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INT@J STRATEGIC PLAN

Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Information Technology Association of Jordan (Int@j) with a Business Model for Sustainability

2007- 2011

May 2007

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Daniel Whitehead.

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Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Information Technology Association of Jordan (Int@j) with a Business Model for Sustainability

2007- 2011

SUSTAINABLE ACHIEVEMENT OF BUSINESS EXPANSION AND QUALITY (SABEQ)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The next five years are critical ones for the Jordanian ICT sector. Accomplishing the goals of the National ICT Strategy requires strong leadership and effective management. As the implementation arm of the private sector, the Information Technology Association of Jordan (Int@j) has a key role to play in achieving these goals. It is therefore essential that Int@j has a clear mandate, that it is managed properly, and that it can support itself financially over the coming five years.

The objective of this five year strategy for Int@j is to define that mandate and to provide a roadmap for sustainability. Accompanying this strategy is a five year business model that illustrates the impact of specific activities on the long term financial outlook at Int@j. The business model provides for a phased reduction of outside financial support for Int@j over the period, as the association builds internal capacity and is able to generate adequate resources on its own through increasing the value of membership.

Int@j should focus on its core competencies. These are promoting Jordan's ICT sector, advocating for regulation & policy reform, supporting capacity building for ICT companies, providing information and research on the ICT sector, and delivering membership services. Int@j should not attempt to provide services, such as training, that are better left in the hands of the private sector.

Sustainability at Int@j will require a long term strategy, effective management and a renewed focus on its membership. The activities outlined in this document are closely aligned with the national goals of the ICT sector. To manage these activities, appropriate project management practices should be put in place that focus on productivity, cost reduction, performance measurement and accountability.

Int@j requires a renewed focus on its membership and their needs. A survey has been developed as a part of the strategy to determine the attitudes and perceptions of members. Ultimately, if companies in the sector do not see the value in membership, the association will become ineffective. Membership dues are the lifeline of the association and Int@j needs membership revenues that cover the greater part of operating expenses.

On the majority of its activities, Int@j should strive to at least break even and to generate a profit whenever possible. This will happen when companies realize the tangible benefits to them from the services professionally delivered by Int@j. Int@j should not have to subsidize the attendance of companies in GITEX, for example, or on trade missions to the Gulf. Participating companies ought to see the value of these activities and be willing to pay their full share. If they do not, Int@j should not be in the business of providing a service that the market is unwilling to buy.

Ultimately, only a focused, efficient and properly financed business association can carry out the critical tasks that are required for the ICT sector to reach its national goals within the next five years.

BACKGROUND

THE HISTORY OF INT@J

In response to a challenge put forth by His Majesty King Abdullah II in July 1999 for the private sector to prioritize the development of Jordan's ICT sector, a core group of members of the ICT industry devised a strategy and action plan identified as the REACH Initiative.

The REACH initiative came about because of a major consultation and research process conducted by Jordanian ICT industry leaders and international and local consultants to design a national ICT strategy for Jordan. The goal was to develop a vibrant, export oriented ICT services sector - thus paving the way for Jordan to become a regional leader and internationally recognized exporter of ICT products and services. The strategy was to be led by the private sector, in partnership with the Government - with the ultimate purpose of favorably positioning Jordan within the knowledge-based economy of the future.

To formulate these initiatives and provide continuity for the efforts, the need for a support program in the form of an ICT business association arose in order to aggressively promote the commercial development of the sector as a whole. Such a body was required to develop and implement policies and strategies in close cooperation with the private sector and take the lead in innovative approaches to human capital development, active support in marketing and financing, upgrading industry capabilities and infrastructure provision.

VISION

Int@j's vision for the national ICT sector in Jordan is for it to become a major regional ICT leader, and an internationally recognized exporter of ICT products & services, exploiting its core human capital advantage.

MISSION

Int@j's mission is to promote and advance the Jordanian software and ICT service industry in the local & global market. It is "results oriented" rather than "activities oriented," meaning it emphasizes the results being produced by the efforts of the organization, instead of simply listing the activities in which the staff and the directors have been involved. Int@j is a "customer-friendly" organization. It continuously informs members, Government and other Stakeholders on the need for the institution. It has adopted a formal public policy advocacy program as a part of its program of work and strategic plan. The plan outlines the organization's recommendations for changes in specific laws that will improve the business investment climate of Jordan. Relationships with other Jordanian organizations are strongly sought.

