

**“Disseminating Information and  
Enhancing Grassroots Public  
Involvement in the ongoing PNA  
Reform Process”**



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## **Political Overview**

Many developments took place in 2004 as a result of the illness and death of late President Yassir Arafat who passed away on 11/11/2004. The Palestinian people dealt with the matter in a peaceful and civilized way when Mahmoud Abbas was appointed Chairman of PLO as stated in the PLO law, and Rawhi Fattuh PNA President, as stated by the Palestinian basic law. The presidential elections were scheduled for 9/1/2005, as stated by the law, to be followed by legislative elections within a period of less than six months.

Out of the seven candidates in the presidential election race, Mahmoud Abbas was elected President with a majority of 62%, and now preparations are underway for the legislative elections and to accomplish the local government elections. These current developments are positive as laws were respected and everyone adhered to the basic law when transferring powers in a peaceful manner after the death of President Arafat.

Concerning local elections, the first phase was held on December 23, 2004 in 26 locations in the West Bank and on January Gaza Strip. The second phase was held on May 5, 2005 in 84 locations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The third phase is scheduled for August 2005. Both the first and second phases of the elections were held with integrity and transparency in spite of criticism against organizational and functional measures adopted in the voting centers. There was wide participation in both elections.

Since Abu Mazen was elected the political situation has been developing positively, with the President tackling challenging issues including Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip and a truce with Israel following an agreement with the different Palestinian factions to promote the peace process. As a result of that agreement, the Sharm el Sheikh Summit was held with the participation of President Abbas, Jordanian Monarch, President Mubarak and the Israeli premier. The summit yielded a number of achievements that included Israel's agreement to stop assassinations and targeted killings in addition to releasing 500 Palestinian prisoners.

The Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) elections are scheduled for 17/7/2005. However the electoral law of 1995 is yet to be amended due to many criticisms by the civil society organizations (CSOs) and political parties against the first reading of the draft amended law. These organizations launched a campaign calling for adopting a 50%-mixed electoral law with 50% for the proportional law and 50% for the majority law, in addition to making the minimum age for nomination 25 instead of 30 years of age. The campaign is also calling for ensuring 20% of the proportional seats as a quota for women.

The Palestinian cabinet was formed following a political crisis that resulted in a new government. For the first time this new government was established for the first time according to experience and academic qualifications. Most of the ministers were non-PLC members.

## **Introduction**

A key component of building the public confidence in and momentum towards overall reform is providing information to the public concerning the ongoing reform efforts. While reform is a big process, providing updates to citizens about what is taking place and how they can get involved is important. To do this, CFI will establish a Reform Monitoring Committee. This committee will meet each month and will prepare detailed reports about the ongoing reform efforts. These reports will be based upon objective criteria regarding the ongoing reform process and will seek to establish performance benchmarks for reform that are easily recognizable to the non-expert. For example, one aspect of reform of a government department might be establishing job descriptions for all of the employees in that department. If the government department agreed to issue these descriptions within three months, and if it complied with the request within the given time period, it would be given an "A" rating. If it only provided 50% of the request within the given time period, then it would receive an "F" rating. Each month, specific reform issues could be monitored and the public can be informed of the specific step-by-step developments taking place.

It is the responsibility of the Reform Monitoring Committee to meet monthly and issue these reports concerning the seven areas of reform. The committee will have a sub-committee for each of the reform subjects and each sub-committee will be responsible for its individual subject in the overall report. Initial performance benchmarks can be established by consulting qualified academic experts working on reform.

## Summary

During the reporting period, CFI successfully conducted 14 workshops and 14 town hall meetings according to the 'Grant activity implementation plan' throughout the West Bank districts. These districts include:

Jerusalem and Jericho

Hebron

Nablus

Bethlehem

Ramallah and Salfeet

Tulkarim and Qalqilya

Among the participants were an expert speaker, decision makers (PNA and PLC representatives), community leaders, local political leaders, professionals, civil society institutions' representatives and ordinary citizens. The ordinary citizen's category included professionals, university students, home makers, women from age 17 and up and youth men aged from 17 to 35.

This report illustrates that the workshops and town hall meetings conducted achieved the project's objective by disseminating information and enhancing grassroots public involvement in the ongoing PNA reform process. From the project's activities we can conclude that Palestinians are seriously concerned about the PNA's reform process and its efforts, and disseminating information about the reform process through public meetings, electronic and written means have been achieved.

Also, Local Reform Committee Meetings were held and these committees organized and held very important activities related to reform which are described in detail below.

## Project Specific Objectives

**1<sup>st</sup> Objective:** Educate Palestinian citizens in the women/youth sectors about the reform process

**Indicator:** Achieved objective number one; CFI held 14 workshops and 14 town hall meetings, published 3,000 informational handouts,



produced monthly reports in seven project regions and provided grading of the ongoing reform process through the work of a Reform Monitoring Committee.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Objective:** Establish local benchmarks about what local women/youth citizens want from reform efforts

**Indicator:** Achieve objective number two; CFI held 14 workshop events and 14 town hall meetings, produced recommendations from all of the events and forwarded them to local reform committees and to a Reform Monitoring Committee and established these benchmarks.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Objective:** Disseminate information about the reform process through public meetings, electronic and written means.

**Indicator:** Achieve objective number three; CFI produced 3,000 handouts, monthly reports from seven project regions, and monthly reports from the Reform Monitoring Committee about the ongoing reform process. All of these reports were distributed via the CFI website and through the media through normal media releases.

## **Project's Evaluation**

### **Project Activities**

#### **Workshops**

During the reporting period 14 workshops were held. The workshop events are designed to provide information to local citizens about the ongoing reform efforts. The workshops also focus on providing trainer guided environments for defining, clarifying, structuring, addressing and evaluating specific problems that need to be addressed by the reform efforts. With the guidance of the trainer, the workshop attendees can formulate the recommendations needed regarding the specific reform action to be taken. With the ongoing support of the contracted trainer and working with the local Reform Committee, these recommendations formulated in these workshops can be undertaken in the project.

### **Town Hall Meetings**

During the reporting period 14 town hall meetings were held. The Town Hall Meetings are important contact points where the local leaders, civil society activists, business leaders, political party leaders and the local community come together to meet in the light of the public and the media. It is in these environments where specific events take place regarding reform to move the individual reform efforts forward. These events put pressure on the local decision makers to act to address public concerns. With the cooperation of the Local Reform Committees, local project coordinators and volunteers, the main project coordinator, the media, civil society and the government sector all working together, these events help to move issues forward to resolution by highlighting the public's request for reform in a particular sector.

### **Local Reform Committees**

There are seven Local Reform Committees. These committees are made up of individuals previously active in past reform focused projects, local leaders and decision makers, members of NGOs and clubs, political parties, syndicates and those from the education and private sector. Women represent 50% of the participants in these committees. Due to the need to involve younger people in the political process, the reform committees engage the population under the age of 40 in this project. These committees are the local voice of the community and interface with local and national decisions makers regarding the reform points of most interest to the subject community.

### **Local Reform Committee Actions**

The Local Reform Committees meet each month and discussed the ongoing reform efforts. These reports are based upon objective criteria regarding the ongoing reform process and seek to establish performance benchmarks for reform that are easily recognizable to the non-expert.

