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Al-Balad Radio Background

Letter from the Founding Director

The Arab Spring has resulted in a major reshuffle in all aspects of public policy in the Arab world. Empowered young Arabs demanding a share in decision making powers and freedom to express themselves have become the hallmark for this mass movement.

Although it is difficult to claim that the Arab Spring made it in full to Jordan, but Radio al Balad and AmmanNet have been covering the *Hirak* (popular protests) in downtown Amman as well as throughout Jordan ever since people began to protest. This was most clear on Fridays. Because of the need to cover the protests, our thirty minute news bulletin quickly stretched often to nearly an hour with our lone anchor having (at times) to cover by phone various events and demonstrations.

We have probably had more field reporting and in-studio discussions about the various demands of the people of Jordan than any other media outlet. At the same time, we have tried our best to keep a professional approach to all current affairs including demonstrations and popular protests.

Our journalistic team in cooperation with our Listeners Club performed valiantly, especially on Friday protest events. While our staff tried to be present in key locations, we were forced to cooperate with civil society activists to provide us with what was happening in their locations. Our web editors worked hard to transcribe the many eyewitness reports to web based news reports as well as short SMS messages to our growing audience.

Following up on the methodologies used by youths around the Arab world, we implemented a major improvement in our engagement with the Jordanian and Arab public through the growing use by our staff of various social media outlets. Our “like” ticker on AmmanNet and our twitter followers have surpassed the 10,000 mark each. Our journalists have been encouraged and have set up their own twitter accounts. All our original reports are regularly tweeted and shared to tens of thousands of followers. We have also added the use of video on our website with good results. The videos come from three main sources. Our own staff, volunteers who work with us, and a number of web-based online sites such as JordanDays.tv. The success can be measured in the rise of how long visitors to our site stay online mostly watching videos. Of special importance has been, the important videos from the Jordanian parliament and the elections.

On the project level our organization has developed horizontally and vertically. *Madmoun Jaddid*, our project to encourage specialization content development in areas such as the environment, migrant labor and consumer protection, has allowed us to work in Palestine, among Palestinian citizens of Israel and in Syria as well as Jordan. Our *Aswatona* project supported by SIDA has allowed us to help set up Community Radio stations in seven Arab Spring countries as well as work on advocacy projects to help improve the legal and administrative landscape for community media in the Arab world. With the help of the EU we are setting up a media project with women in the Zarqa area. With help from Holland we have developed an important Human Rights Documentary series. We continue to be an important reference point for media professionalism. *Eye on the Media* ,supported by

the people of Denmark through IMS, has been one of our longest running and successful radio programs. We have embarked on an important research and awareness project regarding unrecognized religious groups in Jordan and the flow of Syrians into Jordan has led us to develop a series of journalistic training and broadcast programs aimed to help Syrians living temporarily in Jordan. Our school radio received a major boost this year with help from the government of Norway.

Our investigative unit has been working hard in cooperation with Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism (ARIJ) and the International Center for Journalists (ICFJ). We expect to publish at least 10 investigations before the end of 2013. BBC Arabic has adopted for its television audience one of our investigations about abuse in private centers for people with disabilities. King Abdullah made a surprise visit to one of the centers that witnessed abuse and ordered a thorough investigation of the report championed by our own Hanan Khandakji. Other investigations included uncovering organized cheating at the matriculation Tawjihi exams and overpricing of doctors and hospitals.

We found ourselves in the summer of 2011 as a key player in helping the Jordanian government's efforts to draw up a media strategy based on orders from the King. The select committee designing the strategy met with CMN Director General three separate times and shared with us the findings before they were made public. Also a UNESCO sponsored workshop aimed at creating self regulatory bodies for media complaints prominently included CMN in the planning and execution of the workshop. Sadly the media strategy has been largely scrapped with the passing of a regressive amendment to the Press and Publication Law which brings restrictions in the form of blocking "uncooperative" web sites back to the forefront of government's attempts to muzzle the media. We have joined Jordanian websites to oppose this law.

Community Media Network has also worked hard at improving its governance structure. Our board has been active in encouraging us to institutionalize and streamline our administrative and financial guidelines. A legal glitch that occurred because of the government refusal to allow us to replace Salah Huzayen, one of our board members who passed away, has finally been resolved allowing us to reregister CMN reflecting our new board members. Three new board members have been added given us depth and diversity.

New procedures have included written guidelines and the introduction of an internal auditor in addition to the external auditor that annually reviews our financial statements. All have given us very positive evaluations as to our financial proceedings.

Introduction

The past two years have been important in our organization as we faced the challenge of adapting to political changes without slipping into the risk of being biased to one group or another. In the past two years, we succeeded in building the professional foundations for our work through Community Media Network, our legal non-for-profit umbrella that governs the work of the radio and electronic outlet. We also succeeded in strengthening our role as a civil society, interacting with what is happening in Jordan and the Arab world with professionalism and independence, ensuring our credibility and our leading role in media.

