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West Bank and Gaza

NETHAM

Rule of Law Program

Justice and Enforcement

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Implemented by DPK Consulting

Twelfth Quarterly Report
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While continuing targeted assistance to strengthen the formal Palestinian Justice Sector, Netham initiated in this quarter new activities with the informal justice sector including Palestinian law schools, universities, and the Ministry of Education (MoE). A key programmatic initiative included supporting Legal Education programs at Al-Quds University and a memorandum of understanding was signed with Al-Quds Law School to begin implementation of activities. These initiatives will include the development of the legal writing curricula for law students, upgrading the legal clinic, and establishing a legal library and a computer lab at the law school. To facilitate the implementation of these activities, the university provided the project with office space at the law school. Netham has recruited a Legal Advisor and a Project Coordinator to assist in the implementation of this initiative. Additionally, this quarter Netham began work with the Ministry of Education to explore activities to strengthen the civic education curriculum in Palestinian schools.

Among the achievements in working with the formal justice sector, Netham finalized the development of the Supreme Judicial Council's (SJC) financial and administrative systems. Two comprehensive administrative and financial manuals were produced to organize the work at the SJC and promote greater accountability and transparency. This was followed by in-house training on these newly developed systems. Marking a project milestone, Netham's capacity building and training plan, designed to shore up capacity of SJC staff members, has concluded this quarter, with 306 judicial staff trained on topics salient to their work. This training was evaluated as essential to improving the administrative and technical capacities of judicial staff. Moreover, a seven day regional training was convened this quarter, with seven courts administrators attending a training program at the Jordanian Judicial Institute and the Justice Palace of Jordan.

In the area of information technology support, Netham continued working on several IT tools to assist the Justice Sector institutions. Netham's Jordanian based US-expatriate consultant conducted two trips this quarter to work with the SJC IT Team on providing the vision document for Al Mizan 2 software. In addition, Netham continued working on developing a number of administrative systems, including notifications management for SJC and courts, document management and the justice records systems for the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) which will increase the efficiency of these institutions.

Other key projects this quarter included the development of the Caseload Management Survey, which will assist in improving the litigation services at the Palestinian Courts, identify the real causes of delay and support capacity and institutional building of the Palestinian Judicial Institute (PJI).

This quarter, the noteworthy achievements of interns supported by Netham were recognized and celebrated. The interns had assisted several court departments in archiving and entering a large number of cases files and documents into Al Mizan software, thereby alleviating some of the case backlog at the Palestinian courts and speeding up case processing times. The contribution of the interns was appreciated and noted by judicial stakeholders - including the Chief Justice. To publicly recognize the work of the interns, Netham organized an event in August which was attended by USAID officials and key judicial figures as well as Netham and USAID's Youth Empowerment Project staff, which helped assign some of the interns to Netham.

An official inauguration ceremony took place this quarter for the new Jericho Courthouse which will serve as a First Instance Court. The opening was attended by the Prime Minister, Chief

Justice, Minister of Justice, the USAID Deputy Mission Director and various PA and diplomatic representatives. USAID supported the design of the court with a modern hearing room as well as the procurement of furniture and equipment and facilitating IT connection and networking. The opening of this new courthouse received front page press coverage in the Palestinian press.

This quarter also witnessed the convocation of the first judicial conference organized in Bethlehem by the Supreme Judicial Council. The conference offered participants a forum to discuss achievements and obstacles in the judiciary. In his opening speech, the Chief Justice highlighted the strong support that USAID, through Netham, has given to the Palestinian judiciary. He noted the project's contributions in improving the departments of Civil Judgments, Notifications, Notary Public, and key involvement in judicial training.

Finally, this quarter, a new work plan and a budget re-alignment were submitted to USAID, with a number of new and expanded activities that will accommodate the additional USAID funding. The plan and budget were approved by USAID near the end of the quarter.

2. ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

SPECIFIC PROJECT ACTIVITIES

This section provides updates, progress, and challenges of the key project activities set out in Netham's work plan.

