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October 2018 | Implementing Partners Newsletter

Bringing our implementing partners the most recent news and information over the past month. Learn about USAID's support in your communities and about our mutual goals across all sectors.

DO 1: Broad-Based, Inclusive Economic Development Accelerated



Jordan Competitiveness Program

USAID Jordan Competitiveness Program Extends Grant to Strengthen U.S.-Jordan Trade

The USAID Jordan Competitiveness Program has extended a grant to the American Chamber of Commerce in Jordan, which will receive additional support to continue strengthening the Tijara Coalition for export promotion, as well as to provide direct assistance to Jordanian companies with current or potential exports to the United States. As part of the program's ongoing work with the American Chamber of Commerce in

Jordan, the USAID Jordan Competitiveness Program will support 25 Jordanian enterprises to grow and diversify their exports to the United States, organize six training sessions on exporting for 30 Jordanian companies, and continue supporting the Tijara Coalition in order to increase Jordanian exports. The grant has already yielded significant gains in helping Jordan further leverage a Free Trade Agreement with the United States, including through the establishment of a dedicated Free Trade Agreement unit at the American Chamber of Commerce in Jordan, which, along with the Tijara Coalition, has facilitated several trade missions in the last year alone. Through these and other activities, this grant has generated \$844,010 in new exports.

Sustainable Cultural Heritage through Engagement of Local Communities Project

Capacity Building for Museum Staff

This month SCHEP hosted two training workshops for museum employees. The first took place in Madaba and trained participants in artifact photography.



Participants practiced their new skills at the Madaba Regional Archaeological

This five-day training program gave 13 participants the opportunity to learn from international experts about use of lighting and scale, Photoshop, and other skills related to photographing objects for museums. The second training program, also in Madaba, focused on artifact display. The training gave Department of Antiquities and other future Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum employees ideas on best practices in conserving, restoring, and presenting objects.

Park

These training sessions offered professional development opportunities for their participants, preparing them for success in their fields and ensuring they are able to protect and present Jordan's rich cultural heritage.

Local Enterprise Support

Over 50 Women-Owned Home Maintenance Businesses Reach New Customers through Mobile App

Through an initiative to support women-owned businesses in non-traditional sectors, USAID Local Enterprise Support has supported Aoun, a Jordanian app for home maintenance services, to link 400 local home maintenance micro-businesses to new customers. Aoun was awarded a USAID grant to increase the number of micro and small enterprises in the Aoun network and build the capacity of business owners by focusing on customer service and market access, especially for women-led businesses. To achieve this, USAID funded a training program for 300 service providers on customer service, as well as how to use and register their services on the Aoun app. The grant also enabled Aoun to launch a marketing campaign to register more service providers on the app, through which they received 1,051 applications. As a result, Aoun increased the number of registered service providers from 170 to 400 in just five months, of which 54 are women. Since the grant was awarded in March 2018, 80 service providers, including 37 women, have increased their revenues in a six-month period. The number of orders for maintenance services through the platform has nearly tripled, and the number of users on the application has also increased from 3,500 to 18,000 users in just six months. Read more [here](#).

Building Economic Sustainability Through Tourism

"Old to New" Walk: Locals and Internationals Celebrate World Tourism Day



World Tourism Day participants walk and talk en route to Abdali Boulevard.

More than a hundred people took part in the 'Old to New' cultural walk from Al Weibdeh to Abdali on Saturday, October 13, led by H.E. Issa Gammoh, Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and Taleb Rifai, former Secretary General of the United Nations' World Tourism Organization. The event was held in celebration of World Tourism Day and included local and international participants. It was organized by the Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association with support from USAID Building Economic Sustainability through Tourism and in cooperation with the Jordan Tourism Board, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and the Greater Amman Municipality. Local tour guides drew attention to touristic destinations and historic landmarks along the route to highlight the abundance of unique tourism attractions that Jordan has to offer, and the importance of bringing the local community and the tourism sector closer together to attract tourists to the country. At the end of the walk, different tourism products and digital platforms were showcased for the promotion and discovery of new tourism experiences in Jordan.