Each month the report published via the Internet and distributed to the news media for rapid public dissemination. A quarterly newsletter and a yearly final report to better distribute the information throughout the existing Palestinian civil society sector and among local community activists working on reform will supplement these monthly reports.

In addition, the CFI website provides updated information on the activities carried out by the organization.

## **Project Activities**

### **First Interim Period**

#### **First month – February26- March25, 2004 (preparation and staff selection)**

The first month was characterized by the initial selection process for the project staff. At the time that we began this project, we selected to utilize our most experienced field staff to conduct these project activities on a part time basis. It made the most sense to enlist our existing trained staff to conduct the project activities. These individuals represent CFI's most senior field staff.

Other activities during this period included:

1- Appointment of field coordinators: CFI asked part of its field coordinators to start working on this project. However, CFI appointed a new project coordinator at its headquartering office in Al-Ram to assist the program coordinator in its work concerning this project.

#### **Second month – March26-April25, 2004**

Next, according to the set plan, we worked on the following:

- 1- Printed materials on Reform: CFI worked on gathering information on reform through the seven reform sectors that we wanted to touch: the administrative, financial, local government, economic, judicial, civil society and elections sectors.
- 2- Committees Formation: Local reform committees were formed in seven districts: Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Ram Allah, Nablus, Jenin, and Tulkarem.

The committee formation is based on project objectives and represented the sectors targeted (youth and women). We contacted different institutions, youth movements, women committees and institutions in the seven different geographical areas including rural, refugee camps, and urban agglomerations.

CFI also worked on forming an extended committee that included civil society organizations, and political parties in Ram Allah to form the Higher Reform Committee. This committee is responsible to follow up with decision makers on any updates and/or improvements and achievements on the reform process.

Note: The committees met three times since time of establishment.

### **Third month –April26-May25, 2004**

Training Workshops: Four workshops took place in addition to two town hall meetings as planned:

#### **1- Qalqelia Workshop:**

Location: Qalqelia City

Date: May24, 2004

Participants: 35 persons

Description: the participants represented different women and civil society organizations and have had diverse backgrounds and interests. Some of them are political leaders and activists and others are civil society activists.

Workshop Summary: Legislative Council Member Uthman Ghashash spoke about the Reform Process and the Role of the Legislative Council in this process. The member pointed out several topics for discussion on two main aspects of reform:

- 1- The financial reform: the member reviewed what has taken place at this level and the relation between the Legislative Council and the Ministry of Finance.
- 2- The administrative reform: the member pointed out that a lot still has to be done in this regard. He also mentioned that there are several obstacles that the Legislative Council is to pass to achieve the administrative reform. Appointing new people into the government system for example does not help proceeding in this regard.
- 3- The judicial reform: there is a consensus that the judiciary system is to be reformed and it seems that no one is trying to stop any attempt to reform this important authority.
- 4- The economic reform: the Palestinian Authority budget is to develop mechanism to assist the poor and vulnerable people.

- 5- The local government reform: there many developments and positive steps in this sector. It seems that the local elections will take place soon. The national elections law is delayed due to political reasons.

Discussions: the participants' discussion revolved around the following major issues:

- 1- mal-performance and lack of qualified people in the government
- 2- individual decisions are dominant and people rarely refer to legislative, judicial and government laws and regulations
- 3- there is a pressing need to create a specialized training institutions for judges
- 4- national and local elections are to be held soon
- 5- Modern legislations and updating the family law is important. Reserving the women quota is necessary
- 6- Division of powers
- 7- Unification of security bodies and passing laws to regulate their work and relations with others

**Specific Issues:**

Health problems were discussed and participants pointed out lack of response from the Ministry of Health on issues like the medical staff, the hospitals, drugs, and transfers. These issues are vital for reform and decision makers are to respond to the public. Some participants questioned the implementation mechanism for what is planned and the prioritization mechanisms within the Ministry of Health.

**2- Tubas Workshop:**

Location: Tubas

Date: May19, 2004

Participants: 65 people

Description: Participants came from different parts of Jenin area including east of Jenin and Tubas. The participants also represent a wide spectrum of population including women, youth, political and civil society leaders and activists and academics.

Workshop Summary: our impression is that the workshop was excellent. Participants followed the agenda set and discussed several issues related to the reform process and what has been achieved in this regard so far different levels:

- 1- the financial: unified procedures are adopted; Ministry of Finance supervises all financial issues and transactions; Commitment to present the annual budget
- 2- the judicial: many changes took place since the reform process started
- 3- economic reform: reorganization and restructuring of the Ministry; encouraging the investment
- 4- local government: amendment to law on local elections and draft laws on national elections

**Discussions:**

Discussions included the following main points:

- 1- any reform process should start by political reform
- 2- mechanism to fight corruption
- 3- political parties role in the reform process
- 4- women participation in the political decision making process
- 5- public participation in the reform process: subjects of reform, priorities, and division of responsibilities

**Specific Issues:**

- 1-importance to held local elections
- 2-decentralization at the local level
- 3-women empowerment and quota systems
- 4-transparency is to be enforced

Outcomes and recommendations:

- form a committee to follow on the local elections process and meeting with Minister of local government or his deputy. In addition, they have to meet with Jenin Legislative Council Members to discuss topics of interest
- a group of women coordinate for an annual meeting to discuss mechanisms to encourage decision makers adopt the gender quota system

**3- Nablus Workshop:**

Location: Nablus, Workers Union Hall

Date: June15, 2004

Participants: 44 people

Description: representatives of civil society organizations, unions, and political leaderships and included both sexes.

Workshop Summary: discussions on reform took place and participants mentioned the importance of setting a time-frame and mechanisms of following up and monitoring. Discussions on who set the plan and the qualifications needed

Discussions and recommendations:

- 1- reform is important to end occupation
- 2- The Authority is to set a time frame for the reform process
- 3- Reform is to be linked to a development plan
- 4- The local and national elections are to take place soon
- 5- Legislative council role includes putting a reform plan within specific time and with to measure the government commitment

**Outcomes:**

- 1- Increase awareness among participants on reform related issues
- 2- Reform is dammed needed
- 3- Set out agendas to meet with Legislative Council Members and ministerial committees on reform

**Specific Issues:**

The problem of Nablus municipality was discussed. Participants agreed on the importance to hold elections as soon as possible.

#### **4- Hebron Workshop:**

Location: Hebron, Cultural Forum

Date: June26, 2004

Participants: 35 people

Description: representatives of civil society organizations, and political parties (Fateh, National Front, Peoples' Party), academics, and community leaders and included both sexes.

**Workshop Summary:**

Participants agreed that reform is very important.

In addition, participants agreed that the public did not play their adequate role in the reform process.

the workshop initiative is excellent  
the reform process is to be institutionalized through political parties, civil society organizations' active involvement in the process. The legislative council is to resume its role in the process as well.