PROFESSIONALIZING THE FORMAL JUSTICE SECTOR THROUGH ASSISTANCE TO THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, SUPREME JUDICIAL COUNCIL, COURT ADMINISTRATORS AND OTHER BODIES

Supporting the Process of Developing the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC)

Strengthening Administrative and Financial Capacities of the SJC

This quarter, Netham's financial and administrative consultants finalized the development and implementation of the financial and administrative systems and procedures of the SJC. Two comprehensive financial and administrative manuals were prepared and approved by the SJC leadership. These manuals will organize and institutionalize the work of the SJC and will assist SJC employees to execute daily tasks more efficiently and deliver higher quality services to the public—in addition to providing more transparency and accountability. The administrative manual covered the following topics:

- Internal Reports & Communication Management
- Meeting Management
- Correspondence Management
- Employee Attendance Control
- Employee File Control
- Employee Satisfaction Measurement
- Archive Control
- Internal Administrative Review
- Complaints Management System
- Employee Appraisal and Promotion
- Employee Recruitment
- Documents and Records Control
- Employee Training Management

The financial manual addressed the following key areas:

- Accounting System
- Cash Management
- Purchasing
- Payments & Expenditures
- Internal Financial Auditing
- Revenues
- Fixed Assets
- Deposits
- Budgeting

The development of the financial and administrative systems was followed by a comprehensive follow-up through one-on-one training, group training, and further in-depth training. A workshop was conducted for 19 Chief Clerks from the Conciliation, First Instance, Appeal and Supreme Judicial Courts in the West Bank on these systems. The workshop was designed to increase the

Chief Clerks and courts employees' understanding of the newly-developed financial system. Prior to the training workshop, the consultant conducted an assessment to evaluate the level of implementation of the financial procedures, and the results showed that about 80% of these procedures were being implemented at the SJC.

A workshop was held with eight employees from the SJC's Administrative and Financial Departments to qualify them to carry out internal audits and to familiarize them with the newly-developed administrative manual. Prior to this workshop, the consultant, in coordination with the SJC, conducted an audit to assess the baseline level of implementation of official administrative procedures. The audit report showed that about 75% of official administrative procedures were being implemented at the SJC.

Next quarter, Netham will provide the SJC with technical assistance to increase implementation of the newly developed financial and administrative systems. Netham also assisted the SJC in reviewing and developing the organizational structure of the SJC through extensive cooperation with the Chief Justice and SJC's senior staff.

Enhance and Build Capacity of Court Administrators

Capacity Building Plan for Court Administrators

This quarter Netham completed the implementation of the capacity building plan, developed jointly with the SJC, to upgrade the skills and performance of Court Administrators. This plan aimed to build skills and the capacity of court clerks, enforcement, notification, and notary public staff, with the longer-term aim of improving public services. A detailed training report was sent to USAID upon the completion of this plan.

The training modules focused on various topics related to West Bank Courts Administrators, namely:

1. Electronic stenography for court stenographers, including training on mechanisms to record the minutes of the hearing sessions.
2. Training on the automation system in use at the Civil Judgment Departments, and methods of promoting the full use of this software in the department's financial work. This training was provided for Civil Judgment Officers.
3. Unification of procedures on enforcement of judicial decisions among West Bank Civil Judgment Departments.
4. The consolidation of Notary Public Department's work processes and procedures.
5. Rules and regulations of judicial notifications for the West Bank Judicial Notification Court Processors.
6. Enhancement of administrative capacities of the West Bank courts' Chief Clerks and Deputy Chief Clerks.

The training sessions were held at the Palestinian Judicial Institute (PJI). The first training program began on June 28, 2008 and the last sessions concluded on August 23, 2008. Over these two months around 306 courts staff members participated in training. Given the success of this training as well as regional training held in Jordan last quarter for seven courts administrators, the Chief Justice has requested Netham's assistance in facilitating the training of 50 newly appointed judges, including initial training at the Jordanian Judicial Institute and the Justice Palace of Jordan, and practical training at the Jordanian courts. After receiving USAID's approval and vetting approvals for the nominated participants, a first round of 30 judges will be traveling to Jordan for the training in early next quarter.

Moreover, the Chief Justice has requested USAID's assistance to provide case management training in the US to around 30 judges in addition to English languages courses for judges. The

SJC is currently selecting the nominees for these training programs and will be developed next quarter.

Improving Information and Communication Technology at the SJC and Courts **SJC Database Unification Efforts**

This quarter, Netham's database unification consultant worked with SJC's IT specialist and Netham on developing Al Mizan Central Settings Database, which includes unified standards for case management systems such as uniform case classifications and common district names. The unification of databases at all Notary Public Departments is expected to be complete by the beginning of the next quarter. This consolidation will allow all court databases to be integrated into one master database, stored on servers in Ramallah, and enable users to track SJC's case records and all activities of Notary Public and Civil Judgment Departments.