To read more about DO 1: Broad-Based, Inclusive Economic Development Accelerated, click [HERE](#)

DO 2: Democratic Accountability Strengthened



National Democratic Institute

More Than 300 Students Graduate From Usharek+ Youth Leadership Program

On Wednesday, September 26, 341 students from 22 Jordanian universities celebrated their graduation from the youth leadership program, Usharek+. Graduates gathered at Ras Al Ein Hangar in downtown Amman, and exhibited their campaigns to more than 150 guests, including government representatives, local and international civil society leaders, university officials and fellow students.



Usharek+ graduates after receiving their certificates on stage.

Before the graduation ceremony, guests had an opportunity to tour the exhibitions, view some of the best photos taken throughout the year, and discuss campaigns with the students. Across the participating universities, students formed 27 campaigns over the course of the 2017-2018 academic year on issues including assistance to marginalized communities, improving the lives of women and girls, increasing opportunities for youth representation in government, and environmental rehabilitation. Many graduates worked directly with elected officials or members of government to achieve their goal, while others built coalitions with international or Jordanian civil society organizations. Representatives of many of those groups were present to take part in the graduation and exhibition.

During the ceremony, graduates spoke about the impact Usharek+ had on their lives, and representatives of five campaigns presented their achievements through song, skits, stories and videos. USAID Democracy, Rights and Governance Office Director Sean Osner and Dr. Thabet Al Nabulsi, Secretary General of the Ministry of Youth, spoke to graduates during the ceremony, encouraging them to continue their political participation beyond the scope of the program and congratulating them on their achievements.



Bent 15 campaign from Yarmouk University presenting their campaigns achievements through a skit.

Media coverage:

- Jordan News Agency
- Ad-Dustour Newspaper
- Jordan Times

Cities Implementing Transparent and Innovative Solutions Activity



New Ma'adi Municipality held its first town hall meeting since the municipal elections last year. Over 200 community members attended the meeting to hear municipal representatives present the administrative and financial report and to exchange ideas, suggestions and complaints about their community. Those 200 community members were joined by over 3,000 viewers who watched a live broadcasting of the meeting on the municipality's Facebook page.

The town hall meeting was held as part of the recently developed New Ma'adi municipal-community outreach strategy, developed with USAID Cities Implementing Transparent and Innovative Solutions. Town hall meetings are an excellent mechanism to use for informing and soliciting feedback from the local community on municipal issues, changes, and taking advantage of new opportunities.

During the town hall meeting, H.E. Mr. Fandi Al-Yasjeen, the mayor of New Ma'adi Municipality, discussed the municipal budgetary process as a means to help focus on the municipal-community partnership to improve municipal services and to improve economic growth. Through a WhatsApp group of mayors and while attending a social event with other mayors, the New Ma'adi mayor briefed over 40 other mayors on the outcome of his town hall meeting. The mayors responded

positively, as they were impressed by the level of transparency in sharing the financial report with the community. They were also relieved to know that this step did not backfire on the mayor. To the contrary, the town hall meeting seemed to strengthen trust and understanding of the Municipality's financial status. As these other mayors were acknowledging that a town hall meeting seemed to be an effective communication tool, many expressed an opinion that they should replicate this in their own municipalities to enable them and their municipal staff to improve their community's trust and increase their community's understanding of their role in advancing municipal services.

The mayor has shared that the feedback he had received after this meeting from members of the community was nearly unanimous in their support and gratitude for such opportunities.