**Discussions and recommendations:**

- 1- reform is important to end occupation
- 2- The Authority is to set a time frame for the reform process
- 3- Reform is to be linked to a development plan
- 4- The local and national elections are to take place soon
- 5- Legislative council role includes putting a reform plan within specific time and with to measure the government commitment
- 6- The importance of setting a time frame for reform

**Recommendations:**

- 1- enforce the role of the Legislative Council
- 2- Quick Approve for the Constitution
- 3- Held the national and local elections
- 4- Restructuring the Judicial Authority to play its adequate role
- 5- Stop violations on public freedom through passing laws and setting regulations

**Outcomes:**

- 1- Increase awareness among participants on reform related issues
- 4- Realization of the magnitude of affect that could be played by participants in this regard
- 5- Importance of involving more people in the reform process

**Specific Issues:**

- 1- The problem of Hebron, Thahriay, Noba, Soreef and BeitUmmar municipalities were discussed.
- 2- The role of the local committees in the reform is vital



### **Town Hall meetings:**

This town hall meeting idea came out upon request from the Reform Monitoring Committee. Their priorities included:

- 1- lack of hospital services
- 2- lack of experience among medical staff
- 3- external transfers
- 4- Health centers in rural areas

### **1<sup>st</sup> Town Hall Meeting:**

Date: June 21, 2004

Topic: Health System in Qalqelia

Attendees: 160

Speakers:

- Dr. Anan Masri, Deputy minister of Health
- Maroof Zahran, Qalqelia mayor
- Dr. Mohammad Aboshi, Medical Relief Services
- Dr. Ziad Sarafandi, Public Health Director, Qalqelia

Moderator: Fa'q Mezied, Reform Committee Coordinator

### **Discussions:**

Maroof Zahran, Qalqelia mayor specified the health services centers in Qalqelia: UNRWA hospital, Daweesh Nazzal hospital, and private medical centers. He also pointed out the needs and priorities in the sector as follows:

- 1- a government hospital; fully equipped
- 2- increase capacity among medical staff
- 3- cooperation between governmental, non-governmental and private health institutes

Dr. Mohammad Aboshi, Medical Relief Services mentioned that the Separation Wall divided Qalqelia into 4 parts. And that the UNRWA hospital provides services to refugees and all other patients visit either the government hospital or the non-government medical centers. He specified needs as follows:

- 1- rehabilitation of the medical centers especially labs
- 2- family planning services are not available\
- 3- pregnancy services and safe home services are not available
- 4- diabetes services are not available

- 5- lack of drugs
- 6- lack of 24 hours service systems
- 7- transfer mechanisms are not clear and not transparent

Dr. Ziad Sarafandi, Public Health Director of Qalqelia discussed what has been achieved in his field as increase number of health staff and facilities. He put needs as follows:

- 1- hospital establishment
- 2- capacity increase among medical staff
- 3- up-grading medical equipment

Dr. Anan Masri, Deputy Minister of Health, promised to create the hospital soon. He also mentioned that the ministry is aware of the public's needs and took them into consideration during planning. He added that the Ministry of Health is transparent but the President has the right to pass some cases.

Discussions were based and revolved around the raised points. Many people pointed out examples on the lack of adequate health services.

**Recommendations:**

- 1- create a fully equipped government hospital
- 2- capacity building for the medical staff
- 3- upgrading the health district office
- 4- increase the number of medical centers in the rural areas
- 5- drug security
- 6- cooperation with the private and non-government sector
- 7- involve the public with discussions on the Ministry of Health Plan

**Outcome:**

A three persons committee was established and included:

- 1- Fa'eq Mezied
- 2- Dr. Salah Qubba
- 3- Dr. Zuhair Ashour

They agreed to discuss important issues on reform.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Town Hall Meeting:**

Place: Tubas

Date: June26, 2004

Topic: Reform of the local government

Attendees: 145

Speakers:

- 1- Dr. Husain Arraj, Deputy Minister of Local Government
- 2- Nader Kharraz, attorney
- 3- Ghassan Daraghmeh, Director of local government
- 4- Hatem Sawaftah, Sports Club Director

Absentee: Legislative Council Member Hasham Daraghmeh

Dr. Husain Arraj, Deputy Minister of Local Government mentioned that the ministry works on reform and intends to hold the elections very soon. Also, he mentioned that they passed an amendment to the current law on decentralization.

Nader Kharraz, attorney emphasized that elections are an integral part of democracy and that appointing people in local government is to stop. In addition, the number of local government councils is to shrink.

Ghassan Daraghmeh, Director of local government mentioned that the elections are to take place soon and the participants are to get active on registration and elections.

Hatem Sawaftah, Sports Club Director said that an overall reform is to take place and the whole process is to start by elections as the whole reform start point is political.

**Recommendations:**

- 1- setting date for local elections
- 2- seize the appointee policy
- 3- formation of regional councils
- 4- enforcing women quotas (20% on the local level)
- 5- amendment of the local councils law to enforce decentralization

**Outcomes:**

- 1- meeting with legislative council member
- 2- visit the Minister of local government

## **Fifth Month: June 26 – July 25, 2004**

Training Workshops: One workshop took place as scheduled.

### **Workshop**

**Location:** Jerusalem Abu Deiss

**Date:** July 23, 2004

**Participants:** 37 NGO, students unions, political parties, social animators and women institutions' representatives.

**Description:** The participants represented different women and civil society organizations and have had diverse backgrounds and interests. Some of them are political leaders and activists and others are civil society activists

### **First Session: Legal aspects:**

Head of PLC's parliamentary research unit Dr. Issam Abdeen spoke about the reform in the judicial system by saying obstructions and obstacles that lead to limitations in the judicial system. There are two factors;

### **Second Session: Civil Society Reform:**

Mr. Shqeerat spoke of the historical role of the syndicates, such as NGOs and he elaborated on its role in the Palestinian struggle. Since the establishment of the PNA, the syndicates' mandate did not change causing confusion in their roles and duties because they change their old view of the struggle mandate. Mr. Shqeerat cited an example, saying the syndicates are still unable to have a unified position on the women quota issue in the upcoming elections.

#### **i. Lessons learnt and results:**

- a. NGOs need a comprehensive reform.
- b. Election date must be set as soon as possible.
- c. Local elections must be held as a first step.
- d. Conduct general elections as a basis for comprehensive reform.

Mr. Salah Badr commented that everyone diagnoses the problem as only of the government and not seeing that the people as part of it because they keep silent on corruption schemes, and don not voice their objection and demand accountability. Also opposition parties

don't assume their duties and take measures against such corruption. In addition, Palestinian scholars and NGOs don't analyze the cause of the problem instead they analyze the problem's criticism.

**ii. Lessons learnt and results:**

- a. All institutions, including political parties, must be more active.
- b. Palestinian society should be more focused on work instead of criticism.
- c. There is a need to revolutionize Palestinian societal concepts by adopting positive governing concepts.

**Third Session:**

Palestinian political reform and the role of political parties.

The crisis is a historical and structural of nature, since the beginning of the Palestinian struggle Mr. Yasser Arafat adopted the fighters' democracy policy where one person leads the movement.

**i. Lessons learnt and results:**

The Palestinian leftist factions must end their internal crisis.

Establish a collective unified Palestinian leadership.

The national leadership is the most capable of establishing a comprehensive national program that includes the different political parties and NGOs.