Assisting in Design of Mizan 2

Working with a Jordanian-based US-expatriate consultant, the project began to create a vision document for the Al Mizan 2 software and the Business Process Analysis. The consultant conducted several meetings with relevant stakeholders including the SJC IT team and the UNDP IT team to learn first-hand, the requirements and deficiencies of the Al Mizan 2 software and gather recommendations for the new technology. All parties agreed that the proposed application should cover three main areas: civil judgment, notary public, and case management. The consultant also presented to the UNDP IT and SJC IT teams the features of Al Mizan 2 that are being currently used in Jordan (and were shared by USAID's Masaq Rule of Law Project) and the possibilities of re-engineering and adapting the application to the Palestinian judicial context. The teams recommended a visit to Jordan to learn about the application in-depth. This visit will take place next quarter.

Promoting SJC IT Achievements

In preparation for the SJC's IT day, Netham facilitated a workshop for the SJC IT, Netham, and UNDP teams working with the SJC on IT support. The IT day will spotlight the contributions of information technology to the judiciary, and, during this quarter's workshop, the team brainstormed possible IT Day activities and ideas for presentations. Next quarter, Netham will work closely with this team to prepare a detailed work plan of activities for IT Day.

Notary Public Services

Ramallah and Nablus Notary Public Departments

Netham continued supporting the Notary Public Departments through providing the department with interns to carry out data entry and archiving work at the department. By the end of this quarter, the interns serving in the Ramallah Notary Public Department had entered 60,248 documents into Al Mizan software and those working in the Nablus Notary Public Department had entered 42,700 documents.

Project Interns

The interns' notable achievements were highlighted at a special event, held under the patronage of the Chief Justice. Interns serving in the Notary Public, Civil Judgment and Notifications Departments of Ramallah and Nablus courts were honored at this event, and two of the interns presented the work of the group and the results they have achieved. This event was attended by the USAID Mission Director, the project's CTO and Director of the Democracy and Governance Office, in addition to the Deputy Minister of Youth and Sports, the USAID-funded Ruwwad Project – which has provided Netham with names of potential interns from their volunteer database - along with their USAID CTO, as well as other High Court judges and SJC personnel. The event concluded with the Chief Justice and USAID Mission Director awarding each intern a

certificate of appreciation for their contribution to the development of the Palestinian judicial institutions.

Support Improved Case Management System in the Courts

Improving Case Management

To improve litigation services at Palestinian courts, Netham launched the initial phase of a project to evaluate the status of case files at West Bank courts. In consultation with the SJC, the Ramallah First Instance and Conciliation Courts were selected as pilot sites. The review process aims to verify the accuracy of the information entered into Mizan, including the hearing minutes of pending files, identify causes of delay, and make appropriate changes to the Al Mizan software.

At a later stage, this process will assist to compile accurate statistical reports on all cases and potential delays. By the end of the quarter, Netham and the interns supported by the project have reviewed and verified 685 files in the First Instance Court and 655 files at the Conciliation Court.

Carrying out Case Court Surveys

To assist the SJC in improving the case management at West Bank courts, Netham's Caseload Survey Consultant arrived in the country this quarter to identify the obstacles facing case management and to develop an efficient case management reform plan., Starting with the three selected pilot courts in Ramallah, Nablus and Jenin, the consultant surveyed the SJC's criminal and civil court caseload.

As part of this assignment, Netham and the consultant visited the three pilot sites to evaluate the recommended sampling methodology. The visits allowed the consultant to better gauge the court's current workload as well as its effectiveness. Netham also assisted the consultant in developing the survey questionnaire, along with a proposed case file sampling methodology and spreadsheet for the survey. To ensure a variety of viewpoints and expertise were incorporated, Netham and the consultant discussed the proposed survey with interns supported by Netham. Once the survey is finalized, the consultant will carry out a pilot survey at the Ramallah Court. This will be done before a full survey data collection process begins in order to test-run the surveying process and carry out amendments if required.

The consultant produced a report on the development of a survey that will assess the SJC's criminal and civil court caseload in the West Bank. The report proposed initiatives to improve information management at Palestinian courts. Key recommendations included:

1. Adoption of new formats to clearly present caseload information in future annual reports of the Supreme Judicial Council.
2. Improving Al Mizan data quality through regular audits of the system and a program that enables the system to routinely collect and report all summary information relevant to case management.
3. Completing current project activities that promote the consistent use of mutually exclusive codes in Al Mizan to denote different case types.
4. Undertaking occasional surveys, which focus on courtrooms rather than case files, to assess the extent to which court hearing time is wasted because litigating parties were not adequately prepared.

