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SUCCESS STORY

Inherited knowledge: how educated generations emanate from cohesive societies

Youth Organizations in Rural Communities Work with Municipalities to Empower Young Adults through Education



Mr. Shaher Al-Othman builds a more educated and knowledgeable generation as he teaches students from his town.

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In Jordan's eastern desert lies the city of Al Hallabat, where there is a growing interest among young adults to take extra English courses prior to college. For a long time, these students had to travel to adjacent governorates to enroll in classes that support standard school curricula. For many, and chiefly girls, this meant they were not able to attend these extra classes at all, given the long distances.

Through the USAID Jordan Cities Implementing Transparent, Innovative, and Effective Solutions (CITIES) Project assistance to municipalities in bringing youth service providers together into locally formed networks; there was an unexpected and very positive outcome.

These USAID supported networks identify individuals who can meet the critical needs of youth in their municipality and provide them with training and resources to accomplish their goals. Shaher Al-Othman is one such individual who is greatly invested in the city of Al Hallabat, where he grew up. An activist and true philanthropist, Mr. Al-Othman, an English teacher in neighboring Al Dhulail municipality by day, is willing to provide students in Al Hallabat with extra English classes in his free time so they are more prepared for the competitive entrance exams that determine college placements.

Through the youth service provider network, a local organization called All Jordan Youth Commission, a royal initiative that aims to engage young people by activating their participation in political; economic; and social life, was able to harness Mr. Al-Othman's passion and channel his efforts so that he could reach even more students. “These networks, through All Jordan Youth Commission, made it possible for me to reach out to many underprivileged students and helped institutionalize my work,” says Mr. Al-Othman.

Education in Jordan has become the shortest, yet most effective route towards sustainable development with an illiteracy rate dropping by 4.2 per cent from 2000 to 2016, according to the Jordanian Department of Statistics (DoS). Having obtained a Master's degree in English language and literature, Mr. Al-Othman recognizes that a good education makes for a strong community. “There's a great pleasure in passing the knowledge on to the young,” he says. “It is a seed that you plant and watch pay off as these students grow up and serve their country.”

Jordan CITIES is working in 33 municipalities across the kingdom with youth service providers, like All Jordan Youth Commission, to support community cohesion by creating opportunities for youth.

Through the continued partnership between municipalities and youth service providers, even more youth will have new opportunities to expand their horizons. And with individuals like Mr. Al-Othman ready to support these efforts, who have the skills and passion to help them achieve their goals, they are well on their way.