FUNCTIONS

Int@j aims to fulfill its mission through performing the following functions:

- Promotion of Jordan's ICT sector
- Regulations, Policy and Strategy Formation
- Capacity Building for ICT companies
- Information and Research
- Member Relations

Function One: Promotion of Jordan's ICT sector

Int@j's primary Function is the promotion of Jordan's ICT sector. This function entails marketing and representing Jordan's ICT sector at the local, regional, and international level as a top-notch regional ICT hub. This also involves promoting Jordan's products, services and companies, and communicating developments, success stories, and related news to members, stakeholders, and the local and international ICT & business communities in a professional and effective manner. Activities include:

- Jordan ICT Forum
- Trade missions and regional exhibitions (i.e. GITEX-Dubai)
- Producing promotional materials
- Holding industry specific seminars and workshops.

Function Two: Regulations, Policy and Strategy Formation

Int@j should be the primary representative of the private sector to the Jordanian government in all matters relating to the ICT sector. It is a critical partner with government in developing the National ICT Strategy, and it advocates for legitimate changes to policies that would support the entire ICT sector. This includes:

- Implementing the new National ICT Strategy
- Representing ICT industry interests by advocating with governmental and international groups.

Function Three: Capacity Building for ICT companies

Under Function Three, Int@j will assist its membership in gaining the resources necessary to meet the demand of the growing ICT sector in Jordan. This encompasses expanded financing opportunities, the development of human capital, improvements to quality standards and the enhancement of job-opportunities for fresh graduates and others seeking employment in this sector. Activities include:

- Improving the ability of ICT graduates to perform well in a business environment
- Promoting the adoption of the CMMI standard for software development

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- Promoting the improvement of standards in the ICT sector through awards for quality achievement
 - Developing a strategy for effectively managing an ICT R&D fund

Function Four: Information and Research

- Annual ICT Industry Statistics Report
- Develop an ICT sector classification system jointly with the MoIT.
- Market Studies

Function Five: Member Relations

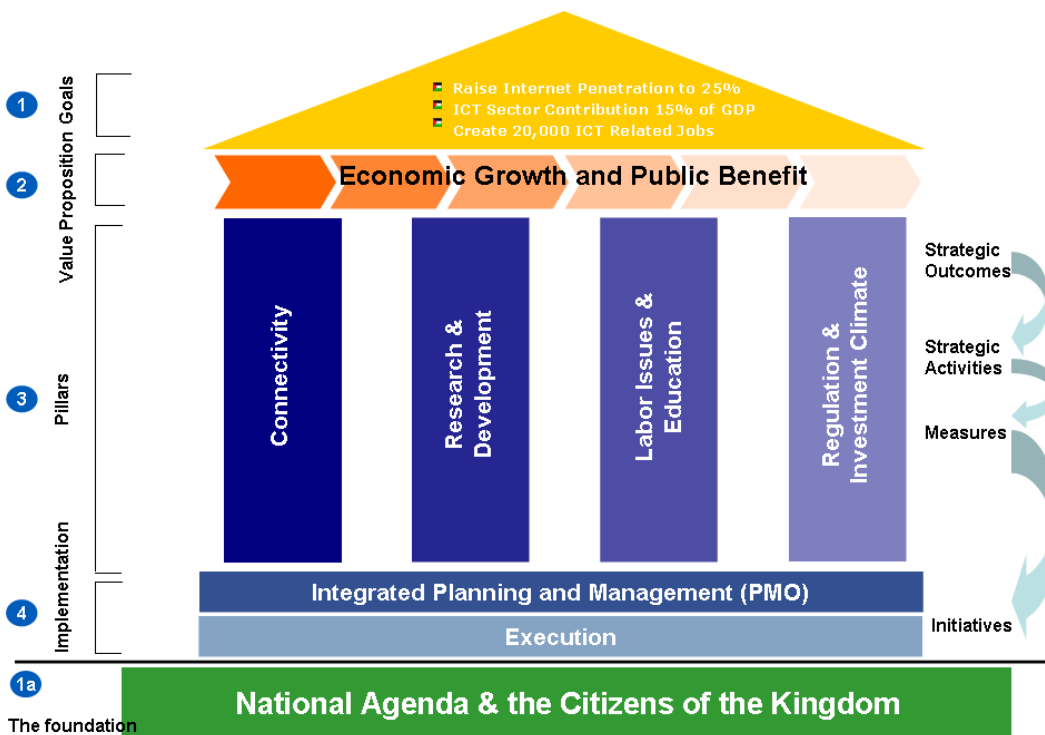
The Function of membership services is to expand and strengthen the association's network of member companies on a continuous basis, in order to reach a point of financial and organizational self-sustainability and client satisfaction. This includes:

- Surveying membership
- Organizing social and networking events for members
- Visiting members and listening to their concerns

Int@j will aim to increase the effectiveness of these services throughout the 2007 - 2011 Action Plan period as a way to build value for its members. Where possible, Int@j will build partnerships with other organizations to leverage work that is already being done in some of these areas.