To read more about DO 2: Democratic Accountability Strengthened, click [HERE](#)

DO 3: Essential Public Services Improved

Water Resources and Environment



Non Revenue Water

Large Reduction of Non-Revenue Water in Aqaba through Advanced Metering Infrastructure

The city of Aqaba is one of the only areas in Jordan that has continuous water supply, so the approach to non-revenue

water reduction needs to be different there than in other parts of Jordan. As part of the USAID Non-Revenue Water Project, the Management Engineering Services Contract assisted the Aqaba Water Company in replacing 7,250 mechanical residential water meters with more accurate ultrasonic meters. In addition to the new meters, a communications network and data management systems were installed, enabling two-way communication between the utility and its customers. It was anticipated that ultrasonic meters may have a bigger benefit in Aqaba than in places that have an intermittent water supply because the average flow rate through the customers' meters is much lower than with intermittent supply.



Mechanical residential water meters alongside more accurate ultrasonic meters.

This innovative system of meters and communications network is capable of 24/7 monitoring of district and customer meters which enables continuous measurement of non-revenue water. The system will also improve customer service by allowing customers to receive SMS messages for bills, alerts on suspected leaks in their internal plumbing and updates on their water consumption, which will drastically improve customer satisfaction and transparency.

Baseline non-revenue water measurements were done in the zones where the ultrasonic meters were installed and non-revenue water was remeasured after installation. Results are shown in the table below. They show that the ultrasonic meters dramatically reduced non-revenue water in these locations.

Furthermore, analysis of billed consumption over several months compared to the same customers when they had a mechanical meter showed that billed volume increased by 37% and revenue by 51% (because of the non-linear tariff structure). These are excellent results and could easily justify the complete replacement of all mechanical meters in Aqaba with ultrasonic meters.

This project was completed in the second quarter of 2018 for a total cost of \$2.2 million. The analysis of billed consumption over several months showed that revenue increased by \$150,000 per quarter, giving an expected payback period of only four years. Again, it should be noted that such a benefit would not necessarily occur under intermittent supply.

Water Management Initiative

Yarmouk Water Company Strategic Planning Working Session Prepares Company for Three-Year Workplan

The Yarmouk Water Company, supported by the USAID's Water Management Initiative Project, conducted a working session from October 1 to 2, 2018, to reflect on the multiple strategic planning interventions that were implemented.



Managers at Yarmouk Water Company discussing action plans as part of Business Plan preparation 2019-2021.

Attended by Yarmouk Water Company's board members and management, the working session included sharing the first draft of the 2018 Business Plan, which incorporates all

activities and projects undertaken by the utility during the year. The effort included reflections on achievements and future projects, specific key performance indicators (KPI's), and allocated budgets.

The working session also included the development of a strategic planning manual with detailed policies and procedures, critical strategic planning processes, and an organizational structure of Yarmouk Water Company Strategic Planning Directorate with its key role profiles.

USAID Water Management Initiatives is preparing to develop a comprehensive 2019-2021 Yarmouk Water Company Business Plan to be finalized in October 2018, working closely with relevant stakeholders at the company to implement the business plan and follow up on its progress.

Population and Family Health



Human Resources for Health Activity

Jordan Launches Four-Year Plan to Improve Human Resources for Health

Without a strong and motivated health workforce, Jordan risks reversing progress in the health sector in the face of population growth, economic instability and other challenges. Recent studies indicate that Jordan's health sector lags in many human-resource related factors including human resources for health governance, policy & partnership, management, education, production, development, and planning. The absence of explicit policies to strengthen

human resources for health has been identified as the main reason for previously failed efforts to reform health systems. To date, there is no national human resources for health strategy in Jordan. Accordingly, USAID Human Resources for Health in 2030 provided technical assistance to the High Health Council by developing the National Human Resources for Health Strategy 2018-2022 through a systematic and comprehensive approach.



USAID Director of Population and Family Health Office Daniel Sinclair delivering his speech during the launch National HRH Strategy Launch Event on October 15_ 2018

Under the Patronage of Minister of Health and Chair of the High Health Council Dr. Ghazi Al Zaben, the High Health Council and USAID Human Resources for Health launched the strategy on October 15 in Amman, hosting global and regional speakers. More than 160 stakeholders and representatives participated in the event. By prioritizing the health system and tackling key challenges, the strategy is envisioned to take Jordan a step closer to reaching its vision of attaining Sustainable Development Goals.

