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WEST BANK AND GAZA POLITICAL PARTY ASSESSMENT

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COVER MEMO

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Subject: Political Party Assessment

Date: 16 January 2006

Our mission was conducted during the first two weeks of December 2005 at a time of both domestic and international transition for Palestinian leaders and political parties. Local council elections and the scheduled 25 January 2006 PLC elections will result in the likely restructuring of Fatah, the emergence of Hamas as a democratically elected political force and the probable introduction of smaller parties into the PLC. Israeli policy toward the Palestinians may be altered by their coming elections. Current United States government policy prohibits engagement with Hamas and in the last days, the United States House of Representatives passed a Resolution in opposition to Hamas' legitimate participation in Palestinian politics.

During the team's visit we had meetings and conversations with representatives of the US government, USAID program implementers, Palestinian Authority officials, PLC members and staff, Fatah party leaders and activists, the leadership of the CEC, local NGO leaders and others from civil society, opinion researchers and university faculty and students. In accordance with US government policy we did not knowingly meet with any members of Hamas nor did we travel to Gaza.

USAID party assistance to date has been implemented principally by NDI. The Institute's program intent may have included party institutional development but the imperative of the local council and PLC elections impelled a reasonable shift in focus to electoral training. Fatah senior leadership did not engage in these programs, but NDI was able to involve Fatah political activists at the district level. Many of the smaller parties also participated in NDI's programs, but it remains uncertain if any of these parties will have representation in the PLC. Hamas was not engaged by NDI per USAID directive.

With the conclusion of the PLC elections in January and the completion of the local election cycle later in the year, we recommend that future party program shift emphasis from active election-based politics to institutional reform and party structural improvement. We also think there are other USAID programs touching on these issues which should be encouraged to focus some of their programming on party development.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Appreciative Inquiry
CEC	Central Election Commission
COP	Chief of Party
DAI	Development Alternatives, Inc.
DG	Democracy and Governance
GTRP	Growth Through Reform Program
MIFTAH	The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PA	Palestinian Authority
PASSIA	Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs-
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PLPP	Party Legal Reform Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

INTRODUCTION

IMMEDIATE POLITICAL PARTY PROGRAMMING FOR NEW PALESTINIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

This assessment is being conducted just as the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections occur. We feel it imperative that certain interventions in the area of political parties acting in a legislative context be instituted as soon as possible following the election of the new PLC. Given that it could take several months to complete the procurement for implementation of a new party program, we suggest the possibility of assigning these early technical assistance assignments to implementers already on the ground and engaged with the PLC. Currently, DAI is establishing a legislative strengthening program and the National Democratic Institute (NDI) is concluding a political parties program. Either of these programs could be modified to incorporate many of the components that will be presented in this section.

In all likelihood, well more than half of the PLC members elected on January 25, 2006 will be serving in the PLC for the first time. Given the dramatic changes that will occur in the chamber as a result of the new electoral system, the expansion of the size of the membership, and the more competitive party situation, it makes most sense to start fresh in establishing the ground rules for the conduct of the PLC. Much has changed in the chamber since 1996. PLC staff positions have grown from 55 to more than 450. At the very outset, the roles of these staffers must be clarified. There are a variety of options available, but it is vital that there be clarity in the allocation of staff resources. One option would be to declare all staff to be nonpartisan and at the disposal of all PLC members. Frankly, this option is not very practical. The 450 employees may be viewed as de facto Fatah members as Fatah has controlled the bureaucratic apparatus for a decade. We would urge against efforts to purge the entire legislative bureaucracy, however. Much of the institutional memory of the past decade lies with the staff.