Political parties should take their lead role in the civil society.

All those under the three authorities are directly benefiting from the current situation and will not work for effecting change.

**Reform Committee Meetings:**

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Jenin / Toubass

**Date:** June 30, 2004

**Participants:** Entire staff of Woman Affairs Institutions and 10 member civil society institutions representatives.

**Description:** The meeting was conducted to evaluate the follow up on Toubass THM recommendations on Ministry of local government and elections reform. Also to distribute tasks of lobbying in order to

establish a definite dates for local and general elections. Committee members held several meetings with PLC members as part of an effort to lobby for women's membership quota in the PLC.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Jerusalem

**Date:** July 2, 2004

**Participants:** 6 civil society institutions representatives

**Description:** In the meeting the committee discussed the preparation of conducting a workshop about reform and its priorities on July 24, 2004. The committee decided on two main speakers that are going to be invited for the workshop. The workshop's agenda was prepared and logistical matters were organized. The committee followed up with the Ministry of local government on women's quota in local elections at the same time committee members met with women grassroot organizations in an effort to rally a lobbying support for the cause.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Bethlehem

**Date:** July 11, 2004

**Participants:** 9 member civil society institutions representatives from Ibda'a Institution

**Description:** Performed coordination of tasks for the reform workshop to be conducted on August 5, 2004. Each representative of the committee to provide three academic or political party representative names to participate in July 17, 2004 workshop. The committee distributed an amendment memorandum and letter on election reform to all committee members. Raji Odeh followed up with Dar Al-Nadwah to organize for the upcoming workshop. In addition, there was a discussion opened between the committee members for improved relations between them.

**Reform Committee Meeting****Location:** Ramallah / Salfet**Date:** July 15 - 17, 2004**Participants:** 13 member civil society institutions representatives.

**Description:** In the meeting the committee decided to postpone the workshop and the THM due to unstable political situation (kidnapping of Ghazi Jabali) because many decision makers and speakers refrained from participating in these activities. Therefore, the committee decided to visit various political parties and PNA institutions to follow up on the reform activities; the committee was divided into groups and tasks were divided among the groups.

**Reform Committee Meeting****Location:** Hebron**Date:** July 20, 2004**Participants:** 10 civil society institutions representatives that are members of the Union of Palestinian Woman Committees.

**Description:** A discussion was opened on how to effectively influence the decision makers on local, PLC and presidential elections reform. The committee planned for THM on elections reform and the members distributed tasks among themselves. The committee agreed to start a signature collection campaign in or to change the appointed local council during the first stage of the local council elections.

**Sixth Month: July 26 - August 25, 2004**

Training Workshops and Town Hall Meetings: two workshops and two town hall meetings took place.

**Town Hall Meeting:** Local councils elections**Location:** The Graduates League, Hebron**Date:** July 29, 2004**Participants:** 180 males and females**Description:**

Minister of Local Government Jamal Shawbaki: Local and national elections are a genuine Palestinian demand and they serve as the beginning for any reform process. However, the first step is to address our problems, then we should embark on holding the

elections in all Palestinian districts including Jerusalem.. The PLC is currently debating which voting system to adopt for the upcoming elections. People want to change the current local councils committees and I believe that change can be achieved through elections. We are working on amending the elections law and adopting a special quota for women.

In addition, we are concerned about possible Israeli intervention, so we asked all foreign ambassadors and representatives to take action. We are also concerned about our ability to hold elections where we can't mobilize police to protect the process, but still this can be overcome with the cooperation of local families to ensure an undisturbed electoral process.

There was participation from the attendees concerned about issues such as corruption, elections and reform. Mr. Mohammad Hourani, a PLC member, replied to these issues in detail. In addition, Minister of local government addressed these issues in details and proposed possible solutions.

**Lessons Learnt and results:**

1. Accelerate holding elections for all local councils especially in Hebron city.
2. Work on bringing corrupt officials at local councils to a court of law.
3. Amend the elections law, print it and the local councils law to distribute them to citizens.
4. Adopt the proportional electoral system for the general elections and set a date for holding these elections regardless of Israel's or the Quartet's consent.
5. Work on supplying electricity to the areas of Hebron.
6. Adopt the Women quota in the local council elections.
7. Invite the different Palestinian political parties and factions to participate in the local and general elections.

**Workshop:** The Palestinian reform.

**Date:** Thursday 5/8/2004

**Time:** 10 am to 3 pm.

**Place:** International Center.

**Participants:** 35 female and 20 male.



**Moderator:** Sulaiman Abu Dayyeh.

**Sulaiman Abu Dayyeh:**

The wide demand for the reform process is a natural reaction to the ongoing lawlessness in the Palestinian society. It is also a response to the passive attitude of the authority in running the citizens' social affairs and to the high government turnover creating high level of ineffectiveness.

Reasons preventing the reform processes that aren't related to the Israeli occupation include:

Tackle the overflow of employment at government apparatus.

Tackle inflation in the number of security apparatus and lack of clear job description.

Enact the laws passed by the PLC.

Solve the conflict over powers between the President and Prime Minister.

Ratify drafted laws discussed by the PLC.

**Lessons learnt and results:**

1. Have a united national leadership to conduct reform.
2. Activate the role of the Public Monitoring Commission.
3. Activate the role of the PLC as an ombudsman for the executive authority.
4. Respect the rule of law.
5. Give more independence and powers for the Council of Ministers.
6. Independence of the judicial system.
7. Desist from centralized governance.
8. Use the media to encourage the citizens to participate in the decision making process.

**Town hall meeting:** Realistic solutions to solve the internal crisis.

**Location:** Eve Center for Arts and Culture/Nablus.

**Date:** 9/8/2004

**Speakers:**

1. Dalal Salama - PLC
  2. Dr. A. Sattar Qasem – Najah University.
  3. Mr. Amin Maqbul – Fatah Movement.
- **Moderator:** Bakr Aghbar – Reform Committee.

**Dr. Qasem:** Corruption is rooted in the PLO institutions since the 1970s. The different factions have the responsibility to conduct advocacy efforts to pressure the PNA. The public also must join such efforts. The PLC is also a part of the problem as it voted for a corrupt government.

**Comment:**

**Nidal Darwazi:** Reform is a Palestinian demand and need. It has to be comprehensive and must start right away wherever possible.

**Lessons Learnt and results:**

1. Political and administrative reform is the way out of the crisis.
2. Set a date for holding local and general elections.
3. Hire only qualified employees to government posts.
4. Activate the PLC ombudsman role.
5. Use dialogue and democratic means to solve political differences.

**Workshop:** The Palestinian reform between reality and aspiration.

**Date:** 18/8/2004.

**Place:** Charitable Society – Zababda, Jenin

**Participants:** 52 participants representing different civil society organizations, women institutions, Syndicates, academics and the local government.

**Comment:**

**Yousef Hamad:** University graduates are being ignored. People are hired not because of their qualification but because of their contacts and relations.

**Lessons learnt and results:**

1. Reform process has to be applied to all PNA departments.
2. Combat financial and administrative corruption and bring corrupt officials to trial.
3. Set a date for holding local and general elections.
4. Reform the security apparatus and set a job description for the apparatus.
5. Enact the Judicial independence law.
6. Amend the elections law.