"This national strategy comes at a time in which the health sector is facing major challenges as a result of rapid population growth, the transformation of diseases, growing populations of elderly and young persons, and the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis. We hope that this strategy will contribute to enhancing and empowering the health workforce

to ensure the provision of the best health service to all," said the Secretary General of the High Health Council Dr. Mohammad Rasool Tarawneh in his opening remarks delivered on behalf of H.E. Minister of Health Dr. Ghazi Al Zaben.

USAID Director of the Population and Family Health Office Daniel Sinclair said in his speech during the launch event: "Behind every delivery in a facility is a service provider, behind every vaccine injected is a talented nurse or doctor, behind every family planning service provided is a skilled midwife or other health care professional, and behind every medicine taken is a trained pharmacist. This strategy is about all of these people, and everyone else who helps Jordan to improve health outcomes throughout the Kingdom."

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Health, Finance, and Governance Activity

Bridging Gaps in Governorate Health Budgets

The USAID Health Finance and Governance Activity works with the Ministry of Health to support their efforts in decentralization. It has been coordinating and facilitating discussions between health directorates, the Ministry of Health, and decision makers at the governorate-level, and conducting capacity building activities to support the preparation of health budgets at the subnational level that reflect the real needs of their governorates. In 2018, the health sector was allocated an amount of JOD 26.7 million from the decentralization budget for all governorates. When USAID Health Finance and Governance studied this amount with the Ministry of Health, they found that this was insufficient for the actual health needs of the governorates since the health sector represents a large part of services compared to other sectors and is tied to the basic needs of the population.



HFG staff with MOH budget and maintenance staff in a meeting to review health governorate budgets for 2019.

In September 2018 and as a result of HFG interventions, the GOJ increased the amount allocated to health by 23% to JOD34.6 million. These funds represent the result of improved planning and identification of governorate needs in line with the MOH decentralization initiatives.

Success Stories

Rule of Law Program

USAID Supports the GOJ in Concluding the First Government Leadership Program Training for 50 Participants



Public sector participants at the launching ceremony of the Government Leadership Program

At the beginning of 2018, the Government of Jordan set out to develop the Government Leadership Program, a national priority declared by H.M. King Abdullah, to be the primary training program delivered to potential leaders in the public sector. The Institute of Public Administration developed the program in cooperation with USAID Rule of Law Program.

The Government Leadership Program aims to foster a cohort of skilled and capable leaders that collaborate to lead change across the public sector and overcome the most complex challenges hindering the achievement of critical national priorities. This program differs from other leadership programs in that it focuses on addressing one national challenge each year.



Participants receiving theoretical training during the first phase of the Government Leadership Program

The program works with decision-makers in the public sector, develops strong relationships between those in the program, and provides post-training mentorship and support from private and public sector leaders.

USAID Rule of Law Program and the Government of Jordan, represented by the Ministry of Public Sector Development, worked together to develop program priorities and objectives. The Government of Jordan selected "Registration of Economic Activity" as a pilot training topic, which would be delivered to government entities providing this service: Ministry of Industry and Trade, Companies Controller Department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Transport, Greater Amman Municipality, Department of Land and Survey, Social Security Corporation, Tax Department, Investment Commission, and Ministry of Interior.

A competitive selection process for the pilot program identified 50 final participants from high and middle ranking management staff of the targeted entities. The program includes both theoretical and practical phases and the full

implementation cycle is 18 months, beginning at the end of May 2018.

In the practical training phase of the program, 13 mentors, who are former ministers and leading executives from the private sector, oversaw groups of four to five mentees. The mentors' role is to provide guidance to mentees throughout program and in their subsequent careers. Participants, with the support of mentors, first conducted thorough research and analysis on actual problems hindering progress in the public sector regarding the business registration process in Jordan. Participants then devised solution plans with a focus on specific areas for improvement. Assigned mentors will continue to follow-up on the acute realization of the proposed solutions, in cooperation with government entities concerned.