If Fatah remains the governing party or the leading party in a governing coalition, then Fatah leaders should secure from the existing staff a cadre of personnel sufficient to manage the affairs of the governing party in both leadership and infrastructure positions as well as in committee staffing. The opposition party (Hamas) or opposition party coalition must also be provided with staffing sufficient to operate as a loyal opposition (shadow government) in the PLC. If Hamas were to capture an outright majority of seats, then Hamas leadership would select its staff from within the existing bureaucracy, if it so desired, or from outside recruitment efforts. Then, Fatah leaders would construct their staffs from remaining personnel or from outside candidates. The exact sizes of these two staffs must be negotiated in good faith by government and opposition forces. While at the outset, there will be significant growing pains associated with the new, larger PLC, the completion of the new Parliament building will alleviate some of the physical constraints on the daily operations of the PLC. If current staffing of the chamber prior to the elections has reached optimal proportionality with membership size, then the 50 percent increase in the PLC membership (88 to 132) should be matched with a corresponding 50 percent increase in PLC staff by adding another 225 positions. This may or may not be feasible, given operating budget constraints. Nonetheless, such an expansion will serve to ease the conflict in creating governing and opposition staffs by providing the opposition with the ability to draw staff from outside the existing pool of PLC personnel.

Beyond the staffing issue, it is also imperative that the newly elected PLC members be provided with technical assistance regarding the proportional allocation of seats on committees as well as on the daily operation of the chamber under overtly partisan conditions. With the high likelihood of at least two or three minor parties gaining seats in the PLC, such PLC members must be instructed on the consequences of joining the government or opposition and the subsequent representation to be expected. In addition, it is very likely that the newly elected parties will have formal caucuses in the chamber. Both governing and opposition

parties will need assistance in the establishment of formal caucuses as well as in the roles that party caucuses play in the formulation of policy agendas and the mobilization of support for or opposition to legislation under debate. The staffing of party caucuses must also be addressed. Here it is vital to instill in both the governing and opposition parties the need for the clear development and articulation of substantive policy agendas that affect the daily lives of Palestinians. These entities should be the policy think-tanks or idea centers for the major parties, with responsibilities to their PLC members as well as the broader party apparatus outside the legislature. Currently, no such entities exist within the PLC. It is vital that such caucus growth is facilitated. Political parties must be institutionalized within the new PLC at the very outset. Too much can happen in the initial six months of operation that may confound later efforts to introduce the importance of disciplined party conduct in the PLC.

I.0 PARTY LEGAL REFORM PROGRAM (PLRP)

Beyond the necessary work on political party development within the PLC in the short term, we believe that there is an important area of longer-term political party development assistance that must be included in the proposed programming. The January 2006 elections will be conducted in the absence of a party law regulating the organization and conduct of political parties. Furthermore, the existing electoral law is viewed by many as an interim statute in need of reform. As well, there are few clear guidelines for the financing of elections in the Palestinian territories. While the existing electoral law establishes the timeframe for political campaigning, the activities of the local elections as well as what one expects to be conflict regarding activities during the PLC elections point to the need for further codification of campaign laws. Tangentially, laws governing the media and the nongovernmental organization (NGO) sector should be in conformity with existing and new reform efforts.

In order to resolve the inconsistencies within existing laws as well as sheer absence of laws in some areas, we propose the creation of a Presidential Commission of Political Party and Election Reform, with commission members named by President Mahmoud Abbas. The Commission would include five members of the PLC—two Fatah, two Hamas, and one independent/minor party member, one member of the Central Election Commission (CEC), one member of the Higher Commission on Local Elections, one Hamas party leader, one Fatah party leader, two NGO leaders (e.g., Muwatin, MIFTAH), two university faculty members with relevant expertise (e.g., PASSIA board members), and two journalists. Like the CEC, individual members of the Commission will not be paid, but members will not have to resign their current positions to serve. It may be necessary to include an ex officio member from the Abbas government for political reasons. In this case, a member of the Commission on Human Rights and NGO Affairs may suffice.