7. Regulate the relation between the local councils and the Ministry of Local Government.
8. The Civil Service law must be enforced.
9. Qualified experts should overlook the implementation of the reform process instead of unqualified PLC members.
10. Citizens should take part in and influence the reform process.
11. Establish income-generating projects and encourage investment.

***Reform Committee Meetings:***

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Hebron

**Date:** July 26, 2004

**Participants:** 15 member civil society institutions representatives from the Union of Palestinian Woman Committees

**Description:** Evaluation of tasks performed by members and ensuring the attendance of Minister of local government Jamal Showbaki and PLC member Mohammad Horani. The committee planned for the upcoming THM and organized for televised coverage and performed other tasks. Confirmed all tasks performed to ensure the THM's success.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Jenin / Toubass

**Date:** August 4, 2004

**Participants:** 11 representatives from different civil society institutions.

**Description:** The meeting was held to prepare for the Palestinian reform workshop. The members coordinated to ensure the attendance of mixed gender participants, decision makers and influential community members. Committee members met with PLC members as part of their advocacy campaign to influence them on accepting women quota in the PLC and on mixed election system. The meeting also included planning to support the voter registration process by personal identification, media means and CFI's activities to support the registration process.

### **Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Hebron

**Date:** August 5, 2004

**Participants:** 12 representatives of civil society institution

**Description:** The meeting was to evaluate the THM conducted on July 29, 2004 where Minister of local government Jamal Showbaki and PLC member Mohammad Horani were the main speakers in the meeting. The THM was directed to discuss the elections law amendments and the main speakers provided important input in the discussion. The committee agreed to start a signature collection campaign in or to change the appointed local council during the first stage of the local council elections. The committee's overall evaluation of the THM was a success.

### **Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Nablus

**Date:** August 16, 2004

**Participants:** 10 different institution representatives of the General Handicap Union.

**Description:** In the meeting the committee discussed security problem that exist in the district and the committee agreed to visit the Governor to discuss the issue with him. The committee also discussed the recommendations that were produced from the recently accomplished workshop where the committee established the need to focus on the rule of law, the importance of activating the accountability issue and evaluating the lobbying efforts on the decision makers on these issues.

### **The 7<sup>th</sup> month: August 26 – September 30, 2004**

Training Workshops and Town Hall Meetings: two workshops and two town hall meetings took place.

**Workshop:** Reform between reality and aspiration.

**Date:** 26/8/2004.

**Location:** Qalqiliya.

**Participants:** 34 male and 11 Female.

**Speakers:**

1. Mah'd Farahni – Palestinian National Council PNC.

2. Majed Abdul Hadi – Businessman.

**How to tackle the problem?**

1. Establish a unified national leadership.  
This leadership should work for conducting free elections.

**Lessons learnt and results:**

1. Establish institutionalized political system that engages citizens in the decision making process.
2. Ensure the rule of law.
3. Encourage all factions to participate in the political system.
4. The President should adhere to his speech before the PLC on the reform process.
5. The Civil Service law must be fully enacted.
6. The Public Monitoring Commission must audit and report on the administrative and financial performance of the local and municipal councils.
7. Establish a unified national leadership.
8. Government departments should adhere to the budget limitations.

**Town hall meeting:** Reforming the electoral law.

**Date:** 2/9/2004.

**Location:** Orthodoxy Club – Biet Jala.

**Participants:** Female 10 Male 80 Total 90.

**Speakers:**

1. Salah Tamari – Minister of Youth and Sports.
2. Bishara Dawoud – PLC member
3. Dawoud Alzeer – PLC member

**Minister Ta'mari:** The electoral law is being debated by the PLC. There are intentions to expand the PLC to 124 members and adopt a special 20% minimum quota for women membership.

**PLC member Bishara Dawoud:** The PLC is currently debating to increase the number of council members. The PLC failed to ratify a law on political parties. We need to adopt a quota for Palestinian Christians.

**PLC member Dawoud Al Zeer:** The Election's Commission met with the President and the following suggestions were produced to ensure a better voter registration turnout:

Reach the citizens in the field by visiting them in their homes and offices.

Use government records of citizens and allow any citizen to object to these records.

**Comments:**

**Palestine's Ambassador to Nicaragua:** As a Palestinian Christian, I oppose having a special quota for Palestinian Christians.

**Minister Tamari:** The nomination minimum age should be reduced to 25 years. For constitutional matters, we need to have a constitutional court instead of the Supreme Court instead.

**Abu Mazen Azzi – People's Party:** I demand the PLC to adopt the mixed electoral system.

**Ismail Farraj:** The Palestinian prisoners in Israel must be allowed to enjoy their right to vote.

**Minister Ta'mari:**

- 1- I have no problem with the memorandum of understanding concerning the NGOs.
- 2- Regarding the women quota, the PLC should decide on the matter.
- 3- As for corruption, the PLC must assume its role as a monitoring body and act accordingly on corruption matters.
- 4- I reported to the General Attorney four corruption cases, but he dismissed them.

- **Workshop:** The Palestinian reform priorities.
- **Date:** 19/9/2004.
- **District:** Nablus.
- **Place:** Yasmine Hotel.
- **Participants:** Female 18 Male 13 Decision makers and representatives of political parties and NGOs.

**Comments:**

**Ziad Shuli – Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine:**

Political reform takes priority in the overall reform process.

**Mr. Nayef – Dialogue Center:** All reform aspects are important.

Electoral reform first and separation of powers is second on the priority list.

**Bakr Aghbar – Member of the town hall meetings committee:**

Reform is a comprehensive process. General elections are the basis for gradual reform and change.

**Yousef Abu Sereya – Societal Development Center:** There is a

need to establish an advocacy body to pressure the PNA on setting local and national elections dates.

**Lessons Learnt and results:**

- 1- Priority should be given to the electoral process.
- 2- Teamwork is essential for success.
- 3- Political parties and institutions need to encourage citizens' registration for elections.
- 4- Besides electoral reform, political reform is the bases for all other reforms.

**Town hall meeting:** Reforming the electoral law.

**Date:** 20/9/2004.

**Location:** Dar Al-Nadwah – Bethlehem.

**Participants:** Female 15, Male 35, Total 90.

**Speakers:**

Nasser Abu Laban – Coordinator, Bethlehem Elections District

Nuha Khoury – Member of the Elections Monitoring Public Committee

Hassan Abed Rabou – Coordinator, Parties Coordination Committee

**Nasser Abu Laban:**

The higher the percentage rate of voter registration is the more comprehensive the democratic representation is. Therefore, all citizens must turn to the centers for registration.

The law is above all decision makers and citizens must abide by it, any new proposed ideas must go through the legal process before it

becomes law, and only then we as decision makers can execute such a law.

**Nuha Khoury:**

Our efforts should focus on supporting civil institutions that work in the Bethlehem community. These institutions can contribute by contacting citizens in their community and explaining the benefits of participating in the elections process.

Encouraging citizens to participate in the voter registration step of the election process would ease the work of the monitors. Because civil society institutions can educate the citizens on the importance of registering, what they need to register and how they can register.