Netham is finalizing the report for official submission next quarter. The report will be translated into Arabic.

Carry Out Surveys to Assess Performance of SJC and Courts

In line with Netham's workplan, a national baseline survey will be carried out to assess the performance of the SJC and courts. Feedback will be solicited from court users, judges, lawyers, court employees and civil society organizations. A national public opinion survey is planned as well. Based on the results of these surveys, the project will propose targeted developmental recommendations to improve court and SJC performance.

In this context, Netham's Institutional/Judicial Development Consultant held a series of meetings with the Chief Justice this quarter to finalize the questionnaires for the baseline survey. After the Chief Justice granted approval to conduct the survey and to use the questionnaire developed, Netham published a Request for Proposals. Seven research companies applied in response to the RFP. Netham will review and evaluate these proposals and, if necessary, conduct visits to the bidding companies before awarding the contract. The award process will take place next quarter.

Improve Judicial Notifications

Ramallah Central Notification Department

Early this quarter, Netham initiated support for the Ramallah Central Notification Department through the three interns the project hired to work at the department and help to distribute notification papers to processors. The interns assisted the department in preparing checklists for notifications, and in entering notifications into an Excel spreadsheet designed to organize their distribution. The spreadsheet will show the number of notifications delivered along with the names of the processors delivering the notifications. To further improve the system, Netham is taking steps to automate the notification process to be used in the notifications departments. During this quarter, the interns entered 5,900 notifications into the Excel sheet. Next quarter, this automation will be completed and ready to be used for data entry. In addition, Netham will furnish and equip the department and procure badges and uniform for processors to facilitate their mission of delivering the notifications to the public.

Notifications Management System

To help develop the Notifications Management System, Netham held several meetings with SJC IT personnel and UNDP IT to explore the workflow of the automated Notification Management System (NMS). The NMS will be designed to enhance the court notification process. Terms of Reference for a potential developer for the NMS were drafted and submitted to USAID. After receiving USAID's approval, Netham hired the Notifications Management System Consultant and provided him with Al Mizan's table structure to enable the migration of data from Al Mizan into NMS.

Netham's consultant met with the SJC and Netham staff to discuss the issue of multiple addresses for notified persons and mechanisms of distribution of the notifications to processors. Several reporting and interfacing templates were proposed for the NMS reports and a list of reports was made by the consultant. Mechanisms for extracting notification data from Al Mizan as well as residential address information from the Palestinian Statistics Bureau were discussed. Towards the end of the quarter, the consultant completed a draft analysis for the NMS and provided recommendations and ideas to be included along with Netham's suggestions on improving the NMS. Among other suggestions, the consultant recommended dividing each district into zones, with a certain number of court processors designated for each zone, according to notification volume, in addition to having the program produce 10 types of reports that summarize the status of notifications, dates of sending/receipt, errors in addresses, percentage of error and percentage of rejected notifications. These recommendations were provided to the SJC for review and approval.

The SJC Library Project

The Chief Justice has requested Netham to assist in renovating and upgrading the judicial library at the SJC premises. After receiving USAID's approval, Netham contracted an architect to carry out the renovation and upgrading work, including demolishing the old structure, overseeing the electricity connections, installing air conditioning, and adding gypsum boards. Netham launched a tendering process to procure the required equipment, including four desktop computers, a printer and library management software. A vendor was selected to provide the needed furniture such as shelves, desks, and chairs. By the end of the quarter, the architect was close to finalizing the renovation work and the selected vendors were contracted. All the requested items will be procured and delivered to the SJC library early next quarter, and the legal references and legal books will be provided through the EU-funded Seyada project. The SJC library opening will take place next quarter.

Engaging and Building Capacity of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ)

Strategic Planning Unit for the Ministry of Justice

In continuation of last quarter's efforts to assist the MoJ in implementing its strategic plan, the two short term technical assistants who were hired to assist the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU) within MoJ continued their assessment and support to the unit. By the end of their consultancy agreement, the technical assistants submitted a final (end of period) report, summarizing their work and assessment of the SPU including its accomplishments, capabilities and future needs. Based on these findings, Netham produced a needs assessment report in which the challenges and obstacles to the SPU's progress were identified, and this report was submitted to USAID. Netham will continue supporting the SPU over the next quarter.