During the closing ceremony of the of the Government Leadership Program, participants presented their business solution plans before an assigned evaluation committee, which reviewed the plans and provided their evaluation scores and remarks.

Content Development Support

The DOC team has created a Content Development Support Form which you can use to request photography and content development not directly related to events from Bidaya and the DOC team. The forms were originally sent to partners and AOR/CORs. However, they will always be available [here](#) for your convenience.

Contact Information

Contact information for USAID/Jordan programs is available on our website: <https://www.usaid.gov/jordan/work-with-us/partners>. If you would like to contact a specific person, please go through your COR/AOR. Thanks.

<https://www.usaid.gov/jordan/work-with-us/partners>

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USAID | JORDAN
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October 2018 | USAID Implementing Partner Newsletter

DO 1: Broad-based, Inclusive Economic Development Accelerated

Economic Development and Energy

Sustainable Cultural Heritage through Engagement of Local Communities (SCHEP)

FAMILIARIZATION TRIP TO BRING GREATER ATTENTION TO OFTEN IGNORED SITES



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SCHEP works to promote both international and domestic tourism, in the hope that visitors will help invigorate the local economy and gain a greater appreciation for Jordan's rich culture and history. To help stimulate domestic tourism, SCHEP organized trips for university students throughout the month of October. More than 190 students from both the University of Jordan and Ammon University visited the SCHEP sites of Busayra, Ghawr as Safi, Umm al Jimal, Ayla, and Wadi Ramm. Students not only toured and learned the history of these sites, they also got to spend time with the local communities through community led events and experiences such as cooking and hiking.

University of Jordan Students at Busyra,

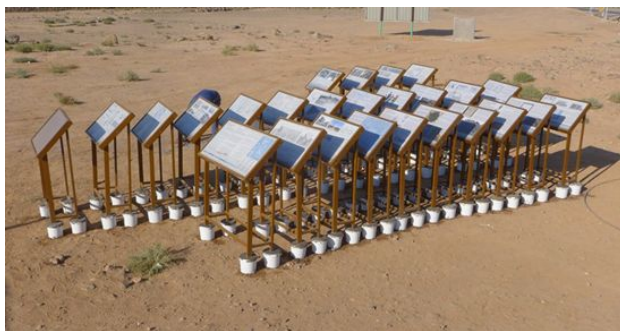
University of Jordan Students at Tawaheen as-Sukar, Archaeological Site,

INSTALLATION INTERPRETIVE SIGNS IN UMM EL-JIMAL

SCHEP endeavors to make heritage understandable and accessible for all. To this end, SCHEP installed 33 bilingual signs Umm al Jimal to explain the unique and living history of the site. Not only does this allow both international and Jordanian visitors to get more out of their experience at Umm al Jimal, but it is also an important step towards getting Umm al Jimal added to the World Heritage List.



Labors during installing signs



33 bilingual signs before installation

Jordan Competitiveness Program (JCP)

JCP Export Promotion Work Goes into High Gear

The USAID Jordan Competitiveness Program (JCP) has completed an in-depth analysis of the technical and legal requirements for operationalizing Enterprise Jordan, a proposed national export promotion institution for Jordan. The report, which includes recommendations for the setup of the new institution, will ultimately assist the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Supply (MoITS) as it works to establish the new entity. Once established, Enterprise Jordan will consolidate the export promotion work of several donors and Government of Jordan entities, streamlining efforts and improving their prospects for sustainability.

The effort comes as JCP also works on a second round of its sought-after Firm-Level Assistance (FLA) program, assisting four new companies with marketing their products to potential external buyers, including in the United States, the European Union, and key African countries. The companies, which specialize in producing dates, herbs, and olive oil, are part of a cohort of nearly dozen firms that have participated in the first and second rounds of the FLA program. The program's aims include improving the packaging of Jordanian products with an eye to marketing them in overseas markets. The four new companies will receive technical assistance in this and other areas through December of this year.

