA. Hurdles to advocacy are seen as: government bureaucracy, centralization of decision making at high levels, lack of a credible judicial process, and the high cost of communications.

There seems to have been some reluctance for AWTC to consider advocacy as a priority due to its status as a for-profit corporation. The consultant pointed out that this is not necessarily a barrier. While AWTC is not a committee-driven organization, the Executive Director agreed that it would be beneficial to establish a Government Affairs Committee within AWTC to establish advocacy priorities and guidelines. The consultant discussed the desirability of AWTC working in coalition

with business associations and ways in which members should be consulted and used re the advocacy process. The need to convince members that they should be active advocates – participants in the law-making/ regulatory process – was stressed. Also discussed the need to build personal relationships between AWTC members and government bureaucrats at all levels. One program idea which could facilitate this is “Good Morning Amman”. As outlined by the Consultant based on experience with similar programs in other settings, this would be an informal forum to bring together governmental leaders from diverse agencies with the business community on a periodic (e.g., monthly) basis to discuss subjects of interest to government and business.

AWTC as Match-maker: AWTC cooperates primarily with WTC members in other countries (although some are primarily interested in their real estate management functions) and secondarily with non-WTC contacts. WTC publishes a “Trade Leads” web site 3 times per week which is available to AWTC members. The AWTC web site has been transferred to the PR/Communications Department from Business Development Department.

Cross-memberships: As AWTC is to some extent competitive with Business Associations such as Jordan Export Association and JABA, the possibility of cross-memberships was discussed. A discount scheme could be devised to encourage companies to join more than one organization. The Executive Director pointed out that in some cases members and potential members, while perhaps primarily interested in AWTC, have some specific needs that can best be fulfilled by another organization. Rather than face potential members with an “either/or” choice, they could be offered dual memberships. The possibility of this substantially increasing AWTC membership were noted.

Key Issues

During initial meeting, it was already noted that recruitment of a Deputy Executive Director and PR/Communications Manager was being pursued. Recruitment of the Deputy was seen as necessary to ensure back-up and succession. This, of course, hit home with the announcement of the Executive's departure shortly thereafter.

As it looks forward to resolution of its hotel contract dispute, AWTC continues to desire locating next to a hotel facility with a modern business complex that would include space for training, plus state of the art business equipment from phone/fax/internet/video etc. This raised discussion on the possible role for AWTC as an anchor for an association services headquarters for Amman/Jordan. Benefits for AWTC include the opportunity to network with a broad range of business/trade associations under one roof, revenue potential from training facility usage, plus prestige of linking AWTC name with a broad cross section of business associations in Jordan. Benefits to all participating associations would be resource sharing of common items such as meeting space, reception, equipment, which could present significant savings and allow the associations to focus more on the services which set them apart and are of most need for their members. Since AWTC will have to find a new location/site to function as a world trade center, the timing and opportunity for AWTC to consider serving as a catalyst for an association headquarters may be ripe.

A key advocacy issue raised during discussions with the executive has implications for the business community at large and is the kind of issue that an association coalition can often form

around and be effective. Approximately 60% of all private sector business activities are indirectly linked to government. Mr. Toukan indicated that it is the government sector and needs of the ministries that provide a market for the private sector. While theoretically all ministries are supposed to tender bids for contract/services and advertise their needs and terms, there is no standardized procedure. Some ministries take out newspaper ads when they are seeking bidders to provide expertise/equipment/services, other ministries operate on a word of mouth approach, while some circumvent the process entirely. He felt that this lack of standardization created advantages for some, was punitive to others, and there was a lack of a level playing field. Mr. Toukan acknowledged such a system was graft prone, plus added costs to the bottom line since it tended to be non competitive. He indicated that such an issue could be a point of common interest for many business associations. Consultant and executive director discussed how mechanics of how association staff could work with boards and top leadership to develop a plan of action addressing this issue. Consultant recommended documenting the bid offerings of several ministries and summarizing the different procedures. Consultant recommended drafting of a position paper for review by all the associations who might be willing to form a coalition around this issue. Consultant also recommended informal meetings with minister heads who were supportive of the private business sector, both to inform them of the emerging coalition, plus ask for their suggestions for inclusion in the position paper.