Institutional Development and Capacity Building

Needs Assessment

In accordance with Netham's workplan, Netham has completed the MoJ Institutional Development and Capacity Building needs assessment that was carried out last quarter. The assessment will assist the MoJ to identify its areas of strength and weakness. Based on the results of this assessment, potential areas of assistance will be explored including the development of the administrative and financial systems. The report is being reviewed internally, and will be translated into English once finalized.

IMPROVING MOJ PUBLIC SERVICES

The Justice Records System

Within Netham's efforts to enhance MoJ's public services, Netham will assist the Ministry in developing a Justice Records System – which is basically a database that stores information on individuals with criminal convictions and is used by the PA to produce certificates of non-conviction. These certificates are often required of Palestinians applying for international visas, various jobs, including civil service employment, and for numerous transactions. To begin re-engineering this process to issue these certificates at the MoJ, a letter of commitment was drafted between Netham and the MoJ detailing the obligations and responsibilities of the two parties in implementing the Justice Records System at the Ministry. In the same context, a memorandum of understanding was signed between MoJ and the Public Prosecution Office in relation to proceeding with the establishment of the Justice Records automated system at the Ministry. The Public Prosecution was previously issuing these certificates. A signed copy of this memorandum was given to Netham.

As a second step, an IT firm was selected, through a tendering process, to provide the automated system design for the Justice Record. Several meetings were held with the selected firm and MoJ to discuss data collection mechanisms. Towards the end of the quarter, the system design was

almost complete and another IT firm was selected to implement and develop the designed system. The system is expected to be fully functional next quarter.

Further, an office within the Ministry was selected to serve as a Justice Records Office, which will be used by the public coming in and requesting certificates. This office will be renovated through Netham's assistance. Netham contracted an architect to carry out the tasks of design and renovation. By next quarter, the office is expected to be completed.

MOJ IT Training

As part of efforts to strengthen the IT skills of MoJ's staff, Netham has launched a targeted training program. To start, Netham solicited offers from IT training firms to conduct the training, and selected two firms. The selected companies provided the training at the Palestinian Judicial Institute for 21 MoJ staff members. The training is still on-going and is expected to be concluded next quarter. This training is tailored to those with no or basic computer skills and teaches the proper use of computer technology through focusing on the International Certificate Driving License (ICDL) courses.

The second part of the training, on CISCO networking technologies, was tailored to the MoJ IT manager. The technology will be used shortly at the Ministry and will include network security systems. The training is ongoing and is expected to be concluded next quarter.

Supporting the Process of Developing the Document Management System (DMS) at the MoJ

As part of the e-nucleus government project at the MoJ, and in continuation of Netham's efforts of developing the Document Management System, Netham's consultant has finalized the system analysis and design, and submitted the final draft of the system's design to Netham for review. By the beginning of next quarter, the implementation phase will start and a vendor will be selected, through a tendering process, to implement and develop the system. The system will capture the document workflow between and within MoJ departments, including complaints, endorsements, licenses, and arbitration. The use of the system will reduce and eventually eliminate unnecessary practices for storing, receiving and circulating information within the ministry leading to a more efficient internal information system.

Palestinian Judicial Institute

Assist in developing financial and administrative capacities of the PJI

Within Netham's efforts to assist the PJI to create an institution that is capable of independently addressing judicial training needs and turning out qualified judges, the project is undertaking a thorough needs assessment. Netham's Judicial/Institutional Development Consultant is spearheading this assessment, which focuses on PJI's administrative and technical capacities. By the end of the first phase of his consultancy that started last quarter, the consultant submitted a report on the development of PJI's organizational structure and job descriptions, the required assistance to the PJI in developing its budget for the remaining of the year, the needed IT developmental recommendations to be adopted by the PJI, the regulations that govern the Academic and Educational Committee of the PJI, and the continuing education needs assessment survey.

Based on these recommendations, Netham hired a local financial consultant to assist the PJI Director in developing its financial system and manual. The consultant recruited for this purpose worked closely with the PJI Director to complete the final draft of the financial manual, which was then submitted to Netham for review. Some modifications and adjustments were recommended and incorporated. The final version of the manual was submitted to the PJI for review and approval. Once the manual is approved, in-house training will be given to PJI's

financial staff on these newly developed financial procedures and systems in order to enforce these financial systems.