JCP has also been working with the Jordan Exporters Association (JEA) to finalize preparations for two of the region's most high-profile trade exhibitions, Yummex and Gulfood, which will showcase the Kingdom's top food industry manufacturers. At least two dozen companies are expected to participate in the two-day Dubai events, beginning on October 30 and November 6, respectively. Spanning sweets, snacks, and beverage producers, the Jordanian companies are receiving partial support for space rental, pavilion design, and other administrative costs thanks to a JCP activity that is working to boost exports in key sectors of Jordan's economy. Ahead of the Dubai exhibitions, the companies will be meeting with JCP-hired international marketing and export development experts, who are working with the JEA to help secure new trade deals in key sectors. The effort is part of USAID's wide-ranging assistance to Jordan's top exporting industries, which have benefited from JCP research, B2B facilitation, and marketing support aimed at the U.S., EU, and African markets.

New Investor Guide Goes Live

The Jordan Investment Commission (JIC) has posted a new Investor Guide, redrafted and redesigned with assistance from the USAID Jordan Competitiveness Program (JCP), to its website, where prospective financiers of projects in the country turn for background on key economic sectors, tools for registering new enterprises, and other one-stop guidance. The new guide is based on the JIC's Five Pillar Strategy and is a critical deliverable under the World Bank's Program for Results, which governs much of the international financial institution's support to the Kingdom. JCP has been instrumental in building the capacity of the JIC Investment Promotion Department, which published the Investor Guide. JCP also assisted in drafting the JIC's Investment Promotion Strategy, which has served as a baseline for much of the Commission's work since. The new Guide can be found online [here](#).



Building Economic Sustainability Through Tourism (BEST)

Pathways to Professionalism celebrates Level 3 expansion

Under the Patronage of H.E. Lina Annab, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, a ceremony was held today to mark the expansion of the Pathways to Professionalism program, which offers advanced specialized training to a wider array of professions for hotel employees to upgrade their qualifications while on the job. A new level of training (Level 3) was developed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in coordination with the hotel industry and was piloted in the food production department at the Amman Boulevard Arjaan by Rotana. The new training will be rolled out to all of the hotels around Jordan that have adopted Pathways to Professionalism. Today's ceremony was also a celebration of more than 150 employees from hotels in Amman, the Dead Sea, and Petra who have completed the program's Level 2 training. In addition, the W Hotel Amman officially adopted Pathways to Professionalism, bringing the total number of participating hotels in Jordan to 27.

The USAID Building Economic Sustainability through Tourism project launched the Pathways to Professionalism program in 2016 in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Vocational Training Corporation. The program offers on-the-job training for hotel employees in three professions: food production, housekeeping, and food and beverage service. To date, 1,686 hotel employees have been trained under the program, which accounts for approximately 8% of all hotel employees in Jordan and 12.5% of Jordan's four and five-star hotel employees.



Yasmeen Al Qura'an receives her certificate for completing her Pathways to Professionalism training in food production.

"The successful implementation of Level 3 is proof that there is always room for development and growth," said H.E. Lina Annab. "As this program continues to expand and encompass more levels of the hospitality sector, these trained and qualified individuals will contribute to lifting Jordan to its full potential within the tourism sphere."

Russell Bauer, director of the Office of Economic Development and Energy at USAID's mission in Jordan, added, "Pathways to Professionalism is crucial in preparing Jordan's hotel employees at

a time when tourism and hospitality are expanding at a rapid rate, requiring a higher level of delivery and performance.”

According to Imad Zaboura, general manager of the Amman Boulevard Arjaan, “The Pathways to Professionalism program is changing the face of on-the-job training in the tourism sector by empowering hotels to recruit, train, and qualify their workforce to prescribed standards.” He added, “Our staff really enjoyed participating in Pathways to Professionalism and they were particularly eager to attain official certification.”

USAID partners with the Government of Jordan to accelerate broad-based, inclusive economic growth in the kingdom. The United States government, through USAID, has provided foreign assistance from the American people to Jordan for more than 60 years.