In this booklet, which explains our programs, projects and achievements, we hope to provide the reader with a detailed picture of all of our activities and provide a look into our various departments, our employees and volunteers.

We have also listed all our partners from local and international organizations, in addition to our budgets and our auditors' statement.

Historical Perspective

In November 2000 the idea of an independent radio station in Jordan, whether on the internet or on the FM waves, was nothing more than a dream. When Amman mayor Nedal Hadid and UNESCO director Martin Hadlow clicked the mouse to announce the launch of the Arab world's first internet radio station, AmmanNet.net, we had no idea where we would be years later. Our pioneering efforts online has produced results in Jordan that are unmatched in nearby Arab countries. Tens of news websites have sprouted up offering Jordanian, Arab and international surfers up-to-date and courageous news and commentaries from Jordan. It is true that some of the sites have abused this privilege, but we are confident that for the majority of Jordanians the news websites offer quick and credible news and opinions.

Our usage of the Net to broadcast radio programming was given a boost when a Palestinian radio station agreed to rebroadcast some of our programs that they downloaded from the internet. With no physical boundaries between Palestine and Jordan, these broadcasts were heard in Amman thus allowing our internet broadcasting to de facto break up the Jordan government's monopoly over the airwaves.

Within a couple of years of our going on line, His Majesty the King issued a temporary law allowing the creation of an audio visual commission, which in turn made it possible for terrestrial broadcasting. We applied for and received a ten year FM license in 2005 and have been broadcasting news, alternative music and specialized programming since then.

Our challenges with our internet and radio broadcasts are huge. We often find ourselves alone in covering certain sensitive news. More often we see that our efforts are setting the agenda for all other news organizations.

We have focused a lot of our work on empowering different segments of society, from high school students to college age youths, from farming women to labor activists and the handicapped. We have encouraged volunteers to use our media operations as a platform to reflect on their own issues and as a way to have a voice in a crowded media field.

On the news level we have and continue to work hard on providing high quality news around the clock. We dug deep into certain issues using investigative journalism tools as well as focus on human rights violations. Al-Balad radio staff has gained experience and training and have attempted to adhere to our professional code of ethics. Whenever we made mistakes or veered from our own code, our news managers were courageous enough to admit these mistakes in public and endeavor to work on setting mechanisms to ensure that these mistakes are not repeated.

Al-Balad radio, our community radio station in Amman, has become a model community radio providing training services and networking opportunities for local, regional and international groups. Internationally, we were the local sponsors of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters AMARC, which held its global meeting AMARC9 in Amman. Locally we have been a driving force behind the establishment of a Jordanian Federation of Community radio stations that include Voice of Karak, New Maan radio, Yarmouk FM and Farah Al-Nas radio.

Our training efforts have and continue to help journalists and community radio activists from most surrounding Arab countries. From Tunis to Iraqi Kurdistan and from Syria to Saudi Arabia we have hosted workshops in areas such as crime of war coverage, humanizing the news and community radio training. We held regional workshops looking for ways to advance the presence of female experts in media coverage.

Al-Balad radio's efforts were not without problems. The speaker of the Jordanian parliament stopped our unique (for the region) live radio broadcasts of the parliament, governors in various districts banned us from holding public events and debates and the mayor of Amman continues to prohibit us from broadcasting live the capital's monthly council meeting. We have survived legal law suits while some remain unresolved. Our efforts to establish radio stations in Zarqa and in the Jordan Valley were rejected by the government without any explanation, and our efforts to reform Jordan's Audio Visual law that adds extra fees to stations that broadcast news and politics, have yet to produce results despite continuous promises from government officials.

A listeners' club has been established and in its latest elections nearly 300 listeners attended the general assembly. We succeeded in broadcasting live the last two world cups. We had to use the services of a sports play-by-play broadcaster from Ramallah when lawyers from Al-Jazeera sports barred our usage of audio broadcasts of their pay-per-view TV coverage.

While we enjoy a successful FM radio presence, we have not forgotten that our beginnings were online. We introduced video blogging to our site with impressive results. We organized training and gave video cameras to tens of Jordanians who were asked to record, edit and upload the results of their filming.

Our original website AmmanNet has given birth to four additional sites Balad.fm, eyeonmediajo.net, shababjo.net and communitymedianetwork.org.

The governance structure of our organization has changed in the past ten years. When we first started we had no choice but to register as a commercial company and then

add an advisory board to ensure that we are committed to a public service agenda. Four years ago we succeeded in registering as not-for-profit and have turned all our operations and programs into our new NGO entitled Community Media Network.

Financially, we have succeeded in diversifying our sources of income. No one donor has contributions more than a third of our overall budget. We have slowly been successful in increasing local contributions and income. Corporate social responsibility has started to produce fruits for us in Jordan and our local marketing and sales department is set to reach the highest target since our operation of JD50,000 a year.