Additionally, Netham worked closely with the PJI to finalize the administrative procedures manual that would organize and institutionalize the work of the PJI. Towards the end of this quarter, the administrative procedures have been completed, and was compiled in a manual and submitted to the PJI for review and approval. Once approved, in-house training will be provided to the PJI administrative staff on the newly-developed administrative procedures.

Parallel to these efforts, Netham received USAID's approval to hire a consultant to serve as the PJI Director's Assistant for Financial Affairs. The consultant worked closely with Netham's financial consultants and the PJI to develop and implement financial and administrative systems and procedures. Additionally, he prepared the PJI budget and assisted in preparations for the PJI Board of Directors meeting. The consultant has also assisted Netham in finalizing the proposed organizational structure and job descriptions for PJI's staff, in compliance with the PA requirements. These were approved by the Board of Directors at the end of the quarter.

PJI Judicial Education

During the second phase of his consultancy, Netham's Judicial/Institutional Development Consultant carried out a needs assessment for the judges' training and continuing education needs. The assessment, based on the analysis of a previous survey, enabled the consultant to draft a Continuing Education Needs Assessment Report and a Career Plan for Judges. After extensive meetings and interviews with stake-holders, the Needs Assessment Report and Career Plan were finalized and submitted to the Chief Justice and the PJI Director for review and feedback.

Additionally, Netham's Judicial/Institutional Development Consultant worked with the EU-funded Seyada Project to develop regulations for the granting of diplomas, for faculty trainers, as well as for academic and admission instructions. The consultant reviewed these regulations in depth and gave feedback to Seyada and PJI.

By the end of the quarter, Netham's consultant traveled to the West Bank to work closely with the Seyada project to review the last drafts of other internal regulations before submission to the PJI's Board of Directors and to establish an outline for PJI's faculty regulations.

Additionally, he worked with the Supreme Judicial Council on developing the legal framework for sending 10 potential judges to study at the Jordanian Judicial Institute (JJI). The legal framework being developed will guarantee that, once their studies are complete, these potential judges come back to serve the Palestinian Judiciary. During his visit, the consultant also developed the Judicial Traditions and Ethics course outline to be introduced to newly hired and sitting judges. A draft outline of the course was discussed and reviewed with the Chief Justice.

PJI Equipment Support

After receiving USAID's approval, Netham proceeded with the procurement of some light office equipment and office materials that had been requested by the PJI. This equipment was delivered and installed this quarter.

Supporting the Civil Judgment Department

Ramallah Civil Judgment Department

This quarter, Netham assisted the Ramallah Civil Judgment Department to relocate to a location that is more convenient for the staff and the public. Also, this quarter, the architect working on contract with Netham completed the renovation of the department which included some

construction work, changing tiles, windows, doors, and paint, in addition to renovating the entrance of the building and installing air conditioning. Netham also procured and delivered some office furniture, such as desks, shelves and chairs.

Interns supported by Netham continued to assist the Ramallah Civil Judgment Department. By the end of this quarter, the total number of files entered into Al Mizan software reached 5,000, demonstrating the actual workload of the department. In addition, around 900 files were labeled. The entered records include files that were not previously filed in the system, new cases registered at the department, and cases that were adjourned by the preceding judge.

Nablus Civil Judgment Department

Netham's interns continue to support the Civil Judgment Department by helping to organize its archiving system. By the end of this quarter, the interns had entered 1,220 files and labeled some 1,300 files. In addition, the interns have scanned 1,583 financial documents including checks, bills, and invoices, to enable safe and accessible storage. As per Netham's request, the courthouse provided the Civil Judgment Department with a scanner for this task. Netham also procured shelves, hangers and dividers for the department to facilitate proper filing, archiving, and retrieval of files.

Jericho Courthouse

This quarter, the Prime Minister inaugurated the new Jericho Courthouse during an official ceremony that was attended by the Chief Justice, Minister of Justice, the USAID Deputy Mission Director and various PA and diplomatic representatives. This courthouse will serve as a First Instance Court for the Jericho district. Netham contributed to the development of this court through assistance with design of a modern court hearing room, procurement of the needed furniture and equipment, in addition to facilitating the IT connections and networking. The opening of the Jericho courthouse received front page coverage in the Palestinian press.

Jenin Courthouse

Within Netham's efforts to help build capacities of the SJC and courts, and based on the Chief Justice request, Netham began to assist in the development of the Civil Judgment and Notary Public Departments, the First Instance and Conciliation Courts Clerks' Offices, and two trial halls that will be used for court sessions at the newly-established UNDP-funded Jenin Courthouse.