Meetings with other staff covered training and website design, marketing, and membership development. Nour R. Alkhas, AWTC's international business development staff member, was supposed to attend the Dead Sea training but unfortunately was not able to do so. She is a new employee and this is her first position in workforce, following graduation from university in UK last year. Consultant found her to be motivated, and interested in how to market programs and services for the organization. The Dead Sea training would have benefited her a great deal, and the networking opportunities would have been an excellent opportunity. Discussions with Ms. Alkhas focused on two areas: the HR seminars mentioned above, and the AWTC website that is soon to be launched. Ms. Alkhas clearly has potential and is in need of some training and guidance as she begins this position at the same time AWTC is undergoing some transition.

With Moh'd Rani Hamdan, membership development officer, discussion focused on marketing AWTC and the difficulties this has presented in light of the legal dispute with Radisson/SAS. As discussed with Mr. Toukan, selling members on the value of AWTC when there is no building, plus addressing membership concerns when fringe benefits such as the use of the Radisson/SAS health facilities and pool use (now revoked), has made recruiting new members an uphill battle. It is important for AWTC to package and present clearly both intangible benefits such as networking and advocacy, as well as more tangible benefits along the lines of low-cost training, and trade leads generation. Mr. Hamdan indicated he planned to raise membership dues minimally 100% within a year. After an hour and a half of probing, the consultant was unable to determine what additional services would be offered to current and future members to justify the proposed dues increases. Mr. Hamdan indicated some new services would be very valuable, and perhaps a 100% increase would be insufficient. At one point he indicated a 500% increase would really reflect the fair price of the new services he had in mind, and that he was confident members would be more than happy to pay twice their current dues for services in the near future. The Consultant failed to establish any basis of understanding with membership officer that would address this inability to define member benefits or articulate a plan to warrant radical dues increases within a

clear management strategy. There did appear to be some misunderstanding as to the identity and purpose of the consultant, since Mr. Hamdam at end of meeting referred to the consultant as Mr. Stephen who headed AMIR (Stephen Wade); possibly he mistakenly thought that AMIR was reviewing AWTC in light of Mr. Toukan's departure and thought that the focus on increasing revenues by raising dues would be impressive. Unfortunately, the consultant conclusion is that the membership officer was unable to define member benefits, and unable to articulate any sort of future marketing effort he would lead.

Recommendations

Developing a strong Jordanian business association environment is going to be critical to the success of business associations, and AWTC may still be a right time/right place player. While the activities of AWTC are somewhat in limbo due to staffing and the arbitration with Radisson/SAS holding company, opportunities to further develop the “business of associations” were looking promising. Joint memberships are one possibility, as is use of a new AWTC building as an “association house”. Continued good relations with the outgoing Executive could form a link to management temporary help to supplement and assist the professional development of Jordanian business associations.

- AMIR could help AWTC with staffing issues by assisting the AWTC board in defining criteria for the executive search, which should include recruitment of someone who is sufficiently versed in managing staff and capable of verifying staff competency understanding of their duties. After the executive is in place, AWTC may need assistance in reviewing staff functions, job descriptions and comprehension of job duties, as there is currently little staff depth.
- AMIR should work with AWTC staff to provide them with basic “how to” marketing materials. Staff at other associations in Jordan appear to have more experience in developing marketing plans and preparing promotional materials. Nour as a new employee and new to work force expressed interest in learning more about marketing and promotional material development. She should be assisted by AMIR, and encouraged to learn from other associations.
- While AWTC is not a committee-driven organization, it would be beneficial to establish a Government Affairs Committee within AWTC to establish advocacy priorities and guidelines. If AWTC wants to follow through on the specific procurement advocacy issue raised during discussions, it should begin by documenting the bid offerings of several ministries and summarizing the different procedures. It could then draft a position paper for review by all the associations who might be willing to form a coalition around this issue, then hold informal meetings with ministry heads who are supportive of the private business sector, both to inform them of the emerging coalition and to gain feedback on the position paper.
- The consultant suggested that consideration be given to establishing AWTC as a “one-stop-shop” for foreign investment in Jordan, exporting/importing, etc. – with AWTC establishing relationships with/ serving as reference source for law firms, accounting firms, advertising, insurance, customs brokers, manufacturing site developers, secretarial services, etc. An eventual WTC building could house such services.