Over the past ten years hundreds of Jordanians and Arabs have been part of the operation that began as a dream of using the internet to produce quality courageous media content. We are proud of where we are today and look forward to another decade of contributing to our society. When Ammannet.net was launched we used the logo “the Voice of the Community.” When Al-Balad radio began broadcasting on 92.4 fm frequency in Amman we said that we are '*radio al-nas wal balad*', the radio of the people and the country. Our goal has and will continue to be the service of the people of Jordan and beyond.

Community Media Network

Early in January 2008, the name of AmmanNet radio was changed to Al-Balad radio; AmmanNet.net remained as a news website. The radio and the site are managed by the Community Media Network (CMN), which is a not-for profit organization, registered in March 19th, 2007 under number (156) with the goal to manage media and cultural projects throughout the Kingdom. CMN has a Board of Directors that supervises the radio and website. The current members of the board are Elias Farkouh as chairman, Rana Sabbagh, Salam Madanat, Mahmoud Zawawi, Lamis Andoni and Mohammad Qteishat as members. Two new board members have joined us in 2013, namely journalist Lamees Andoni and attorney Mohammad Qteishat.

Key Staff of CMN

Founder and Director: Daoud Kuttab, dkuttab@ammannet.net

Radio Manager and Editor- in-Chief: Mohammad Ersan, ersan@ammannet.net

Project Development Officer: Hamza Saoud, hamza@ammannet.net

AmmanNet Website Manager: Ammar Al-Shuqayri, ammar@ammannet.net

Employees

CMN personnel consists of twenty-five staff members working as journalists, administrators, technicians and project-managers, in addition to dozens of volunteers.

The radio opened its website (www.ammannet.net) to its employees to create their own blogs.

Summary of “Al-Balad Radio” Programs

News

On the news front, our listeners can hear headline news every hour at the half hour and a full news bulletin twice a day. We focus almost entirely on local news in an independent and balanced manner. The 30-minute news bulletin at 1:30 and 5:30 pm provide listeners with in-depth look at the most important local issues. Live interviews with experts and officials are supported by feature reports and the latest reaction of Jordanians on the most important events of the day.

Tallet Subuh (a morning visit)

A morning open program discusses issues of concern to the general public through daily field interviews, live interviews, and call-ins. The program includes a reading of the most important news in the local press and a review of a number of important articles.

This is immediately followed with ***Tallah Riadia (Sports News)*** that includes a presentation of the latest local, Arab and international sports news.

Ain al E’lam (eye on the media)

A critical look at the media scene in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Palestine; the program, which is broadcast and distributed to local editors, attempts to critique the level of adherence of journalists to media ethics and guidelines.

Nas Wa Nas (people and people)

It discusses social issues within the Jordanian society with a documentary report on the discussed case.

Haqi (my right)

A legal awareness program servicing the public and giving free advice to the queries of the citizens on issues of civil rights.

Hawa Hizbee (political air)

A program focusing on political parties and legislation through hosting representatives of political parties.

Rainbow

An interactive talk show with the audience round the clock that discusses current social and political issues dealt with in the Jordanian arena.

Watan Wa Mu’taqad (citizenship and belief)

A program dealing with the reality and rights of minority religious groups in Jordan, such as Bahai's, Evangelical Christians, Druze, Shiites and the non-religious.

Souriyoun Baynana (Syrians amongst us)

A program focusing on Syrian refugees in Jordan covering their issues and shedding light on their living conditions. The project includes training and involving Syrian reporters in preparing radio episodes and producing reports.

Currently, the radio presents 20 minutes bulletins on the status of the Syrian refugees on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Kulna Zay Ba'dh (we all are the same)

A program dealing with issues for people with special needs.

Al-Majles the parliament)

This program broadcasts the parliament sessions directly on air without any censorship; an important step to maintaining the right of the citizens to have access to information.

"Elections 17" a program initiated in preparation for the 17th Jordanian lower house parliamentary elections, is dedicated to analyzing and discussing the electoral and political scene in detail. The program reviews the legal and political aspects of the parliamentary elections and their impact on the form of the next parliament.

Techno Hayat (techno life)

A program specialized in the technology, environment and health sectors and hosts specialists in the fields.

Hiwar Watani (national dialogue)

This program focuses on issues and strategies concerning political and economic reform in Jordan. It hosts political figures from all directions.

Sawt Al-Aghwar (voice of the valley)

A program focusing on different issues in the northern, middle and southern valleys in Jordan, it gives the citizens of these areas the opportunity to talk about their problems and discusses agricultural problems that young Jordanians face, in addition to women's pioneer achievements.

Siyara FM (car fm)

A Program on issues of public transport and concerns of drivers on the road.

Bi Rewaya Thaniya (an alternative narration)

A youth program that sheds light on issues of relationships and trust among members of the community or family.