Guide training course brings new opportunities to residents of As-Salt

USAID BEST, in partnership with the Salt Development Corporation (SDC), is providing training to residents of As-Salt to become future guides for the city as part of efforts to enhance tourism experiences and create work opportunities for the local community. Following a call for applications in September 2018, 18 new trainees and 6 experienced guides began the training course. Most are residents of As-Salt or of *Salti* origin, and 12 of them are women.

The applicants were evaluated by a committee of representatives from SDC, BEST, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and the Ammon Applied University College of Hospitality and Tourism. The course, which runs until November, is equipping trainees with the knowledge and skills to guide visitors along the city walking trails of As-Salt. It covers topics from geography, geology and history to religious tourism, architectural models, guiding skills and English for tourism. The course includes field training that covers the main touristic spots in As-Salt downtown area, like Al Khader Church, Citadel Hill and Al Ein Square. It also allows participants to venture beyond the trail into surrounding areas, such as Wadi Shueib and Al-Maghtas. This will provide them with comprehensive knowledge and experience that will qualify them for a career in guiding.



“Wow! I cannot describe how I feel about the training and the things that I've been learning so far,” said Sajeda Al Zo'bi, one of the trainees. She added, “I thought that I knew my hometown very well, but through the training I discovered that there's a lot that I had not known about the history and geography of As-Salt and many other details.”

"Although I'm from As Salt and have been living here my whole life, I've learned so many things that I didn't know before," reiterated Anwar Abu Hamoor, another participant. He added, "In addition, the course drew my attention to the guidelines that we need to follow to become professionals in guiding."

Husam Arabiat, one of the experienced trainees, has been a guide for four years. He said, "I've joined this course to gain more knowledge and develop my skills. For me, the training will enable me to answer every single question addressed to me, as it covers gaps in our knowledge as guides."

The course concludes in November and participants will be eligible to apply for positions as freelance local tour guides through SDC to guide visitors.

The course is part of wider efforts by SDC and USAID BEST to establish As-Salt and its rural areas as an attractive tourism destination under the Distinctive Destination Program.

Local Enterprise Support (LENS)

USAID LENS launches Business Hub Kiosk micro-franchise project

Supported by USAID LENS, The Business Hub powered by Migrate organized a launch event for the Business Hub Kiosk micro-franchise project. The Business Hub Kiosk Project aims to support business growth in Azraq, Mafraq, and Irbid. The event featured the three selected micro-franchisees, who will be managing Business Hub Kiosks in each of the three listed cities. Invitees included: Business Hub Network members, and organizations who work in Mafraq, Irbid, and Azraq, and may have interest in working with the franchisees (especially NGO's).

DO 2: Democratic Accountability Strengthened

Democracy and Governance

National Democratic Institute (NDI)

NDI'S WOMEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION PROGRAM HOLDS A WORKSHOP FOR PARLIAMENTARY WOMEN CAUCUS ON CYBERCRIME LAW AND DEBATE



Members of the Parliamentary Women Caucus during the workshop on Cybercrime Law

On October 18, NDI's Women Political Participation Program held a two day workshop for 12 members of the Parliamentary Women Caucus in the city of Petra to discuss the proposed amendments to the Cybercrime law and widen the Women MPs' exposure to different opinions. The workshop also included a training on debate skills as requested by women parliamentarians.

On the first day of the workshop, journalist Khaled Qudah, member of the Jordanian Press Association (JPA) and human rights advocate, highlighted the provisions of the law that restricts people's right to free speech and expression, emphasizing that the most dangerous aspect of the law is its broad and vague definitions which will leave more room for judicial interpretations, such as the definitions of "Hate Speech". He emphasized that we have the Penal Code to prosecute any abusive language, but criticizing performances is a right for all. He added that activists have been fighting for years to stop pretrial detention of journalists and now they have to fight more for the freedom of speech in addition to their cause.