Following the elections, USAID personnel would consult with President Abbas regarding the creation of this Commission. President Abbas will need to demonstrate his own leadership, apart from the successes and failures of his party in the PLC elections. By responding to the election outcome, regardless of the final tallies, in a manner that addresses the systemic weaknesses in the political/electoral system, he places himself in a position to provide leadership (in a bipartisan fashion by naming an equal number of Fatah and Hamas representatives) in the absence of any coherent PLC activity in the weeks following the elections. It is hoped that Abbas will be able to identify truly reform-minded Palestinians of both parties to serve. Once constituted, the Commission will act as an autonomous, independent entity; Abbas will not have veto power over the Commission. It is possible that a confirmation process conducted by the PLC could be added.

The Commission of Political Party and Election Reform will have a date-certain, 18-month timeline in which to produce a series of statutory proposals to the PLC. It is vital that the Commission address the interrelated nature of campaign law, political finance law, electoral law, and political party law (as well as NGO law and media law) by producing legislative proposals that integrate each of these aspects into an omnibus legislative package or a coherent series of reform measures. During the final six months of the two-year program, the Commission will remain in place and the executive director and staff (as well as commissioners) will work closely with the PLC to ensure that the reform proposals presented to the PLC are adopted and made law. These efforts would include formal testimony before the committees of jurisdiction.

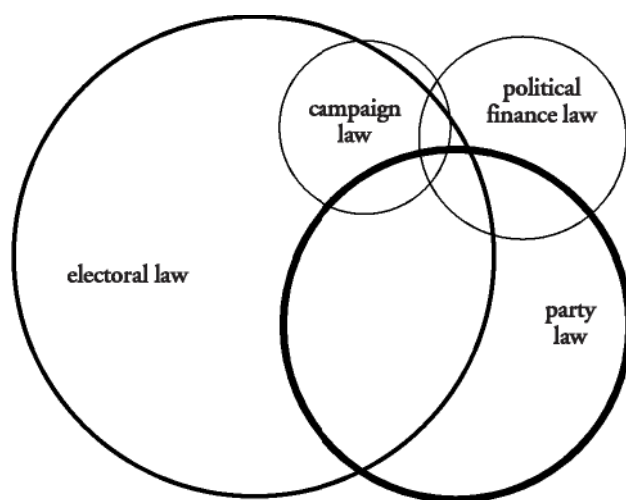
We envision that the successful contractor/entity will identify a senior elections/parties specialist who will serve as the executive director of the Commission as well as supporting staff for the Commission. This model and staffing would be clearly articulated to President Abbas in the negotiation process. Whether or not

USAID fully funds the operation of the Commission or seeks a good faith investment on the part of President Abbas is negotiable. The business of the Commission will include extensive fact-finding regarding the more than 1,000 electoral laws currently in force around the world—a wide variety of global examples of political party law options available to the Commission. The Commission will hold public field hearings in each of the 16 electoral districts (with some being televised); it will seek broader public comment through various media outlets, an interactive website, and established public comment periods. It will produce draft documents to be published on the Commission website as well as in newspapers. Finally, it will deliver to the PLC formal proposals in the form of draft legislation regarding the areas mandated in their charge. President Abbas will be briefed periodically on the progress of the Commission and will offer public comment in support of the enterprise throughout its existence. By raising public attentiveness to the issue, one would hope that the PLC would be constrained in its ability to kill the proposals put forth by the Commission.

The successful contractor/entity will solicit support for this endeavor from other foreign donor organizations, both financially as well as substantively. The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung has produced documents relating to the proposed political party law that failed to be considered by the PLC. Other international party institutes are active in West Bank/Gaza and should be consulted on this effort.

We believe that it is vital that the individual selected to serve as the senior elections/parties specialist be intimately familiar with the wide variety of statutory/regulatory options available in the areas of political party law, election law, campaign law, political finance law and that the successful candidate has a clear understanding of the interrelationships between these types of law, as well as with NGO law as it relates to electioneering prohibitions and allowable activities. The theoretical conceptualization provided by Professor Ken Janda in a recent USAID-funded analysis of political party law will be most useful in assessing the various proposals and reforms (see Kenneth Janda, “Adopting Party Law,” *Political Parties and Democracy in Theoretical and Practical Perspectives* [Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, 2005], 30 pp.). Figure 1 offers a clear representation of the interrelationships between the various types of laws that should be considered by the Presidential Commission.