B Ra'ihat Al-Qahwa (With the aroma of Coffee)

A cultural program that hosts authors and researchers to talk about their latest books and research.

Selector

A musical program in cooperation with the British Council, introducing the most important British music and artists, as well as the most important alternative music artists in Jordan.

Zahret Al-Aghwar (flower of the valley)

A specialized program on women's issues in the Jordan Valley through which women convey their views of economic and social problems within their communities and are given the opportunity to express their opinion and transmit their voices to officials.

Nissa' Attaghyeer (women change agents)

A program focusing on the challenges and conditions of working women, and on the methods that help them cope in order to improve their working conditions. It hosts women who cut their way through and made a difference in the working place.

Ihna Mni'dar (yes we can)

A program that sheds light on and hosts youth who provide initiatives and volunteer work for development. It aims at encouraging young people to invest their abilities in serving their local communities.

Laji'oun (refugees)

This program reports on the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan through stories, polls and news reports on human rights issues and public services problems.

Bint Balad (town girl)

A program aimed at discussing the most important young women's issues in a bold way.

Ommal Al-Balad (town laborers)

This program discusses issues of concern to laborers, raising awareness and explaining labor laws and legislation related to labor issues and labor rights.

Dhid Attayar (against the tide)

A program on political reform, key changes and political movements based on interaction with the public.

Live Shows

Our live broadcasts cover the most important topics of interest to Jordanians; from sessions of the Jordanian parliament to the most important football games. We are the first independent radio in the Arab world to broadcast live and un-edited gavel-to-gavel live coverages. We broadcast each and every sports game of Jordan's national team in addition to the games of the leading clubs. Our live coverage also includes important social, artistic and cultural issues as well as live interactive shows during holidays like Eid al Adha, Eid al Fitr, Christmas and New Year.

Websites and Pages

The idea of splitting our website came from the fact that it reached enough maturity to be divided into separate and self sufficient sites holding their own independent identities. These news sites are:

1. **AmmanNet Website-the first Jordanian electronic news site www.ar.ammannet.net:**

In 2011, AmmanNet news website was updated both in form and content in order to keep pace with the evolution of electronic journalism especially with greater reliance on multimedia. We redesigned the look and structure to become more user-friendly and appealing to the reader. As per content, the following new sections have been added:

- Videos and photos to enrich our site with multimedia tools.
- "*Arabs and the World*": tracks the most important Arab and world news that reflect on Jordan.
- "*Damascus Gate*": focuses on the news of Jerusalem due to its relation to Jordanian issues, especially that the Jordanian government is responsible for managing the Jerusalem Islamic endowments.
- "*Culture*": reports on the Jordanian cultural scene.
- "*Parliament*": monitors the interactions of the House of Representatives.
- An online interactive newsletter has been created allowing subscribers to send messages about the latest news to be published on AmmanNet website.

AmmanNet Website contains also the following pages:

- **Women for Change Page www.ar.ammannet.net/womenforchange**: It publishes reports broadcast during the radio program in text, audio and video and provides the latest news concerning working women.

- **Human Rights Documentaries page** www.ar.ammannet.net/documentary: created in 2010 to publish in-depth reports on human rights issues, and follow-up on human rights movements and public freedoms in the Jordanian arena, this page interacts with the readers on facebook and twitter, in discussing and analyzing opinions and suggestions on the issues presented.
 - **Madmoun Jadeed page** www.ar.ammannet.net/madmoun: This page produces high-quality, in-depth reports on issues of migrant workers, environment and consumer affairs that are under-reported in the local media. The Jordanian and Palestinian journalists, who were trained to cover these issues, produce regular content and build a critical mass of reporting on these issues in local media.
2. **The Parliament Monitor website** www.parliamentjo.net: Broadcasting the parliament sessions directly on air and without any censorship is an important step in maintaining the right of the citizens to have access to information. Al-Balad radio was the first to broadcast the parliament sessions on air for more than a year in 2005. The live broadcast was suspended by the Speaker because of a negative remark by a listener against members of the parliament

The radio broadcast resumed in 2009, thanks to the ability to broadcast the sessions on the internet. Al-Balad radio was able to pick up the internet signal and broadcast it on the air, giving the Jordanian public the chance to hear what their elected representatives have to say.

3. **Eye on the Media website** www.eyeonmediajo.net: This site is a multimedia watchdog website that contains a radio program on media issues in Jordan, such as media freedom and control, skills, standards of journalism, ethics of the profession, the media market and its role and its impact on society.

The website also publishes a report that monitors the content of traditional media and talks about radio, television, newspapers and the internet. It presents a variety of views on media, editors, reporters and writers and the views of citizens and new media activists such as bloggers and online social networks.

"Portrait" is another section of the website that presents prominent media personalities with an impact on the media scene of Jordan. Other sections encourage good media production and praise good business owners, highlight the best news report in the week.