From a legal perspective, Esraa Mahadin, lawyer and Founder of Karak Castle Center for Consultations & Training explained the definition of the Cybercrime law in its current form. She stressed that the law contradicts other laws and occasionally overlaps with others, since the Penal code already criminalizes

abusive actions, the anti-terrorism law criminalizes terror related movements and the Press and publication law prosecutes journalists' misdeeds. Mahadin went through critical details of the law that directly restrict Freedom of speech.



Members of the Parliamentary Women Caucus during the training on debate skills

On the second day, participants were trained on debate skills and techniques to improve their presentation skills.

"This Bill raises the question of how can we find a balance between safeguarding Jordanians' dignity from abuse and protecting freedom of expression. This workshop had made lots of things clearer for us." MP Rasmiya Kaabneh

"We should be thankful for the media for conveying important news that was not previously reachable, such as news on corruption cases. If this law was passed we will lose a fundamental source of information, we will lose the freedom to express." MP Safa Al Momani

NDI'S CSO PARTNER AL QUDS CENTER FOR POLITICAL STUDIES ORGANIZES A WORKSHOP ON "DECENTRALIZATION: RESPONSIBILITIES AND MECHANISM OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE GOVERNORATE COUNCILS AND PARLIAMENT"



Participants during Al Quds Center for Political Studies workshop on decentralization

On September 24, NDI's CSO Partner Al Quds Center for Political Studies held a workshop titled "Decentralization: Responsibilities and Mechanism of Partnership between the Governorate Councils and Parliament" in Amman to discuss the policy paper issued earlier by Al Quds Center on "New Mechanisms to involve Parliament and the Newly Elected Governorate Councils in the State Budget Cycle". The workshop opened a discussion between members of the House of Representatives and members of the governorate councils and saw the attendance of 90 participants including 15 MPs.

The first session of the workshop commenced with a presentation of findings and recommendations of the policy paper by Dr. Oraib, Director General of Al Quds Center followed by speeches from the Chairman of the Finance committee Mr. Ahmad Al Safadi, Rapporteur of the Permanent Committee in Economy and Investment Mr. Omar Qaraqesh, Mrs. Wafaa Bani Mustafa Coordinator of Mubadara Parliamentary Bloc and Dr. Musa Al Wahsh from Islah Parliamentary Bloc. The session was concluded with an open discussion between the officials and attendees where MPs gave their perspectives on decentralization in Jordan, with a particular focus on the relationship or lack thereof between the Parliament and Governorate Councils along with recommendations on how to improve the relationship.



Participants during Al Quds Center for Political Studies workshop on decentralization

The second session was devoted to the opinion of a number of presidents and members of the Governorate Council, followed by a discussion with the attendees. This workshop discussed the responsibilities of the Governorate Councils in relation to their approval of the state budget cycle and also the role of the House of Representatives in approving the budget of the governorates.

Subsequently, Al Quds center collected a number of recommendations from attendees' views, which will be included in the amended policy paper. Some of the recommendations mentioned were as follows: to hold more meetings between MPs and members of Governorate councils; also to allow political parties to be involved in Governorate Councils elections to enable parties to exist in both Parliament and Governorate Councils, thereby building greater partnership and communication; and finally Governorate Councils should collaborate to develop a targeted set of amendments to the Decentralization Law and submit their recommendations to Parliament, Parliamentary blocs, and MPs.

ANA USHAREK-SCHOOLS PROGRAM TRAINS STUDENTS FOR THE STUDENT PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS



Students from Hay Sikareen School for Girls in Ajloun preparing for the students Parliament elections

The elections lesson in Ana Usharek-Schools program's curriculum was given great importance this month as it goes parallel with the elections of the Student Parliament at schools.

Every year and specifically in September, schools across the Kingdom elect their Student Parliament for grades five to twelve where two students from each class are elected. Through these parliaments, the Ministry of Education seeks to prepare future leaders and enhance democratic practices.

This year, Ana Usharek-Schools Program was the focal point in training all Ana Usharek-Schools students running for the Schools' Parliaments elections in all 238 schools in the different directorates across Jordan.