FIGURE 1: INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LAWS RELATING TO ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PROCESSES



Arriving at the correct balance of complementary laws and regulations in the area of elections and political parties is a delicate process. When focusing on party law, the Commission must decide whether it wishes to adopt a particular form or model of law from the more than 1,000 party laws promulgated globally. Janda codifies these party laws within five models: 1) proscription model, 2) permission model, 3) promotion model, 4) protection model, and 5) prescription model. The Commission may choose to adopt one of these models or develop a hybrid model that best fits the contemporary political context. Beyond the development of a party law, it is important that none of the reform elements is developed in a political vacuum. As is clear

in Figure 1, each of the legal reform elements is related in some way to each of the others. In addition, any reform efforts in the areas of media law and NGO law are also interrelated. It will not be necessary to offer a single omnibus reform proposal that encompasses all of the reform elements, although this may be the form that emerges from Commission deliberations. However, it is necessary that there be clear coordination and interoperability between each of these related reform elements.

We strongly believe that the Presidential Commission format will serve multiple purposes in the democratization process beyond the promulgation of election/party reform laws. A simpler model of providing technical assistance to the PLC committee with jurisdiction over such laws may prove effective, but it would not engage the wider audience of attentive Palestinians and nor would it serve to “socialize conflict” by broadening the scope of the policymaking process.

I.1 PLRP ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Negotiate with President Abbas regarding the creation, composition, and physical location of the Presidential Commission on Political Party and Election Reform.
- Organize the leadership and staff of the Commission.
- Design a clear mission statement of the Commission with input from Commission members.
- Organize the initial meetings of the Commission.
- Conduct public education/outreach campaign to inform citizens of Commission goals, composition, methods of operation, and procedures for public input.
- Conduct Commission field hearings in each of the 16 election districts.
- Design a Commission website for Internet dissemination of Commission schedules, public documents, and interactive component for electronic public comments.
- Establish a media liaison to facilitate the coverage of Commission activities.
- Draft reform proposals in the areas of party law, election law, campaign law, and political finance law.
- Establish public comment periods.

I.2 ANTICIPATED PLRP RESULTS

- Draft reform proposals submitted to PLC prior to end of 18-month period;
- Public awareness of party/election reform efforts and their importance in improving the democratic political process is increased;
- PLC acts to pass Commission-proposed reforms into law;
- Subsequent elections are administered under more credible, democratic legal/statutory guidelines; and
- Public support for the electoral process increases.

I.3 PLRP CANDIDATE INDICATORS

- Comprehensiveness of election and political party reform laws adopted by the PLC;

- Number of public hearings held by the Commission;
- Number of public comments recorded by the Commission;
- Percentage change (+) in public support for the electoral process;
- Percentage change (+) in public support for political parties; and
- Number of formal complaints filed in subsequent local and PLC elections.

2.0 PARTY INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT GROWTH THROUGH REFORM PROGRAM (GTRP)

By any contemporary standard there are, at the moment, no mature democratic Palestinian political parties. Fatah is certainly a political movement whose adherents serve in the current PLC, have recently been elected to local councils and are competing aggressively in the current PLC election campaign. Nevertheless, as a party, Fatah is so closely allied with the larger Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and so interlocked with the governing Palestinian Authority (PA) that it can be considered a political party only in the sense that the Chinese Communist Party is so defined.

Hamas, until quite recently, had virtually none of the attributes of a political party but in the last year has begun a rapid metamorphosis into an effective, if not democratic, electoral organization. Hamas now operates what amount to constituent service centers, names candidates for local and PLC office, makes substantive political statements, produces voter education materials, actively campaigns, runs what appear to be effective election day Get-Out-The-Vote operations, and engages actively in debates over election process and timing. Nevertheless, Hamas is not a modern political party and in large measure still more closely resembles an advocacy organization actively supporting candidates who agree with its stated policies and goals. More problematically, Hamas' current designation as a terrorist organization by the United States and the European Union disqualifies them from inclusion in any democracy and governance (DG) program funded by USAID. It is not reasonable to expect USAID to support political training designed to improve the capacity of Hamas as a political entity when the same lessons ensure arguably to their capacity to mount terror campaigns.