The site provides a free service to media organizations to advertise their job vacancies under a section called "jobs" that contains CVs for job seekers.

4. **Aswatona website** www.aswatona.net: This site was established as part of an integrated project aimed at the creation of seven community radio stations in seven Arab countries namely, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Libya and Tunisia. It connects these radio with other community radio stations in the Arab region and the world.

5. **Al-Balad radio website www.balad.fm:** This website is considered the link between the radio and its listeners outside Amman.
6. **Shabab (youth) website www.shababjo.net:** This website deals with different youth issues in news context and it covers the news in the form of field reports prepared by volunteering youth of both sexes who come from different governorates and reflect different backgrounds.
7. **Community Media Network website:www.communitymedianetwork.org:** This site provides a general definition about the network, its objectives, services, its various projects and about the Board of Trustees.

Social Media Accounts:

What distinguishes "AmmanNet and Al-Balad Radio" pages on social media is that they reflect what CMN offers genuinely in community media and in alternative music. AmmanNet website and Al-Balad radio were steady in maintaining this stream in the pages of social media websites as they do not use cheap and shallow topics and commercial images to attract the audience; its goal is to attract those who are drawn by the content, and to promote the content provided by CMN in different media outlet.

Its role doesn't stop here, but it monitors the key issues that are talked about on social media websites and blogs, and will be discussed during Al-Balad radio news in addition to the specialized program, "Haki Net", which is a weekly half an hour program monitoring issues circulated on social media; news on a certain issue are drafted as well, to be discussed electronically and be published on AmmanNet website.

Al-Balad radio Newsroom the supplying nerve

Al-Balad radio is distinguished in 2012 by covering local events to become the first news radio in the capital Amman, which exclusively covers the live public movement that took place in the kingdom since 2011. Dozens of interns and volunteers who have received training at the radio about the skills needed in the journalistic work provided the radio and AmmanNet website with the latest events.

The number of professional journalists in the newsroom has increased in 2012, as the institution is relying on specialization through different field visits to local institutions and highlighting the citizen's voice on issues of interest such as high prices, and endorsement of political and social laws.

Activities and Challenges: 2011-2012

- **Al-Balad radio celebrating its tenth anniversary**

Al-Balad radio celebrated in 03/20/2011 its tenth anniversary amid a large audience of its listeners and supporters in the presence of the former Minister for Media Affairs and Communications Taher Adwan, and with the presence of the effective listeners Club, which constitutes an important part of the radio work to establish the citizen journalist concept. The celebration was attended by around 350 people.

- **Workshops**

“Towards Full Citizenship Free of Discrimination based on Belief”

A study about the equality of rights of Jordanian citizens irrespective of their religious affiliation was conducted by CMN. The study entitled “Towards Full Citizenship” deals with the problems facing Jordanians of unrecognized religious groups especially Baha’is and Evangelicals. The study was launched at the Landmark Hotel in September 12, 2012 and was followed up by a series of workshops aimed at creating public opinion in support of the need to recognize these groups. The advocacy campaign also included closed meetings with stakeholders. One such event took place in November 13th and based on it, a letter was sent to the Prime Minister asking the government to consider making changes to accommodate Jordanian citizens irrespective of their religious affiliation. The year ended with a workshop discussing the need to remove the religious identity slot that is present on all citizens’ ID cards.

- **Debates**

Community Media Network in collaboration with the Quds Center for Political Studies organized 13 debates during the period of 2011 - 2012 in Amman, Zarqa, Madaba Balqa, Karak, Jerash, Tafileh, Irbid and Aqaba. These debates focused on several laws and issues such as "the economic priorities, the political parties law, the relationship between citizenship and the state, the budget bill for fiscal year 2012, the public movement, the 2012 draft election law, the up-rise of the Islamic movements, the economic situation and public demands, the distribution of development gains on remote areas and the parliamentary elections... between boycott and participation."

During these debates, Al-Balad radio was forced to cancel a debate that was supposed to take place in Rosaifa in the governorate of Zarqa in September 2012 under the title "Water scarcity: failure in planning or forgetfulness and marginalization?"

This activity comes from our strong belief in the importance of the debates to shed light on the most prominent policies and laws that touch the citizens in the community issues.

Achievement and Success

Al-Balad radio and websites programs have made remarkable achievements and successes, of which:

- **ARIJ for investigative journalism Prize:** The news investigative unit in CMN got first prize from "ARIJ, on abuse in care homes for disabled children. The unit also collaborated with BBC in the production of a documentary film on this subject, and also worked with Ro’ya TV on Tawjihi exams leak.