- The possibility of setting up a “virtual WTC” was also discussed (and has previously been considered by AWTC). While this idea has been dropped in the past, perhaps 9/11 offers a window of opportunity. AWTC will revisit this idea with WTC-NY at the April WTC meeting in Sofia. Estimated cost to develop the site is around \$500,000.
- A discount or joint membership program could be devised to encourage companies to join more than one association. In some cases members and potential members, while perhaps primarily interested in AWTC, have some specific needs that can best be fulfilled by another organization. Rather than face potential members with an “either/or” choice, they could be offered dual memberships.
- Another cooperative approach for associations is the idea of a trade association headquarters. AMIR may want to further explore this idea, as several associations may be well placed for this. If AWTC is to consider such an undertaking, contact should be made with business/trade associations in Amman to get feedback, plus alert them to possibility of such a development, since some may already have plans to move offices (such as Int@j). An important ingredient in successfully establishing an association headquarters is the mix of tenants and level of development of the organizations. A major player such as Int@j as first tenant could be very helpful in selling other associations on the value of an association headquarters building.
- Finally, there remain opportunities for AWTC in continued good relations with its out-going executive, who is leaving to establish a management placement service. The ability to contract skilled Middle Eastern management professionals to assist associations on a short term basis could serve as a significant resource as the association community sector develops. Mr. Toukan knows, values, and understands the US way of doing business. He has spent a number of years both in school plus working in land development in California. He places a great emphasis on sound business planning with a focus on the bottom line/profitability. He appears to have the vision to reach out and explore new money-making projects in the Middle East that he feels can be loosely linked to AWTC. He sees a future for the business association community in a developing Jordanian marketplace. A temporary management program along the lines he is considering could be used to supplement association staff/resources.

Jordanian Association of Manufacturers of Pharmaceuticals & Medical Appliances (JAPM)

JAPM Managing Director Maher Matalka participated in the Dead Sea strategic planning retreat, interacting with the consulting team there, then individual meetings were held with Stephen Bower and Fred Whiting at JAPM's offices in Amman.

Overview

On one hand the association is in a strong position, since it represents the bulk of the pharmaceutical manufacturers. In terms of financial stability, the association is in an excellent position and could, if needed, raise more money to address an identified threat. At the same time, the association staff is stretched to breaking point, with a good number of standard operating practices simply not taking place since there are no staff to carry the activities out. Board leadership and ownership of issues does not appear to be strong, as surrogates are often sent to Board meetings, where issues raised by staff are discussed and then bounced back. Getting some immediate assistance for staff on AMIR documentation will help ease the current crunch, then a longer term staff solution should be addressed as part of a larger Board effort to strengthen the association and position it for future growth.

Membership: JAPM currently has 14 members (including one about to be dropped for non-dues payment). This essentially comprises the entire industry sector, excluding only 3 or 4 potential members. Supplier membership was raised with both consultants. A review of the by-laws, and indeed the association name, indicates that suppliers are now included within the definition of authorized members. Discussion focused on the advantages, risks and reasoning for wanting to add supplier members as a non-voting membership category. While dues and sponsorship opportunities were covered, consultant also raised issues such as member supplier ratios at events, plus the risk of the association mission shifting or being diluted if the supplier membership was not monitored/controlled. There is also the possibility of JAPM establishing a new affiliate membership category for ancillary entities; a by-law change would likely be required for inclusion of service providers. It was noted that inclusion of ancillary entities as affiliates would enhance the visibility of the association and serve as a new source of revenue. In discussing this possibility with the JAPM Board, it should be made clear that such affiliate members would not be provided with the level of services as is provided to core members (although JAPM might work with suppliers on quality, specifications, etc.) This potential expansion cannot take place with current staffing levels.