**Hassan Abed Rabou:**

I have observed the series of meetings that were held in the Bethlehem district had a positive impact on the voter registration turnout. Thus, I suggest that we should continue holding such meetings whether on family, civil society institution, political or community levels.

We should target the professional associations by asking its administrations to organize meetings that would educate its members on the importance in participating in the election process. I believe that we also can use their knowledge since they represent a sizable portion of the professional or educated class.

**Lessons learnt and results:**

To amend the elections law by adopting the memo that was produced by the political parties and civil society institutions that includes adopting the mixed elections system, women's quota for local councils and PLC and to lower the minimum age required for candidacy.

The PLC must exercise its authority under the law.

To hold workshops and meetings to encourage citizens to participate in the voter registration process.

To collect signatures for amending the elections law.

The Public Monitoring Committee to intensify its activities on mobile centers and by conducting field visits.

To lobby decision makers so they urge citizens to register.

To coordinate between civil society institutions for awareness raising and to divide tasks involved in advocating on election issues.



- **Town hall meeting:** Reform and Elections.
- **Date:** 23/9/2004.
- **Place:** Zababdeh Charitable Society.
- **Participants:** Male 40 Female 65 total 105.
- **Speakers:**
  - 1- Burhan Jarrar – PLC.
  - 2- Dr. Ayman Yousef – Arab American University.
  - 3- Adv. Ghassan Barham.
  - 4- Nariman Bishara – Zababdeh Women Club.
  - 5- Saed Alkarm – Reform Committee – Session moderator.

#### **What can the reform committee do?**

Establish a Reform and civic action supporters committee. This committee can do the following:

1. Lobby the PLC to amend the elections law according to article 26<sup>th</sup> of the Basic Law.
2. Write petitions to the PLC or the Council of Ministers to accelerate holding elections at the earliest.
3. Encourage citizens to register for elections especially in areas with low registration count.
4. Demand to amend the basic law.
5. Demand to ratify the women quota in the elections.

#### **Lessons learnt and results:**

Demand setting a definite date for holding general elections.

The PLC to establish a special commission to investigate corruption.

Activate the role of the Public Monitoring Commission.

Combat anarchy in the Palestinian society.

Stress on adopting a quota for women and minorities in the upcoming elections.

Desist from nepotism in the upcoming elections.

Finalize the Palestinian elections law.

Establish advocacy groups to ensure the implementation of reform recommendations.

- **Workshop:** Reform and Elections.
- **Date:** 23/9/2004.
- **Place:** Ramallah, Yassouf Junior High School.

- **Participants:** Male 22 Female 23 total 45.
- **Speakers:**
  1. Ibrahim Mohammad – Popular Front party
  2. Abed AlJawad Al Bir – Labor General Union
  3. Marwan Al-Deek – Ministries Committee for Reform

**Ibrahim Mohammad:**

To internally restructure the governmental and non-governmental institutions starting with defining the tasks and authority of each institution. Also by establishing a job description to each of the employees and to reexamine the financial management principles that is being used by the PNA.

The PNA must abide by the budget that is ratified by the PLC and respect financial procedures according to the law.

To comprise a central elections commission according to the law and assigning it to oversee elections at all levels.

To reevaluate the elections law in accordance to the primary law and previous experiences and to adopt the mixed elections system as a primary elections system.

Transparency and Accountability: To develop the General Monitoring Commission's role by supporting its independency and professionalism.

**Abed AlJawad Al Bir**

- Civil Society Institutions' role in the reform process should focus on participating with parties concerned in preparing and executing the national reform plan, awareness raising, defining the reform process' priorities to complement national and social tasks in the process and to develop a coordination mechanism between concerned parties in the reform process.

**Marwan Al-Deek**

- The purpose of the hundred days plan was to internally reform the PNA's institutions and to reform the interrelations of these institutions. During the course of implementation we faced serious internal and external obstacles. The internal obstacle was that we did not find the will from PA officials to implement the plan. The

external obstacles were the Israeli occupation and we did not find support from the donor countries to implement the plan.

**Lessons learnt and results:**

1. To establish a national committee that would include representatives from civil society institutions, private enterprise, and community and political leaders. There should be an incorporation of an executive committee to execute the duties that is put forth by the national committee.
2. The PNA should evaluate the reform action that has already been preformed and based on its evaluation it should reassess its agenda and priorities in continuing of the implementation of its reform plan.
3. The reform plan, conduct and achievements should be made public and PNA collect public polling during the reform process to find out what the public needs is to incorporate it into the reform plan.
4. The constitution's final draft should be finalized and adopted. This is an important part of the reform process.
5. To amend the principle law so the authority and responsibility of the PNA's executive institutions are clarified and accounted for.
6. To ratify the PLC's election law so the elections for the legislative council can be held as soon as possible.

**Workshop:** The Palestinian reform.

**Date:** 30/9/2004.

**District:** Hebron.

**Place:** Social Rehabilitation Center – Al Fawar refugee camp.

**Participants:** 41 (10 female and 31 male).

**Comments:**

**Hasan Hmouz:** UNRWA employee: Reform is a comprehensive process where citizens must start by reforming their social environment; shun nepotism and favoritism. Facing corrupt leaders is as important as facing and resisting occupation.

**Walid Hmouz:** The media has a very important role to play in the reform process. The media these days gives a platform for corrupt people to preach the citizens instead of being neutral.

**Hasan Hmouz:** The Palestinian factions aren't doing their job and they aren't assuming their supposed role in assisting and leading citizens' fight against corruption. These parties and factions need to establish an alternative body to the government.

**Participant:** The NGOs need to adopt internal reforms and conduct elections if they want to stay in the lead for reform in the Palestinian society. The PNA shouldn't allocate the major part of the budget to security and instead it should focus more on health and education.

**Lessons learnt and results:**

Adopt legislations to ensure transparency in the performance of the PNA and political factions.

Lobby decision-makers to adopt reform measures.

Lobby political parties to embrace internal democracy to combat corruption.

Political parties and NGOs should conduct internal leadership pre-selection.

NGOs and political parties should educate citizens on combating corruption instead of living with the problem.

Reform the school curriculum to incorporate human rights education.

Hold a town hall meeting on the importance of the citizens' participation in elections as a basis for conducting reform.