- **"We are all alike" program... Minister of Education visits The Royal Academy for the Blind:** The Minister of Education visited the Academy Monday September 24th, 2012 as a result of the complaints raised during the radio episode by teachers; he listened to the staff about the violations, abuses and mismanagement of the managing director.
- **Tangible success on social Media websites:** With our determination to maintain distinguished content on our pages of social media websites, AmmanNet Page on social media websites has achieved a particular success; the number of followers on "Twitter" approached 10 thousand followers. "AmmanNet" channel on YouTube has been activated, which increased our reach, especially those videos registered in the parliament.
- **Parliament Monitor (Marsad) and its latest news:** In 2011, the parliament monitor completed a study on the performance of the House of Representatives the 16th based on the evaluation of the correspondents in the daily newspapers.
- It also conducted a study on the constitutional amendments at the end of 2011, which were approved by the House of Representatives, providing complete data of the amendments and how each deputy should vote for and whether or not he would be present for the vote.
- The study also published the new Jordanian constitution including the amendments. The University of Jordan has adopted this document for teaching law students.
- The parliament monitor prepared a series of press reports on the Phosphate Company regarding suspicion of corruption was dealt with. A number of deputies and daily newspapers have reported our efforts.
- It introduced new sections on its website, mainly, a video section, and a section for images. It also publishes a section about parliamentary questions and governmental answers, allowing readers to communicate with the deputies.
- **Voice of the Jordan Valley and its achievements:**
 - a) Elimination of stray dogs phenomenon: Chairman of the Sweimah Municipal Committee carried out a major campaign to eradicate the phenomenon of stray dogs. This is the fourth campaign, but the biggest of its kind, after talking about this phenomenon in the program.
 - b) South Shounah municipality establishes a parking lot for vehicles: South Shounah municipality establishes a parking lot for vehicles instead of being in the center of Karama market. The Executive Director of the municipality confirmed that decisions were taken.
 - c) Maintenance on Al-Karamah Bridge: The Jordan Valley Authority conducted maintenance on Al-Karamah Bridge, placing a fence on both sides of the bridge with iron bases to protect people.
 - d) Allocation of salaries and maintenance on lighting units: The Directorate of Social Development in the Northern Jordan Valley has allocated JD70 monthly salary for Souad's very poor family. Maaz Bin Jabal

Municipality in the Northern Jordan Valley carried out maintenance on the lighting units in Al-Manshiya area in the Jordan Valley.

- e) *Solving the problem of overcrowded second grade class*: Director of Education in Deiralla solved the problem of overcrowded second grade class in Thahr Arramel School by transferring a number of students to the boy's school.

1. FM car program and its achievements:

- a) Succeeded in having a patrol car inside the Southern Taxi compound to organize the chaotic traffic as the compound serves five provinces plus the capital Amman.
- b) Succeeded in having a patrol car in Al-Mahata Taxi compound to regulate the traffic and follow up on private cars that work for money.
- c) Succeeded in replacing two warning signals devices at two traffic lights to guide people with special needs.

Community Media Network Projects

1. Aswatona Project

Aswatona Project, a three-year program, includes advocating activities to improve the legislative regulations and the establishment of community radio stations in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, Jordan and Palestine.

"Aswatona Project" consolidates the concept of community-based media and provides means of communication for communities through staff and local volunteers. The project will create popular grassroots support for legislative amendments, and the establishment of a core of radios that will begin broadcasting via internet and satellite, followed by broadcasting through FM waves in countries that give permission, and a comprehensive website will be created to provide complete information about community media as well as an arena for debate. The following radio stations have already been created:

- Sawt Al-Aghwar radio, in Jordan: www.aghwar.fm
- Yemen Times radio, in Yemen: www.radioyementimes.com
- Horytna Bahri radio, in Cairo, www.alex.horytna.net
- Dahriya radio, in Palestine: www.dahriya.com
- Awal radio, in Lybia: www.awal.ly
- Mines FM, in Tunisia: www.minesfm.com
- ANA radio - Syria, broadcast from Cairo: www.radio-ana.net

2. Discrimination against Religious and Ethnic Minorities Project

The project aims at reducing abuses and discrimination on religious and ethnic groups in Jordan, and at seeing their impact in practicing their civil and religious rights, to achieve equality among citizens and consolidate the right to freedom of belief; the project also aims at:

- Requesting the government to recognize minorities religious groups in Jordan,
- Cancelling the entry concerning religion in the Identity Card to achieve justice and greater equality to society,
- Contributing to the elimination of different forms of discrimination that people exercise even without the existence of a law supporting it,
- Drafting outline of a position paper on existing laws, articles discriminating against religious minorities and provide alternative substituting articles,
- Working on a fact-finding study, which is considered the first of its kind in Jordan, relying on an investigative strategy and research about violations against the rights of religious minorities in Jordan targeted in the project with the participation of a team of observers and monitors.

3. Empowering Zarqa's Women using Media Project

A three-year project aiming at training women from the governorate of Zarqa on media; it includes producing a weekly program and a bi-monthly newspaper to cover the issues of Zarqa. The trainees prepare and submit the content under the supervision of professional journalists. It also includes holding seminars on issues related to women in Zarqa.