Sector Consolidation/ Cooperation: Although merger of companies within the pharmacy sector is stated as an objective in the current JAPM strategic plan, this is perhaps not a proper function for the association. The Consultant pointed out that one of the association's roles should be to develop strategic thinking regarding the position of the industry in the world market, and that the desirability of consolidation of sector participants might well be indicated by such an analysis, however the association should be wary of activities undertaken to "rationalize the market" as this

places it in the position more of a cartel. Furthermore, an expanded membership as described above may have divergent interests on this particular issue.

Public Policy Advocacy: It was noted that pharmaceuticals are viewed by government as a critical sector of private industry and an important foreign exchange earner. This image must be fostered and used (selectively, with discretion) as “muscle” when needed. It was agreed that advocacy is among the most critical functions of JAPM. Matters discussed include the needs:

- for the Board to focus and prioritize issues
- to minimize diversion of attention to ad hoc issues
- to develop position papers for priority issues and determine target audience(s)
- to determine who within JAPM (Board or staff) should be involved
- to establish working relations not only with parliamentarians and top-level bureaucrats, but also with their staff and mid-level civil servants, to establish broad network that shares information, gives early warning on issues and seeks the participation of JAPM in policy and regulatory matters.
- Hold periodic briefings with government staff – on particular issues or round-table discussions with JAPM, its members and relevant employees

The Consultant stressed that the advocacy function and capability of JAPM must over time be *institutionalized* – i.e., effective advocacy should not depend on the presence and abilities of certain individuals. Rather, ways and means of advocacy should be developed that are accepted by government as a normal part of the law-making and regulatory process.

Media and Public Relations: Several questions arose during discussions on media issues, including Who should be the spokesman for JAPM, the Chairman or Managing Director? Normally the Chairman would be the spokesman for the association, though occasionally when that may be seen as a potential conflict of interest or self-serving position, it may be better for the Managing Director to speak for the association.

Should press releases/ media contacts be used as part of the advocacy arsenal? While access to the media is an important tool of advocacy (providing transparency, publicity), it should be used with discretion. Media exposure is an effective means of educating the public regarding issues and can be used on a “soft” basis in the educational/ public awareness context. If media exposure is to be used to force certain actions by government, it is often best to warn those concerned that the association intends to go public with the issue if certain agreements are not reached. Over time, government personnel become accustomed to the idea that there will be transparency regarding their actions and they will routinely take this into consideration. In the case of the pharmacy sector, those in the media focusing on health care should be identified and regularly supplied with materials regarding JAPM members and developments in the industry. From time to time, publicly sensitive matters may develop in the field, and the association and its members can benefit from early warning and a friendly news corps.

Media outreach should also be part of JAPM's market development strategy. It was noted that quality and market acceptance issues are key to the development of a domestic, regional and

international export market. A major function of JAPM will be to devise, with professional assistance, a comprehensive plan and major campaign to convince consumers of the quality of members' products. Within Jordan, focus groups have already been organized by outside consultants to determine consumer attitudes.

JAPM Committees: It is recognized that, due to its small size and Board participation by all members, the standard association committee system may not be appropriate to JAPM. Consideration should be given, however, to establishing working groups of members' staff to deal with certain issues or projects. For example, the human resources/ personnel department staff could work on policies & procedures manuals; staff could work jointly on quality issues and product standards.

Marketing: Another issue discussed was general state of communications materials both for member recruitment/retention and communicating with the media. Association has almost no printed information covering activities it engages in, case studies of successful undertakings, or testimonials from the membership as to the value of services offered. Office has no industry related art, and the association has never developed any promotional material such as membership certificates, calendar cards as giveaways at trade missions/expos, etc. Consultant explained the advantages of marketing the association and its services to different constituents. With current staff levels, however, this element will continue to stagnate.