***Reform Committee Meetings:***

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Jenin / Toubass

**Date:** August 28, 2004

**Participants:** 11 representatives of different civil society institutions

**Description:** The meeting focused on increase the support for the Central Elections Committee in the upcoming voter registration campaign in Jenin and Toubass districts. The increased effort will focus on opposition parties, women and non-educated. The committee has organized a signature collection campaign as a part

of its lobbying campaign to pressure the PNA on setting elections final date.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Tulkarem / Qalqilia

**Date:** September 5, 2004

**Participants:** 15 representatives from different civil society institutions.

**Description:** The committee met to follow up on several developments but most renowned was the Palestinian's ministers cabinet decided to build a public hospital in Qalqilia. This decision came in response June 22, 2004 THM's recommendation to establish a public hospital in Qalqilia that was attended by the Deputy Minister of Health Anan Almasri. The committee agreed to follow up on the cabinet's decision in September 22, 2004 committee meeting.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Tulkarem / Qalqilia

**Date:** September 9, 2004

**Participants:** 15 representatives from different civil society institutions.

**Description:** The committee met to plan a THM to discuss ways to fight unemployment as the topic was one of the recommendations from August 26, 2004 workshop. The committee decided that the action will be conducted in cooperation with the Rural Woman Development Society also in the meeting the committee distributed the tasks among the members. The objective of the cooperation is to support women quota in local elections and increase women participation in the voter registration and election process.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Jerusalem

**Date:** September 10, 2004

**Participants:** 10 representatives of different civil society institutions

**Description:** The meeting was utilized to prepare for the October 11, 2004 THM for Political and General Reform and the committee members finalized the speakers list. Committee members discussed

their meetings with political and community leaders. In addition, the members raised elections women quota with several PLC members. At the end of the meetings tasks for the upcoming event were divided among the members and logistical matters were organized.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Jenin / Toubass

**Date:** September 11, 2004

**Participants:** 11 representatives of different civil society institutions

**Description:** The meeting was to review the preparations for the September 23, 2004 THM and to foresee the final work needed to intensify the preparations for the voter registration process. After the THM there was an excellent turnout for registration and the committee continued in its lobbying efforts to influence the proposed amendments in the election laws.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Nablus

**Date:** September 14, 2004

**Participants:** 9 representatives from different civil society institutions.

**Description:** The committee discussed how to support the voter registration process. The members agreed to hold a THM so the THMs committee can intensify its efforts to effectively increase voter registration participation. The meeting also included a discussion on the meetings that were conducted with PLC members on women quota in the elections and the mixed election system.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Bethlehem

**Date:** September 19, 2004

**Participants:** 9 representatives of different civil society institutions

**Description:** The discussion involved the planning of the upcoming THM in Bethlehem and invitations will be extended to THMs Committee, Reform Committee and Democratic Work Committee. In addition, the invitations were extended to Christian and Muslim religious leaders and other community leaders to support the voter registration campaign in their communities. There will be a televised

coverage by Bethlehem television. The discussion also included the planning for the upcoming workshops in the Bethlehem district. In addition, each committee member spoke in more detail about his or her organization in an effort to improve the coordination between the committee member organizations.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Tulkarem / Qalqilia

**Date:** September 22, 2004

**Participants:** 15 representatives of different civil society institutions

**Description:** In the meeting the committee decided to follow up on several recommendations and propose to the Deputy Health Minister (Anan Almasri) to establish three healthcare centers. The committee assigned a group of its members to carry out this mission with the Ministry of Health. The committee decided to conduct another THM titled Fighting Unemployment and at the same to support the voter registration process. The committee issued a press release the praising the Cabinet's decision to build a public hospital in Qalqilia and it was published in Al-Hayat newspaper.

**Reform Committee Meeting**

**Location:** Hebron

**Date:** September 23, 2004

**Participants:** 12 representative of different civil society institutions.

**Description:** In the meeting the committee discussed to move the upcoming workshop from the city to Al-Fora refugee camp, also the preparation tasks were distributed among committee members such as media coverage and invitations. The committee agreed to start a signature collection campaign in or to change the appointed local council during the first stage of the local council elections. The committee also proposed that at the end of the project to publish an achievements handout including the names of participating institutions in it.

## Second Interim Period

### WORKSHOPS AND TOWN HALL MEETING ACTIVITIES

#### Nablus

Activity	Activity title	Date	Place	Participants	Speakers
Town hall meeting	Citizen and elections	30/12/2004	Hawwa center	85	Dalal Salameh – PLC Reema Nazzal – PNC, Moh'd Ghazal – Najah University

#### Tulkarem and Qalqiliya

Activity	Activity title	Date	Place	Participants	Speakers
Town hall meeting	Combating unemployment in the national budget	22/10/2004	Jayyous	100	Othman Ghashash – PLC, Assad Ahmad – Labor office-Tulkarem, Shareef Ahmad – Farmers Union

#### Ramallah and Salfeet

Activity	Activity title	Date	Place	Participants	Speakers
Town hall meeting	Political reform as a gateway for general reform	25/9/2004	Yasuf school	120	Akram Barghuthi – Ministerial committee for reform, Ziedan Hamdan – National factions
Workshop	Government reform	30/10/2004	Ramallah chamber of commerce	37	Ghassan Khateeb – Minister of Labor, Basil Jaber- Ministerial committee for reform
Town hall meeting	The new cabinet, a government for reform or just a solution for a crisis?	5/3/2005	Arab Bishop center - Ramallah	110	Moh'd Hurani – PLC, Azmi Shuabi – PLC, Riyad Malki – Panorama Center, Basil Jaber - Ministerial committee for reform



### Jerusalem and Jericho

Activity	Activity title	Date	Place	Participants	Speakers
Town hall meeting	Political reform as a gateway for general reform	11/10/2004	Al Quds University	120	Dr. Abdul Rahman – Law professor – Al Quds University, Dr. Abdul Malik Rimawi – Constitutional law professor - Al Quds University
Workshop	Political reform	13/2/2005	Businessmen Society	35	
Town hall meeting	Political reform as a gateway for general reform	23/2/2005	Businessmen Society	95	Ziad Atrash – National factions, Abdul Rahman Taha – Birzeit University, Marwan Ziada – Political analyst

### Bethlehem:

Activity	Activity title	Date	Place	Participants	Speakers
Workshop	Palestinian reform	7/10/2004	Arab Orthodoxy Club – Biet Jala	30	

### Hebron:

Activity	Activity title	Date	Place	Participants	Speakers
Town hall meeting	Election law	11/12/2004	Hebron municipal council	80	Abas Zaki – PLC, Sulaiman Abu Sninih – Minister

Following are the most important recommendations from the above workshops:

1. Legislate a special law on reform that details reform mechanisms and responsibilities of the government and civil society in this regard

2. Create an institutionalized framework for deliberation between the government and civil society organizations to develop reform mechanisms in such a way that includes institutions in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Jerusalem.
3. The government should demonstrate dedication to reform through holding regular meetings for the national committee for reform.
4. Hold a national conference to discuss reform and reform issues and priorities
5. Appoint highly qualified people to deal with reform issues
6. Embrace the concept of the separation of powers
7. Revitalize the judicial system
8. Legislate economic laws with the participation of private sector
9. Bring corrupt people to trial
10. Reestablish the Higher Council for Development with the participation of private sector
11. Draft development plans and adopt decentralized management.
12. Reform the rules and system of the Investment Fund so that it becomes in charge of overseeing government investments in trading companies and end monopolies
13. Enact the Monetary Authority Law
14. Improve the Measurement and Specifications Department
15. Improve the monitoring apparatus
16. Develop certain important sectors such as postal and freight sectors
17. Monitor and improve the sector of insurance
18. Invest more in education
19. Privatize all government investment activities
20. Rationalize government spending
21. Rationalize imports
22. Government should pay its debts to the private sector
23. Establish a special compensation fund to compensate for war and catastrophes risks and dangers
24. Assist the private sector in establishing exhibitions in foreign markets
25. Adopt the mixed electoral system with 50% for the proportional and 50% for the majority system
26. Adopt a special quota for women and hold elections regularly

The following are the most important recommendations from the above town hall meetings:

- Use only the voters register in the coming elections
- Political parties should promote their candidates based on their platforms not family and clan affiliations
- The Higher Committee for elections should conduct a comprehensive evaluation for the previous phase of elections
- The PLC should condition the ratification of national budget draft based on inclusion of a special article on unemployment
- Implement the financial part of the social insurance law
- Implement the retirement law
- Create more jobs
- Establish factories for canning olive oil
- Define minimum prices for the agricultural produce
- Ensure that the Palestinian constitution won't have a provision on the possibility of declaring marshal law in any case
- Ratify the Palestinian constitution at the earliest
- Legislate the political parties law
- Political parties should hold internal primary elections

#### **LOCAL REFORM COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES:**

No meetings were held in December and January because of the month of Ramadan and the death of President Arafat. Nevertheless, many visits to the PLC, Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Women Affairs were conducted to learn how these institutions function.