As for the smaller parties, they are essentially candidate-based organizations with little if any following and few will survive the coming PLC elections. The local council election process and the district-based PLC contests essentially preclude minor party success, and the threshold provision of the national party list system virtually assures defeat for most of the small parties or independent candidates.

Nevertheless, the coming year is likely to witness a dynamic shift in Palestinian political fortunes. Fatah is suffering through an internecine struggle between its younger and older factions which will likely result in a permanent split in the party if not its complete dissolution over time. Even running as one combined list and presuming the principals coalesce to form a government, the factions within Fatah will continue to struggle for power and control and it will never again be a hegemonic political/governing movement.

Hamas, if it is to prosper as a party, must modify its more radical positions and separate its armed resistance and political factions. Hamas as a political force in the local councils and the PLC will have to either act responsibly as a loyal opposition or even governing party or eventually fail to command continued electoral support. If Hamas moderates its positions and maintains constituent support, the international community cannot under such circumstances maintain its current non-engagement policy towards Hamas, unless willing to abrogate any continued influence over Palestinian policies and governance.

We think this dynamism in Palestinian politics affords a new opportunity for USAID to engage the parties in development assistance programming aimed at helping them move beyond movements and/or dedicated electoral mechanisms into modern, more democratic constituent and policy-based parties. Aside from acting in the PLC in caucus and committees, the GTRP will work with the parties to, among other tasks, effectively and consistently:

- Engage citizens beyond the electoral cycle,
- Reexamine and better define the roles and functioning of executive committees,
- Improve and expand party office administration,
- Increase membership roles,
- Develop needed constituent programs,
- Learn more sophisticated uses of analytical methods,
- Expand and focus policy and platform development,
- Modernize communications,
- Revamp and legitimize fundraising and disclosure,
- Institute new budget and accounting policies and procedures,
- Reform candidate recruitment and selection, and
- Plan and execute increasingly effective campaigns.

Central to the new initiatives of the GTRP, the parties need to become policy, program and issue based as well as candidate-centered organizations. While Fatah has experience with the challenges of governing, it needs considerable reform to its approach which has been both undemocratic and rife with corruption. Hamas in the next months will face the unfamiliar tasks of governing at the Council level and participating in government in the PLC.

Whatever policies, goals and objectives the major parties now espouse focus on Islam's role in society and occupation/liberation politics. Aside from the broad issue of official corruption, the recent Council elections and the current PLC campaigns are entirely non-substantive in terms of governance. Education, finance, employment, health, public works, and housing, all the domestic political issues one expects to find in a substantive electoral campaign, are largely absent from the debate.

One consequence of this paucity of domestic issue discussion is that once elected, office holders have no constituent-centered basis upon which to govern other than their own generally uninformed views. It would be far preferable in terms of democratic process if party plans and policies were informed by and reflected the parties' ideals and positions as arrived at by engaging the public. Unless and until the parties have positions on issues of governance, citizens will not be able to differentiate between them by other than emotional appeals. Inevitably and unfortunately, parties depending on visceral reactions for votes feel compelled to become more and more strident in order to maintain electoral support.

Generally we would support party strengthening programs that keyed off the parties' elected officials at the local and national level and sought to link them. While we do support dialogue, coordination and activity between party local and PLC officeholders, we discourage USAID from sponsoring programs to directly engage local councils in party programming. It is clear that despite standing for office on a partisan basis, the local councils will, in the main, function as nonpartisan bodies. Any attempt to introduce party politics into their deliberations and management would be unfortunate and contrary to both existing family and tribal

traditions and the strongly expressed opinions of virtually all of our informants. That said, we would encourage active engagement of the parties' local council-elected members in general party development activities but not those directly impacting local governance.