Key Issues

The two primary issues facing JAPM are Board Governance and staff overload. The Managing Director feels that there is a good understanding by him and by the Board regarding the Board's policy-making function and the staff's operational functions. However, surrogates are often sent to Board meetings, which are held once a month and, as a result, end up becoming informal board meetings. The agenda for these meetings is staff developed, and once decisions are taken, follow up is in executive director's his hands. Less frequent official Board meetings should be the norm, possibly interspersed with informal industry meetings at which surrogate attendance may be appropriate. Increased use could also be made of ad hoc meetings or phone consultations with the Executive Council to both minimize the time drain on Board members and encourage their participation on issues that should involve them. Consultant discussed steps that might reduce the frequency of surrogates being sent to these meetings. This included

- establishing an annual calendar of all Board meetings that would permit Board members to schedule attendance well in advance
- preparation of a meeting agenda that would include both a start time and a concluding hour so that a board member would know in advance the time commitment needed
- to work in the names of board members throughout the agenda so that everyone knows in advance the level of discussion and decision making to take place.
- periodically inviting a significant business/government/or court leader to attend to add prestige to the event and offer an opportunity for industry leaders to share insights with him

- an annual retreat by the Board (possibly overnight/ out-of-town) to strategize how to best address major issues, review the past year and coming year, review the strategic plan update, etc.
- Board orientation for members, covering JAPM's mission, strategic objectives, plan of work, activities, etc., with particular attention to the role of association Board members
- brief minutes of meetings, recording decisions, not conversation, to be distributed promptly and with the agenda of each meeting.

Consultant also discussed meeting format and time of day scheduling. Discussed the pros and cons of holding a working luncheon or an evening reception. Consultant stressed the need to develop format and style of meeting that works best for most members.

The practice of Board members sending alternates to Board meetings is very undesirable and will quickly lead to the demise of the Board as an effective governing body. Alternates will never be viewed as decision-makers by other Board members, but as mere messengers. The presence of alternates will diminish Board confidentiality, will be resented by other Board members who expect to deliberate with their peers, will lead to reduced commitment to the Board and will ultimately lead to the effective disintegration of the Board. This practice has arisen at JAPM in part because of its size -- all members are on the board -- and the frequency of meetings. Clearly distinguishing between a formal Board meeting -- focused on association governance, scheduled well in advance, at more reasonable intervals, and to be attended only by elected members -- and other industry meetings of a more ad hoc nature should happen right away.

Recommendations

- Immediate assistance is needed from AMIR for the JAPM executive in developing work plan submissions, as he is understaffed and unable to meet AMIR timelines in the current overload.
- Immediate changes should be made to the way the Board meetings are handled, based on the points described in detail above. Ideally, this should be coupled with board training, emphasizing the role of a business association in a developing market, codes of ethics, and the governance role of the board.
- Additional assistance from AMIR would be helpful in recruiting an appropriate staff person with an association background and skill levels that include marketing, collateral development, and general management. This assistance, stopping short of becoming involved in actual recruitment, should include development of criteria, appropriate job descriptions, and sample policies & procedures manuals, and should be well grounded in a renewed Board vision for the organization.

Jordan Hotel Association

JHA participated in the first 2 days of the Dead Sea planning retreat, then in the Business Association Management training; finally, a meeting was held between consultant Stephen Bower and executive Bassam Kawash, plus JHA president Michael Nazzall, owner of the Radisson/SAS in Amman.

Key Issues

First part of meeting was on services provided by membership evaluation department that rates hotels and conducts annual evaluations of properties. Discussed extensive checklist that is being converted to computer. Consultant recommended department look into providing a preferred vendor list so that properties failing inspections could be hooked up with quality suppliers who would upgrade hotel services with standardized products at fair prices. Consultant also indicated that such a service could even supplement association income from dues.