#### **HEBRON DISTRICT**

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##### **1. Meeting**

**Date:** 28/11/2004

**Subject addressed:** Election law

##### **2. Meeting**

**Date:** 1/3/2004

The committee made preparations for a town hall meeting on local government to be held in Sair municipal council.

##### **3. Vigil Strike**

**Date:** 21/11/2004

Vigil strike before Palestinian Legislative Council(PLC) Hebron district office to call for ending discrimination against women.

#### **4. Vigil Strike**

**Date:** 16/2/2005

Vigil strike before PLC in Ramallah to demand for adopting the mixed electoral law.

### **RAMALLAH AND SALFEET DISTRICT**

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#### **1. Meeting**

**Date:** 7/10/2004

**Subject addressed:** Visiting the council of ministers, different ministries and following up implementation of recommendations of the town hall meetings

Resulting activities classified by date:

#### **The participants noted the following:**

The reform committees in the different ministries are inactive and seldom hold meetings.

The committee wasn't provided with any reform plan from any reform committee in the different ministries.

Follow up with the PLC on the teachers' demands. The PLC asked the minister of education for clarifications on the issue.

#### **2. Meeting**

**Date:** 27/10/2004

Participants: 15

**Subject addressed:** Discussing the implementation of recommendations adopted in the previous meeting and the demands presented by the teachers to the reform committee.

**3. Follow up:** Follow up with the PLC on the teachers' demands. The PLC asked the minister of education for clarifications on the issue.

#### **4. Meeting**

**Date:** 10/11/2004

**Details and activities:**

Follow up with the PLC on the teachers' demands. The PLC asked the minister of education for clarifications on the issue, same as done in the previous meeting.

#### **5. Town hall meeting**

**Date:** 17/11/2004

**Subjects addressed:** Reform

**Speaker:** Minister of Labor Mr. Ghassan Khateeb

**Details of activities:** The Minister of Labor briefed the attendees on the latest developments on Palestinian reform.

#### **6. Meeting**

**Date:** 2/3/2005

**Subjects addressed:** Reform

**Details and activities:**

The participants discussed the latest political developments on the Palestinian political arena and reform developments.

### **BETHLEHEM DISTRICT**

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#### **1. Workshop**

**Date:** 3/1/2005

**Subjects addressed:** Amending the electoral law

**Details and activities:** Meeting with PLC member Bishara Dawoud to discuss amending the election law.

#### **2. Meeting**

**Date:** 11/1/2005

**Subjects addressed:** Elections

**Details and activities:**

The participants discussed performance of monitoring local and presidential elections.

#### **3. Vigil strike**

**Date:** 16/2/2005

**Subjects addressed:** Amending the electoral law

**Details and activities:**

The committee protested against the PLC rejection to legislate a special law for ensuring a women's quota in the elections and protested against not adopting the mixed electoral system.

#### **4. Workshop**

**Date:** 24/2/2005

**Subjects addressed:** Amending electoral law

**Details and activities:**

The participants held discussions with representatives of different political parties the draft amended electoral law and means of advocacy to convince the PLC to legislate the amended draft law.

### **JENIN DISTRICT**

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#### **1. Workshop**

**Date:** 24/2/2005

**Subjects addressed:** General activities

**Details and activities:**

The committee discussed the overall situation in the district and possibilities for cooperating for future activities such as workshops or town hall meetings.

#### **2. Meeting**

**Date:** 23/12/2004

**Details and activities:**

The committee wrote a memorandum to the PLC district office demanding for the adoption of the mixed system and adopting a special quota for women in the elections.

#### **3. Protest**

**Date:** 16/2/2005

**Subjects addressed:** Electoral law and reform

**Details and activities:**

A protest was held before the PLC office in Ramallah.

Demands were raised for:

- Adopting the mixed electoral system

- Legislating a special quota for women

- Adopting a minimum percentage of votes for parties to win elections

- Amending the electoral law before the upcoming elections

The following organizations participated in the protest: Kufr Rai Youth Club, Taibi Charitable Society, Tubas Youth Club, Aqaba Youth Club, Zababdi Womens Center, Fahmi Women Center, Um Atout Women Center, Seelat Al Daher Municipal Council, Aneen Youth Club, Zboba Village Council, Jalqamous Women Center and Seelat Al Daher Youth Club.

## **TULKAREM & QALQILYA DISTRICT**

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### **1. Protest before the PLC in Ramallah**

**Date:** 16/2/2005

**Subjects addressed:** Electoral law and reform

**Details and activities:**

Protestors were members of the following 20 organizations: Palestinian Development Center, Working Woman Society, Women Action Committees Union, Kufr Jammal Sports Club, Rameen Sports Club, Palestinian Women General Union, Palestinian Center for Democracy and Peace Issues, Dier Al Ghsun Women Society, Kufr Zeebad Sports Club, Women Committee for Social Work, Anabta Women Club, Jinsafut Charitable Society, Biet Leed Sports Club, Health Care Committees, The Palestinian Women Development Center Society, Kufr Jammal Charitable Society, Palestinian Youth Union, Labor Unity Block, Jinsafut Sports Club, and the Rural Woman Development Society.

## **NABLUS DISTRICT**

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### **1. Conference and other activities**

**Date:** 14/10/2004

**Subjects addressed:** The rule of law

**Details and activities:**

Participants discussed the state of lawlessness and anarchy in the district.

Preparations for a town hall meeting that was held on 30/12/2004

### **2. Visit**

**Date:** 13/1/2005

**Details and activities**

Visiting the Central Elections Commission.

### **3. Protest**

**Date:** 16/2/2005

**Subjects addressed:** Electoral law and reform

**Details and activities:**

Protest was held before the PLC office in Ramallah: Demonstrators demanded for amending the electoral law and adopting the mixed system. They also demanded for allocating a special quota for women in the coming elections.

**Difficulties encountered disrupting our activities:**

The activity schedule was affected by the following unforeseen events:

- There was a difficult transitional period between the death of President Arafat and the election of President Abbas
- The first phase of local elections that were held on 23/12/2004
- The Presidential elections held on 9/1/2005

**Solution:**

As a result of these events, CFI had to reschedule previously planned activities and refocus the work of the project to address issues related to these events.