Despite their high visibility and varying degrees of electoral participation and success, the connection between Palestinian parties and their members, voters and constituents is neither broad nor deep. For example, in a study of twelfth grade students in public and private schools in the West Bank and Gaza, published by Alpha International in January 2004, only 35 percent of the students responded affirmatively to the statement: "I wish to join a political party" (see Marwan Awartani et al., *Education for Citizenship: A Study of Civic Attitudes and Perceptions of Twelfth Grade Students* (Ramallah: Alpha International for Research, Polling, and Informatics, 2004, p. 17). Lacking long-standing and robust party structures, supporters have no consistent means to engage with their party other than through the rare electoral event. Rather than acting like long-established organizations, the parties need to begin building mutually dependent relationships as if newly launched.

Identifying potential supporters, listening to their views, writing and adopting a consensus party platform, broadly communicating these concepts, winning elections, advocating policy, writing and adopting law and eventually governing and then continually repeating this process as membership builds, requires a disciplined organizational development model to be successful.

Before the open political model envisioned by the GTRP can be designed, adopted, and acted on there has to be broad agreement among the parties' leaders that the parties' initial or continued success is dependent on the informed will of the voter. Intent and willingness to build democratic political structures is far more important than the ability to do so. The necessary skills and resources can be learned and obtained but the ideals required for genuine participatory party governance require belief. By definition this dictates that the first step in such a party support program requires identification of a democratic leadership cadre.

At their core, parties exist to represent and advocate for their supporters' views, nominate and elect officeholders, and play a role in governance. If internal democratic governance is believed antithetical to political victory it will never be institutionalized. Recognizing and recruiting real democrats or perhaps convincing skeptics requires insight, knowledge, experience, and gravitas. It is difficult to imagine a political environment more vibrant and relevant than those in West Bank and Gaza where politics has and will affect daily life and long-term prospects for the entire society. Given this reality, political leaders will not engage with would-be advisors who are either naïve or uninformed.

Even the perfect political organizer needs methods and practices with which to engage a party's leadership. We think the next party program should use *study circles* and *appreciative inquiry* (AI) as tools to engage these leaders in a democratic policy formulation process and their efforts to restructure the party organization and expand support.

The parties do not fully understand what their current and future supporters consider important or what it is these supporters expect from their association with a party. Existing party structures do afford opportunities for individual conversations and informal small group discussions and the parties do have occasional access to opinion research; it is nevertheless true that the parties do not have active organizational tools to engage their supporters. Even if the parties are correctly gauging their supporters' views, in the absence of organized efforts to engage their constituents the parties face the real risk that they will misjudge what their supporters expect and perhaps more crucially their supporters will not feel invested in the process or in the party.

Study circles have been shown to be an excellent mechanism for reaching group consensus on complex public policy issues. Unlike focus groups which are designed to elicit individual participants' one time views of issues or communications approaches, study circles are a continuing process to engage a whole community to reach consensus on one or more issues. The discipline of conducting study circles and using their results to guide organizational goals and objectives has been refined in over a century of experience throughout the world. In Sweden, for example, almost all public policy discussion and decision making is done through study circles. Typically, study circles are used by governments or civil society organizations but this approach should have

appeal to any political party interested in active and continuing engagement with its supporters. Study circles would not only provide parties with an accurate gauge of their supporters' views but would also serve as a compelling and dynamic organizing tool.

We envision that these study circles would be organized to include party activists at the local and national levels, but would also be organized separately to include youth elements of the party movements. Youth organizations are already established within each of the major parties. Given the relative youth of the population of the Palestinian territories, with the vast majority of the population under the age of 25, it is vital to instill democratic values as well as conflict resolution skills in the next generation of political leaders. We would also envision that study circles will engage in substantive debates regarding the broader questions of party and electoral reform and that these debates will be integrated into the activities of the Presidential Commission of Political Party and Election Reform outlined earlier in this document.