4. Your voice counts Project

The project will encourage youth aged 18-30 to participate in the decision-making in Jordan by providing them with needed information and engaging them in debates, using new and different multimedia platforms, to make their voices heard in their community.

5. Public Action for Water, Energy and Environment Project

This project is aimed at researching, planning, implementing a training program and creating a guide for representatives of the mass media to ensure improved coverage of issues on water, energy and the environment.

6. Sawt Al-Aghwar Project

The project is about establishing a community radio in Deiralla. The Jordan Valley residents asked for it especially after CMN had broadcast their local issues on Al-Balad radio and AmmanNet website since 2007.

The project is part of "Aswatona" project, which aims at creating community radios in seven countries of the MENA region. Sawt Al-Aghwar radio broadcast online at www.aghwar.fm and through satellite channel after providing training to volunteers on community radios. Soon, it will broadcast on FM wave. For this purpose, the advisory board, which is formed of active

citizens in the Jordan Valley, has collected the signatures of the residents on a petition requesting the government to approve the license.

7. Madmoun Jadeed Project

The purpose of this project is to develop specialized knowledge for Jordanian and Palestinians journalists and create new quality media content in the underreported issue areas of environment, migrant labor and consumer affairs.

8. School Radio Project

The purpose of this project is to train 50 students in two groups on radio and TV skills so they will be able to produce a weekly radio show and broadcast a weekly web TV program on their YouTube channel. The project will focus on building capacities of the students in media fields and develop their personalities; it will enhance the student participation in their communities by engaging them in covering their communities' issues and work for positive change.

9. Research by CMN on Parliament Activities

Community Media Network conducted an informal research about the Parliament's performance during the 18th session of the 15th parliament and its result was published on AmmanNet website. The research was carried out manually and it covered the presence of the MPs and their interventions. The news of the research gained extensive coverage by local newspapers and BBC radio.

10. Citizen Journalism with Al-Balad Radio: Car FM and Listeners' Club

The program "Car FM" focuses on the public drivers and has received a large group of fans through broadcasting weekly and boldly issues concerning public transportation, through its presence with the drivers in the transportation parking lot, and with citizens in the streets.

New Departments at CMN

- **Investigative Reports Unit**

The investigative unit in Al-Balad radio and AmmanNet website, which was founded in 2011, prepares in-depth investigative journalism reports of community issues in a professional documentary manner. In the first year, the unit has accomplished six investigative reports that have dealt with important issues, such as the suffering of patients with thalassemia, sports stimulants, assaults on persons with disabilities, purchase of university graduation thesis projects, waste of grant funds and leaking of Tawjihi questions.

- **Human Rights Department**

The project aims to advocate and promote the rule of law and a culture of human rights in Jordan among the public, official decision-makers and civil society. It aims to support local and international efforts of civil society organizations and individuals and governments in the field of human rights and in their efforts to change the laws according to the recent constitutional and international agreement to enhance the rule of law in protecting human rights. The project will link those actors. It will give voice to people/victims of human rights violations, whose stories will be revealed in the in-depth stories. The programs that are supervised by this department are: “Refugees among Us” that covers the reality of the Syrian refugees in Jordan, “Nas wa Nas”, which is a human rights documentary, “Citizenship and Belief” related to religious minorities in Jordan, “Haqi” related to the legal awareness for citizens and “We Are All Alike” program for people with special needs.

Community Media Network Training

Community Media Network organized a number of training courses on local and Arab levels such as:

- a) **Technical training in the Al-Balad radio studio:** dvv International, the institute for International cooperation, supported a training of Jordanian adults in studio radio skills. The project included the training of ten young men and women in Maan, Karak and Irbid, the Jordan Valley and Amman. The priority was also given to people with movement disabilities so that they may work in the field of Broadcasting Engineering and be integrated into society through productive jobs.
- b) **Al-Balad Radio held training sessions that exceeded the borders of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan:**
 - In June 2012, CMN held a week-long training for Libyan journalists on media coverage of the parliamentary elections with CM Solutions organization.
 - In July 2012, 22 Libyan Journalists benefited from CMN with the partnership of the Foundation for the Future’s professional trainings to build a transparent, independent media network in Libya. The training took place in Benghazi and Tripoli. Topics covered during these trainings were: professional ethics, writing for news and reports, interviewing and field reporting techniques as well as applicable media laws that strengthen legal protection for Libyan journalists.
- c) **Technical training for Syrian refugees:** The journalistic team in the Community Media Network conducted a training course on "*Fundamentals and skills of journalism in conflict zones*" for Syrian refugees in Jordan after the calamities in Syria. The training was held in two phases:
 - In Mafraq, to enable the refugees located in North of Jordan to attend. The training took place from November 3-10/2012 with 56 hours of training in various arts journalism. It was attended by 18 refugees from Irbid and Mafraq.