Second part of meeting was with market research department that tracks data on hotel occupancy, country of origin of guests, and length of stay. Department has been charged by president to look into two initiatives. In Petra hotel zone, association wants to conduct feasibility study on developing arts & crafts/fashion & textile sector so that visitors to area become more engaged, increasing length of stay. In Dead Sea zone, association wants to further explore health and wellness issues, especially since UV ranges are exceedingly low due to salt vapors plus region being below sea level. Discussion focused on what sort of information should be gathered for each study, and how to calculate cost of study. Consultant recommended low cost data collection primarily from internet. Examples suggested were researching Australian sites on government programs to reduce UV exposure, and promote UV risk awareness. Consultant recommended basic preparation work be undertaken, then shared with donor organizations to determine interest in funding these types of projects (provided they were realistic and could be packaged as in the interest of Jordanian tourist development).

Mr. Kawash then took consultant to hotel/foodservice training school supported with funds from select Jordanian hotel owners. Campus, facilities, test kitchens, classrooms, dormitories were clean, filled with modern equipment, and classes were in session. Spent an hour touring facility and met with Ammar Kanaan, general manager for Ammon College for Hospitality & Tourism Education. Mr. Kanaan headed up this project, originally a government program that has been turned over to private industry. Graduates are hired by hotels in Jordan and in Gulf region. Consultant explained how such programs in US market are frequently supported by food and equipment manufacturers, plus corporate hotel operators.

Final portion of program was attending an industry event lunch and sitting with Sultan Abu Jabar, Secretary General for the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities. Luncheon event conducted mainly in Arabic with dozens of participants coming to table to ask for various considerations. Consultant saw first hand the level of involvement of the ministry in day-to-day operations of the Jordanian tourist sector.

Conclusions and recommendations

Though the Jordan Hotel Association is a mandatory membership association, it does appear to be interested in upgrading services association offers members. The association President states his desire to move the association from a mandatory organization to a voluntary one within two years. The executive will take retirement within year, and there may be an opportunity to work with volunteer leadership at that time. Since tourism is one of industries target for growth and expansion in Vision 2020, and association values activities such as the Amman College, consultant recommends AMIR continue a dialogue with this industry sector. Overall there are enough positive indicators to warrant an ongoing dialogue, though JHA is clearly not as strong as the associations that participated in AMIR I programs.

Jordanian Intellectual Property Rights Association

JIPA's Chairman participated in part of the Dead Sea planning, as well as part of the Business Association Management Training. The Executive Director, Rana Diab, participated in the Management Training and subsequently met with consultant Stephen Bower, along with 2 other JIPA staffers (the receptionist and the new membership/marketing person). Several informal discussions were also held between JIPA and Jean Rogers.

Overview

JIPA has the strongest articulation of any of the associations of its mission, and is clearly driven by that and its member needs. As a new association it lacks many of the formal structures and training, yet it is clearly posed to be a dynamic organization if it can overcome the immediate organizational funding/formation issues with which it must deal. Though the executive and chairman have not had formal association management training, they were easily able to apply their business skills and intuitive sense to the topics covered during the training and were far ahead of many of their peers in understanding the strategies underlying the concepts presented.

Key Issues

Discussion focused on membership services and dues, plus the financial situation at association. Currently all office staff are serving in a voluntary capacity, since there are no funds to pay staff. Office rent and daily operating expenses are paid with funds from board member currently serving as president. The association activities are minimal at present since there are no operating funds. Meeting on day one focused on association structure, and degree of involvement of members through committees. While the association is in poor financial shape, consultant was given a presentation that summarized an effective organization with viable committees and active membership. Of all associations visited in Jordan over 30 days, this one clearly had the best understanding on the balance of power/role of members and board. Consultant was provided with example after example of members actively recruiting members, teaching at seminars to help association generate income and proposing ideas to board for future activities.