It is clear that the parties do need to know what their supporters are thinking and it is crucial that these supporters feel engaged in this process but party leaders also need to know what works organizationally and what does not. Typically parties rely on their leaders' notions of what constitutes good political organizational theory. If the organization is patently dysfunctional, the party might turn to outside advisors to consult on how best to structure party activities.

We want to introduce the mechanism of *appreciative inquiry* as an alternative means for the parties to learn best organizational practices. AI is a facilitated approach to organizational change that has been used successfully by government, civil society and many large corporations over the decades since its initial invention as an organizational development tool. Unlike study circles which engage supporters to reach policy consensus, AI is aimed at those expert in the chosen subject in order to reach conclusions about best practice. For instance, small groups of party leaders and managers could use an AI process moderated by a trained facilitator to discuss and better understand the best practices for how the party should engage constituents, raise funds, manage campaigns or virtually any organizational undertaking that the participants, by merit of experience and training, are expert in. If, at the outset, it is determined that the initial AI participants are not in fact expert, then new groups can be assembled or external actors thought expert could be engaged, for example, managers of a civil society organization(s).

The introduction of study circles at both the local and national level to involve and energize large numbers of new party activists in policy discussions and consensus building and the use of AI as an organizational development tool are innovative and flexible mechanisms to lead the parties to conclusions about how better to grow and manage modern dynamic political organizations. Among other attributes they should be attractive organizational mechanisms to younger members and women.

The GTRP would use the process of and policy results generated by study circles as the focus of communications efforts designed to fully engage the electorate in these activities. The very recruiting of study circle participants is one step in new member recruiting and the consensus policies developed by the study circles should strike a responsive chord with a broader potential base of support. The communications methods themselves as well as the new party structures and operations should be more effective if the results of the AI process are used to identify best practice in reforming the internal organization. These reforms should, in turn, attract more activists and expand the favorability ratings of the parties.

These recommended policy development and organizational design tools should, in the first instance, be as nearly organic to the Palestinian political parties as possible. As such, we recommend that the lead implementer of this technical assistance program be a Palestinian organization supported by an experienced USAID implementer. One possible construct would be to recruit a Chief of Party (COP) from the Palestinian group assisted by an expatriate Deputy COP. We expect that a local lead group would have to augment their own resources with short-term technical assistance from their implementing partner(s) but to the extent possible this program should be designed and managed internally, as this will greatly facilitate its acceptance by and integration into the political parties.

2.1 GTRP ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Develop rationale for democratic party governance in West Bank/Gaza context. Case study examples and practical advice will be used to persuade Palestinian political leaders that internal democratic governance can lead to a more robust party.
- Recruit GTRP participants. Design interview guide as focus for activist/leader recruiting. This “hiring” process should be rational rather than idiosyncratic, and decisions should be based on at least some objectively verifiable indicators.
- Introduce study circle methodology as tool for engaging constituents and defining issue consensus.
- Identify and train study circle facilitators.
- Organize study circles among existing supporters with emphasis on participation by women and youth. Attempt to organize study circles among experienced older members, PLC and local council members, and non-office holding national leadership.
- Develop mechanisms to use study circle consensus as basis for party positions.
- Verify wider appeal of study circle findings through opinion research.
- Design and implement communications efforts to inform the broader population about these processes and use continuing study circles to recruit and involve new supporters.
- Develop appreciative inquiry as tool to identify existing party organizational best practice. Use AI process with internal and external expert panels to gain knowledge of how to modify existing party structure.
- Use AI findings on best party structures as subject for study circles and use AI to debate consensus from study circles for issues of practicality, legality, etc.
- Modify party structures to reflect findings and consensus from AI exercises and study circles.

2.2 ANTICIPATED GTRP RESULTS

- New cadre of younger men and women engaged in party activities,
- Greater numbers of women active in party politics,
- Study circles established and self-generating,
- Party programs and policies reflect constituents’ views as verified by opinion research, and
- Party structures more democratic and effective.