- In Amman, from November 11-17/2012 with 56 hours of training and it was attended by 15 refugees, residents in Amman and Zarqa.

d) **Building Capacities of Female Citizen Journalists in the Jordan Valley:** Community Media Network underwent training for capacity building in the Jordan Valley to provide women in rural communities with the chance to participate in the media arena and voice their concerns and needs, and those of people in their communities.

Previous Projects

“Kharej Alsirb” (Outside the flock) Project

This is a radio program specializing in dealing with cases involving young Jordanian women. The 24 episodes were centered on the freedoms of Jordanian women, such as tackling for the first time issues considered social taboos for many years. Field reports were conducted and dealt with gender discrimination at work.

East Amman Youth Project

Al-Balad radio launched with the collaboration of the Arab Foundation for Sustainable Development, Ruwwad, one of Aramex institutions, in November 2010, a radio program for the youth of East Amman. This program is aimed at discussing a series of issues relevant to the youth such as citizenship and youth in the media.

The university students, representing "Musaab Khorma grant" took an intensive three months training course on the production of radio programs.

KARAMA Human Rights Film Festival

The first Human Rights Film Festival, was held in Amman from the 5th to the 10th of December 2010.

The festival aims to raise awareness and create debate on critical worldwide human rights issues. Through numerous film and documentary screenings, public talks and discussions, and other cultural activities, the festival aims to bring to light issues of human rights and human dignity to as wide an audience as possible, targeting the general public, school and university students, and community centers around the country.

Karama is organized in collaboration between the **Community Media Network** and **Al Ma3mal 612**, and in partnership with the National Centre for Human Rights.

For more info: www.karamafestival.org

Voice of the World Cup 2010 on Al-Balad Radio

During the period from June 6th until July 11th, 2010 Al-balad radio presented a special and exceptional coverage for the "South Africa World Cup 2010" through live transmission and comments through its program the "Voice of the World Cup", in order to provide radio coverage to the largest possible segment of listeners and to those who cannot afford to watch the games on TV.

The program was widely received among the Jordanian public who interacted with it through phone calls, sharing their expectations and winning prizes; the broadcast included analysis concerning of coaches, players, media and critics involved in the World Cup.

Al-Balad radio in support of independent Arab media

The Washington-based IREX Institute won a three year competitive grant aimed at improving media in the Arab world. AmmanNet's portion of the grant includes coordinating a yearly fellowship to the US for mid-career journalists and supervising the distribution of ten grants to Arab documentary makers totally \$150,000 annually. On the first of October 2006, twelve journalists from Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Tunisia traveled to Chicago's North Western University for four weeks class based courses to be followed by six weeks of internship in a major US media outlet. Also 5 journalists from Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon have been chosen to receive grants to produce documentary films on controversial Arab social issues.

Our News in the Media

The court of Appeal acquitted Al-Balad radio of the charge of abuse of the House of Representatives charged by the Audiovisual Commission. This verdict was a victory for the freedom of press in Jordan assuring that the judiciary is the main media protector.

A blog on the city of Amman won a contest on video blogs: AmmanNet website with the collaboration of IREX organized a contest on video blogs. A blog on the city of Amman, presented by Maisam Saleh won the first prize. She was invited to participate at the bloggers conference in Amsterdam.

Al-Balad radio staff awarded best investigative report: HRH Princess Basma honored journalist Hadeel Albis for earning the award of best investigative report entitled "**Al-Baqaa . . . between rapid growth and cruel living conditions**" during the local journalism competition.

Cooperation Agreement between the "Yarmouk University" and Al-Balad Radio in November 2008

A joint cooperation agreement was signed between Yarmouk University and Al-Balad radio in order to train a number of students from the faculty of Mass Communication on radio broadcasting skills as well as training radio Yarmouk FM personnel on the radio mechanism.

About Al-Balad Radio/AmmanNet

In the fall of 2000, using the opportunities that the internet provided, award winning Arab journalist Daoud Kuttub launched the Arab world's first internet radio. With funding from the Open Society Institute and UNESCO, the Director of UNESCO's Amman office, Martin Hadlow and Nidal Al-Hadid, mayor of Amman, launched on November 15th, 2000 the new web-based station. AmmanNet began its first year

under the patronage of UNESCO and the Greater Amman Municipality. AmmanNet began producing audio reports, news bulletins and a variety of programming all of which were posted on the Net. Rebroadcasts of the programs (especially from nearby Palestinian stations) were pursued so as to create a terrestrial home for all the audio content that was being posted on the internet. Large sectors of Jordanian society would thus have the opportunity to hear and follow radio programming created in their own country but being broadcast with the help of the internet.

AmmanNet (the Voice of the Community) as its sub heading stated has in reality become the voice of the community. It began broadcasting terrestrially on 92.4 FM in the Amman metropolitan area in the summer of 2005. According to the license, the content included general programming excluding politics and news. But in September of the same year, it became the first independent radio station to broadcast news.