The consultant assisted staff in preparation of a brief plan of action for a 90-day period, designed to generate some income through small seminars at offices of members, fundraising activities

centered around authors, musicians, cartoonist/illustrators, a focused membership campaign using board plus select members to solicit prospects, and press program to generate interest in issues. Consultant recommended series of intense activities to both demonstrate to board prior to May elections that staff were committed to success of association, plus to use current crisis to engage members in the association so they would share in the problem solving exercise. Consultant and staff discussed steps of each proposed action, the funds that each action might generate, and role of staff, volunteers, time commitment etc. Consultant focused on answering questions so that staff would be in position to share with board and determine merit.

Conclusions and recommendations:

Both the executive director and the Chairman have an excellent understanding of how an association should operate. While the current financial situation indicates association has a significant problem, the marketplace is small, and intellectual property rights is a relatively intangible concept to promote. Based on information shared with consultant from past year work plan, association is a membership-driven entity and has met most of its goals with the exception of securing sponsorship for one event, and falling very short on a major fundraising activity. The association currently is not receiving USAID funds since USAID asked organization to re-apply for assistance from the recently launched AMIR 2 program. JIPA seems well placed to make good use of financial assistance in making association more financially viable, grow the association membership, and expand non dues generating programs.

Jordanian-American Business Association (JABA)

Executive Ragda Boutros participated in the Dead Sea planning retreat and has previously participated in CIPE association management training. Additional staff members attended the management training, and brief meetings were held in Amman at JABA's office with Ms. Boutros, Mr. Bower, and Ms. Zina Seikaly in membership.

Overview

Clearly JABA is one of the better organized and financed associations. At same time they have not fully mastered costs associated with services they offer, and consultant got a feeling that departments are operating independently without measuring their impact on other activities within the association. The executive director is a strong personality and driving force on the staff; she has had an excellent working relationship with the outgoing Chairman.

Key Issues

Materials developed by JABA were reviewed during first part of meeting. Consultant saw a lot of new materials and programs being discussed, with new services at various levels of development. Consultant suggested that membership information include testimonials and that services offered be re-written to convert from a feature approach to real benefits. Discussion time was split between discussing training programs and membership marketing. Association staff pointed out a decline in participation on training programs. They felt that while JABA has originally been one of the first associations to offer training seminars, that the market was now glutted and the events were less popular and less profitable. Consultant discussed nature of training offered and suggested JABA look at associations such as ASTD (American Society for Training and Development) to look at training trends, new speakers on market etc. Consultant also recommended association consider some lower cost options such as audio cassette/self study training complete with manuals. On membership, association staff explained the division of roles on staff and how membership recruitment worked with another section of organization who were responsible for servicing members once they joined. Membership staff indicated they felt removed from the servicing role and were torn between recruiting new members and developing a relationship with a new member. Consultant discussed importance of understanding responsibilities of job function and stressed the need for the different staff to communicate with one another so that marketing arm and the servicing arm were in tandem.

Recommendations

As one of the early strong associations, JABA now faces not resting on its earlier success as the marketplace in Jordan develops. It should use its strong U.S. contacts to follow new trends in member services, notably training, and work to improve its internal coordination across departments in terms of communication and cost/benefit analyses.

AMIR's board governance assistance for JABA is timely given the current turnover of the Board. Assistance on pricing strategies, understanding true service costs, and presentation of benefits rather than features are areas for future focus.

Young Entrepreneurs Association (YEA)

Executive Director Dina Dahkqan participated in the Dead Sea planning workshop, then subsequent meetings were held at YEA's Amman offices with Jean Rogers and Stephen Bower. Ms. Rogers met with the entire YEA staff; Mr. Bower met with the executive, public relations staffer Leanne Kawar, and Rania Sabbah in membership. Unfortunately, the Executive did not participate in the Association Management training, which would have been of benefit to her, electing to send 2 other staff instead.