2.3 GTRP CANDIDATE INDICATORS

- Pre and post demographic analysis of party members, activists, leaders;
- Party favorability as measured by opinion research;
- Number of active study circles;
- Number of study circle participants;

- Number of AI sessions and demographics participants;
- Increase in favorable constituent view of party organization as measured by study circles and opinion research; and
- Increase in party communications budget in non-election periods.

3.0 INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING

Recognizing that US government (USG) policy currently prohibits even indirect engagement with Hamas, there are certain practical and political realities of future party programs that demand the possibility of all party participation if they are to be successful. Principal among these are: 1) the likelihood that excluding Hamas risks increasing their popular support at the expense mainly of Fatah; 2) such exclusion risks fostering a continued focus on the issues of occupation, liberation politics and multi-national relations instead of good governance; and 3) without Hamas support for necessary election and party institutional reform measures, these are likely to fail even if instituted.

- Hamas is the governing party in some number of local governments and a governing partner in others.
- Hamas is a fact of future Palestinian national government as they will win a substantial number of PLC seats. It is not beyond question that Hamas could command a governing majority or lead a governing coalition.
- The Government of Israel will continue to work with local governments controlled or partially governed by Hamas-elected councilors.
- The Gaza gate opening formalities have been accomplished with Hamas as a full partner in their implementation.
- Hamas' stated positions if not their Charter will continue to moderate.
- Fatah's Charter and armed factions are viewed as comparable to those of Hamas by many Palestinians who remain puzzled by the USG's distinction between them.

Given these observations, it is our strongly held view that party programming that fails to offer the opportunity for all parties to participate will be so unproductive and even dysfunctional that we would recommend against these programs under such conditions.

APPENDIX A. LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted between December 13, 2005 and December 19, 2005 in Jerusalem, Ramallah, and Gaza (by telephone) and in Washington, DC prior to and following the field interviews with the following persons:

Peter A. Wiebler Director – DG Office USAID West Bank/Gaza
Marc J. Mellinger, Political Officer, United States Consulate General
Ibrahim Eid, Political Specialist, United States Consulate General
Katherine Hoffman, Public Diplomacy Specialist, United States Consulate General

Michael Murphy, Country Director, National Democratic Institute
Vladimir Pran, Elections Advisor, National Democratic Institute
Stuart Krusell, Resident Program Director, International Republican Institute
Colin Stewart, Director, West Bank/Gaza Field Office, The Carter Center
Jarrett Blanc, Chief of Party, International Foundation for Election Systems
Garrett Doer, Chemonics—Tamkeen
Mohammed Almbaid, PLC Project Director, Development Alternatives, Inc.
Carmen Lane, Interim Director, PLC Project, Development Alternatives, Inc.

Jamal Shobaki, Chairman, Higher Commission on Local Elections, PLC Member
Abed Wahdan, Ministry of Youth and Sport, Director of Youth Exchange Dept., Fatah
Muhannad Shehadch, Association President, Jerusalem Youth Forum, Fatah
Eng. Ahmed Abu Hashish, Technical Department, PLC
Ali Nazzal, Fatah Youth Leader
Fahme Zegher, Fatah Youth Leader
Abdel Rahmans Bseso, Senior Manager, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ammar Dwaik, Chief Electoral Officer, Central Elections Commission
Hanna Nasir, Chairman, Central Elections Commission
Robert Patterson, International Observer Advisor, Central Elections Commission
George Giacaman, Director, MUWATIN
Faisal Awartani, Chief Executive Officer, Alpha International
Khalil Shikaki, Director, Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research
Munther Dajani, Director, Peace and Democracy Studies Center, Al-Quds University
Basem Bushnoq, Executive Director, Palestinian Independent Commission for Human Rights
Abdel Ashout, Executive Director, PINGO
Lama Hourani, Executive Director, General Union of Political Women
Focus Group of 12 Al-Quds University graduate students
Ken Wollack, President, NDI (DC)
Larry Garber, Former Mission Director USAID WB/G (DC)
Eric Bjornlund, Former NDI WB/G Chief of Party (DC)

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