As part of this initiative, Netham contracted an architect to finalize the designs, allocate work stations, and oversee other needed architectural and design requirements. Moreover, Netham will provide the Jenin Courthouse with equipment and furniture to create a better working environment for both the employees and the departments' clients which, in the longer-term, will improve public services. The equipment includes air conditioning, queuing system for the notary public and archiving systems along with needed furniture.

Netham supported interns working at the Jenin court assisted the Civil Judgment Department personnel by entering some 1,300 files into Al Mizan software and labeling some 150 files. Additionally, they entered 350 of the Notary Public Department's documents. Once the new courthouse is completed, Netham will provide additional interns to assist various departments in entering the data into Al Mizan software and organizing the archiving system.

SUPPORT PUBLIC OUTREACH, NETWORKING, AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT ON RULE OF LAW ISSUES

Legal Education

Within Netham's efforts to enhance legal education initiatives, Netham held a series of meetings with the various judicial stakeholders and the local law schools, where potential areas of assistance were explored. Additionally, a needs assessment to evaluate legal education was conducted.

Following these efforts and USAID feedback and approval, Al Quds University and Netham signed a memorandum of understanding which details activities that Netham will implement to strengthen the university's legal education programs. To facilitate Netham's mission in implementing these activities, an office space has been offered at Al Quds University for Netham's use. With USAID's approval, Netham began renovating the office and procuring the needed equipment and furniture.

Netham's assistance packages to Al-Quds Law School will include, among other activities, the following:

English Language Training: This program will be designed according to an assessment of the language capabilities of all second year law students. This training will strengthen the capabilities of university English language faculty, curriculum and materials. For these tasks, Netham will contract AMIDEAST to help test the students, and assist in providing English language courses designed to fit the students' needs and abilities.

Legal Writing: A legal writing team was formed, consisting of five Palestinian lawyers, three of whom are graduates of the AMIDEAST/OSI US LL.M program. This team will assist in developing the course curriculum and materials for Al Quds University. Next quarter, a two-day workshop will be held to draft the table of contents for the legal writing book, delineate efforts among team members and to discuss the adaptation of the US legal writing knowledge to the needs of Palestinians.

Legal Library: Netham has carried out an assessment of the current status of the legal library. Based on this assessment, potential assistance initiatives were recommended, including renovation and procurement of specific equipment and furniture.

Legal Clinic: Netham held several meetings with Al Quds University legal clinic to discuss possible support to the clinic. A number of international consultants will arrive next quarter to work with the legal clinic at Al Quds University and identify collaborative opportunities.

Computer Lab: Netham carried out a needs assessment to evaluate the state of the computer lab. Based on this assessment, potential assistance initiatives were recommended, including renovation, procurement of needed equipment and furniture.

International Humanitarian and Human Rights Institute: Netham held meetings with this institute to compile a list of course books and materials that need to be purchased for the IHL course that begins early next quarter. Two consultants have been identified and are tentatively scheduled to arrive in the West Bank next quarter to teach, develop curricula and conduct a needs assessment on sustainability for the institute.

Supporting Civic Education Initiatives

In line with Netham's objectives to raise awareness of rule of law among school students, Netham's Civic Education Consultant worked closely with the Ministry of Education (MoE) to assess current civic education programs. The consultant conducted several meetings with MoE, teachers, students, and civil society organizations to gather relevant information for the needs assessment.

Based on these meetings, the consultant drafted a proposal for a number of activities, to be conducted in cooperation with MoE. These activities were discussed with the ministry. The recommendations, which were tentatively endorsed by the MoE, included:

- Conducting a comprehensive evaluation of civic education programs, teaching and grading methodologies for grades 1 to 9.
- Evaluating the results, which would be presented and discussed during a roundtable with all stakeholders in the area of education. As an outcome, an action plan to enhance civic education would be developed.
- Develop a civic education manual for teachers and conduct a 'train the trainers' course to create a pool of qualified trainers of civic education.
- Support a public school competition to select the schools and teachers who organized the best rule of law awareness activities. The best schools and teachers would be recognized on Justice Day, on May 29 2009.
- Other activities, such as 'rule of law' summer camps, and a play about rule of law would be explored.

Next quarter, Netham's Civic Education Consultant will prepare a final report including an extensive work plan for upcoming activities. This work plan will be submitted to the USAID and the Ministry of Education for approval prior to implementation.

