

## Inherited knowledge: how educated generations emanate from cohesive societies

With an illiteracy rate dropping by 4.2 per cent from 2000 to 2016 as reported by the Jordanian Department of Statistics (DoS); education in Jordan has become the shortest, yet most effective route towards sustainable development. Over the past few decades, Jordan has seen a growing interest in extra English courses that augment the standard school curricula. These courses help prepare young adults for the competitive entrance exams that determine the students' college placements.

For a long time, students from Al Hallabat had to travel to adjacent governorates to enroll in these classes. For many, and chiefly female students, given the long distances they would need to travel, this meant they were not able to attend these extra classes.



The USAID Jordan Cities Implementing Transparent, Innovative, and Effective Solutions (CITIES) Project assists municipalities to harness key capacities within their local communities by bringing youth service providers together into locally-formed networks which resulted in an unexpected and positive outcome for residents of the Al Hallabat municipality.

These USAID-supported networks identify individuals who can meet the critical needs of youth in their municipality and provide training and resources to accomplish certain goals. Shaher Al-Othman grew up in Al Hallabt and is one such individual who has personally invested in his home city. An activist and true philanthropist, Mr. Al-Othman is an English teacher in the neighboring Al Dhulail municipality by day but provides students in Al Hallabat with highly valued additional English classes in his free time so that the students are more prepared for the college placement entrance exams.

Through the youth service provider network, one local organization, All Jordan Youth Commission, is a royal initiative that engages young people by motivating participation in political, economic, and social life, has followed Mr. Al-Othman's efforts and passion and has channeled them so that they 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.

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."*

USAID CITIES is working in 33 municipalities across the Hashemite Kingdom with youth service providers such as the All Jordan Youth Commission to leverage potential that contributes to strengthening communal cohesion through increased opportunities for youth.

Through the continued partnership between municipalities and youth service providers, even more youth will have new opportunities to expand their horizons. With individuals like Mr. Al-Othman ready to support these efforts, many students are well on their way