Overview

Overall, YEA is a well organized and functional association. The executive, in the job for some 9 months now, is a strong administrator -- intense, energetic, and operationally savvy-- who has reportedly brought the association back to profitability. It seems that much of this was done through cost-cutting however, thus the current challenge is to design valued services that can generate sustainable income. She is initiating new services while pointing out to board that new services require time and cost commitments, plus addressing which of current programs/activities should be curtailed. There is a significant turnover of staff, due in part to most staff positions being held by young entry-level staffers who are not focused on their positions or associations generally as a career choice and who need more structure and grooming to perform effectively. Standardized systems and working manuals being developed for the association will help to capture institutional operating practices in the face of staff turnover, but ultimately YEA needs some staff depth which would allow the executive to operate on a more strategic, less task-oriented, level with sufficient delegation to staff.

Key Issues

The consultants reviewed a range of services/programs YEA provides members, including training programs. Discussion started with electronic newsletter association sends to members and the data base used. The organization does not effectively use any of the software programs available in the office which could help organize its member records. Currently the organization has not centralized the newsletter data base, so that prospects and member records are stored on at least two data bases and multiple duplicate mailings are the norm. This wastes resources and will rapidly dilute the perceived value of the mailings, perhaps even becoming an irritant to members. Streamlining the data records is extremely important. Consultant recommended greater focus on qualifying the prospect base, developing an active membership committee to assist in the prospect effort, including visiting prospects with the membership director. As part of membership discussion consultant strongly recommended an annual dues renewal process to replace the current oral renewal effort. Consultant pointed out number of man hours currently dedicated to chasing down renewals, explaining how much of that effort was not especially productive.

Second area discussed was association training efforts. Currently, the bulk of training offered is geared at the non-member market as a revenue generator for the association. This should be used as an opportunity for the association to prospect new members and maximize non member exposure to YEA as a recruitment strategy. Though YEA does provide some information on the association at these events, it does not have a strong approach for using the events to build affinity, expand its network, and sign new members.

Similarly, its approach to sponsorship solicitation is not strong. The materials reviewed are not concise, do not focus on benefits to sponsor, and do not make a strong case. Consultant discussed how to package and promote sponsorship opportunities more effectively by looking at them from the sponsors' viewpoint.

Time was also spent reviewing several new program ideas, such as the Arab network of young entrepreneurs and a proposed collaborations with an international group which facilitates venture capital. These services appear to be primarily donor-funded, and it was not clear what the demand for these services is among the membership at large. YEA is right to focus on developing new services; this should be done in close coordination with the membership to ensure relevance. YEA does have the potential for some splits in the membership, as there is a tier of members who are the elite young "movers and shakers" who are already highly successful, active and vocal -- yet membership expansion and future service growth may depend on a more typical young businessman profile.

Jordan Vision 2020, housed at YEA as a coalition effort of many associations, seems to be stagnating after a strong start as the coalition has become less active while YEA feels strong ownership. This was covered only briefly by the consultant, but this is a significant high-profile effort for YEA, the association community and AMIR. Re-invigorating the coalition behind JV2020 as part of a review of the strategy and advocacy campaign would be timely now.

Staffing and work flow are clearly issues for YEA. With some of the highest visibility of the associations and key early successes, YEA is clearly pressured to perform, and is now struggling a bit to maintain high service goals. The executive, in the midst of organizing a high-profile event (MDF4), was clearly stressed, and though there is not significant dissatisfaction on the staff, there is clearly room to clarify roles, communicate better, and delegate more effectively. The staff and executive have different work styles, which makes these even more crucial to be conscious of: the executive is very driven and goal-oriented, while the staff is more relationship-oriented. Both approaches and skill sets are assets to the association; the onus is on the executive to work with the staff to blend these styles effectively. This will mean slowing down a bit for her to ensure that she is communicating clearly, building ownership within the staff, and empowering them to work at a more substantive level.

Recommendations

AMIR should continue to work with YEA, emphasizing member-demanded program development.

AMIR could also provide technical training to assist new staff and a new executive director in developing their association and general management skills.

Reinvigorate the JV202 coalition in order to build broader ownership of the effort beyond YEA.

YEA, and its director particularly, should take more time for the "soft skills" of association management – cultivating prospects, reaching out to inactive members, listening to the market, and grooming staff.

Annex A - Strategic Planning Workshop PowerPoint Slides