Supporting Development of Grants Program

This quarter, a short-term consultant was hired as a Grants Specialist to assist the project with strategic planning for a grants program, including the production of a grants manual and development of a one-year action plan, which will be subject to USAID for discussion and approval.

The Grants Consultant developed several versions of the Netham grants manual, incorporating feedback and suggestions from Netham and the DPK home office. The revised version was submitted for review to the DPK home office by the end of the quarter. The draft manual will be submitted to USAID for approval early next quarter. To help kick-off grants activities, the project plans to hire a Grants Manager and Grants Coordinator. The positions have been advertised, and are expected to be filled next quarter.

Newsletter

This quarter, Netham started working on the project's third newsletter which will be produced to keep stakeholders updated on project activities and achievements. Once finalized, the content will be sent to the USAID CTO for review and approval. It is expected that the newsletter will be produced early next quarter.

3. OVERALL PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

Budget Re-alignment

This quarter, Netham received USAID approval for budget re-alignment and expansion of program activities.

Netham Staffing

This quarter, five long-term positions were filled. A Project Coordinator was hired to work closely with Project Managers in implementing various activities supporting the SJC and courts. The coordinator is primarily based at the SJC in order to coordinate project activities with Ramallah court staff and other courts, and to oversee the growing scope of work of project interns at the Notary Public, Civil Judgment, Notification and Court Clerk departments.

Additionally, a Project Statistician was hired to respond to the high demand for analysis of surveys and other data. He will be expected to assist in activities of both project components and to provide needed data for the project's Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan.

A Legal Advisor and a Project Coordinator have been also selected to join Netham to work on Legal Education initiatives. In addition, a Senior Coordinator for Secondary Schools has been hired. Netham has also advertised for several new positions including Grants Manager, Grants Coordinator, and Media and Public Relations Coordinator, which are expected to be filled next quarter.

Staff Retreat

Early this quarter, Netham held a staff retreat with a focus on improving Netham's internal operations, identifying means to enhance internal cooperation and project planning. Additionally, programmatic issues were discussed with the USAID CTO and the Director of the Democracy & Governance Office. A summary report on the retreat was sent to USAID.

Procurement Update

This quarter, Netham has signed a blanket agreement with Kanan and Antar Electronics for translation services, a blanket agreement with the Ambassador and Legacy Hotels, and a blanket purchase agreement with Adwa' Design Co. for printing services. To adapt operations to the project's broadened scope, Netham has sent a Request for Quotations to several rental car agencies for the leasing of two more vehicles.

4. SUMMARY OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES NEXT QUARTER

- Follow-up implementation of the PJI Financial and Administration Systems;
- Finalize the MoJ Needs Assessment Report;
- Develop and implement the Financial System at MoJ
- Finalize the organizational structure and job descriptions of the Ramallah Notification Department (RND);
- Continue exploring potential areas of assistance with the Hebron court and the Hebron municipality court;
- Renovate and equip the Ramallah Notifications Department and procure badges and uniforms for processors;



- Implement the regional judicial training at the Jordanian Judicial Institute for 30 newly appointed judges;
- Carry out English training for judges;
- Proceed with the preparations of the administrative training in the US;
- Follow up on the implementation of the civil and criminal caseload survey at the Ramallah, Nablus and Jenin Courthouses;
- Carry out the national Justice Sector Baseline Survey;
- Continue the development of the Justice Records System at the MoJ;
- Unify Notary Public databases in all West Bank courts;
- Carry out the IT Day activity and prepare PowerPoint presentations;
- Finalize the vision document for Al Mizan 2 software for the SJC and courts;
- Conduct study tour to Jordan on Al Mizan 2;
- Begin implementation of civic education programs
- Complete the renovation and equipping of Netham's office at Al Quds University (AQU) Law School;
- Enhance the AQU computer lab;
- Enhance the AQU library;
- Carry out a needs assessment of the capacity of the English language faculty, curriculum, materials and teaching methodologies.
- Conduct the ITP English language screening for the second year law students;
- Based on results of English language screening of second year law students, initiate the process of designing and offering English language courses;
- Start the drafting process of the legal writing course book, and conduct a workshop focused upon adapting the US curriculum model to the Palestinian context;
- Facilitate a US study tour for two legal writing consultants;
- Organize an introductory workshop for the AQU street law program;
- US consultants to initiate planning for a partnership between AQU and a US law school;
- Finalize the project's grants manual and complete the recruitment process for a grants manager and grants coordinator;
- Publish the project's third newsletter.