NATIONAL ICT STRATEGY

Need to link the Int@j Functions to the Four Pillars of the National ICT strategy



ACTION PLAN

OVERVIEW

This section describes the planned activities to be carried out under each of the four main functions. The activities have been designed to capitalize on the strengths and opportunities in the ICT sector, eliminate identified weaknesses and convert such into strengths and to develop strategies to neutralize the threats.

The general purpose of the Action Plan is to determine “what” will be done, by “whom”, “when”, and “how much” in resources will be required. A set of criteria will be utilized to measure the successful implementation of the planned activities.

For each activity, the following details are described:

Description of Activity: A description of the planned activity.

Objectives: The objectives that each activity will accomplish in serving the members and the entire sector.

Tasks: A list of all tasks that will be undertaken to accomplish each objective.

Measurement Criteria: The criteria that will be used to measure the successful implementation of each activity.

Budgets & Sustainability: Financial resources that will be required for successful implementation of planned activities. This section will also address how the activity will become self-sustainable over the five year period of this strategy.

Time Table: A description of when each activity will begin, end, and how long it will last.

FUNCTION ONE: PROMOTION OF JORDAN'S ICT SECTOR

1. HOSTING THE ICT FORUM

Description of Activity

The Jordan ICT Forum is the Kingdom's premier international ICT industry event, held under the patronage of His Majesty King Abdullah II. The Forum brings together over 1,000 regional and international ICT leaders and professionals to review progress made to date in reaching Jordan's strategic ICT goals and share lessons learned. It acts as a gateway for international, regional and local ICT leaders to network and explore the myriad opportunities available in Jordan and across the regional ICT market.

Objective

The objective of the ICT Forum is to promote the image of Jordan as a top-notch regional and international ICT hub. Attendees will learn about Jordan's accomplishments over the preceding two years, success stories, future plans, and any new objectives that have been identified in the National ICT Strategy.

Tasks

Host the ICT Forum in Jordan every two years: Int@j will manage the ICT Forum. It will be responsible for promoting the Forum to its members and other stakeholders in Jordan and throughout the region. Int@j will prepare presentations and line up keynote speakers for the conference. Int@j will coordinate with event sponsors to share the cost of the Forum and to lead to long term sustainability.

Set up an ICT Exhibition concurrently with the ICT Forum: At the next ICT Forum, Int@j will organize an ICT exhibition in an adjacent location where Jordanian and other companies may promote their products. Fees will be charged to exhibitors, which will go toward covering the cost of the exhibition. Over time to exhibition should become a profit center for int@j.

Measurement Criteria

- Int@j holds an ICT Forum in Jordan every two years
- Int@j will host an ICT Exhibition concurrently with the Forum every two years
- Support from USAID for the ICT forum is eliminated entirely within five years
- The ICT Forum exhibition becomes a profit-making activity for Int@j within five years.

Resources & Sustainability

Int@j currently covers the costs of the Forum from several sources: grants, sponsorships and entrance fees. Due to the enduring national importance of the ICT Forum under the patronage of his majesty, the MoICT provides a grant each year, which totaled JD100,000 in 2006. USAID also provided funding in 2006 totaling JD47,000 in 2006. The remainder of the

approximately JD420,000 needed to stage the Forum comes from fees from entrants and exhibitors, and through sponsorships.

Over time the goal is to increase the revenue generated from entrants and exhibitors, and through sponsorships. This should eliminate the need for support from USAID altogether and may reduce the amount of support needed from the MoICT. Better bargaining with the venue provider may also help bring down costs in future Forums.

Time Frame

The ICT Forum is a bi-annual event

2. REPRESENTING JORDAN'S ICT SECTOR IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIRS AND EVENTS

Description of Activity:

Several ICT related conferences, seminars, and forums are organized every year on a local, regional, and international basis. Such events promote new trends, economic developments and new technologies, and they can be a critical marketing tool for countries such as Jordan. Global Industry leaders participate in international events for networking and business development purposes.

Objectives

Since the majority of such events are for the purpose of marketing and promoting the host country, its ICT sector, and business environment, it is critical that Jordan is properly represented in as many major events as possible, and that it be given the opportunity to deliver its message about accomplishments in the ICT sector in Jordan and future development plans.

Tasks

Represent Jordan at Major ICT Events: Int@j will maintain a calendar of all the major ICT related events that are scheduled each year. Int@j will determine which events provide the most impact for itself and member firms, and will provide its recommendations to member companies. For those events deemed critical, Int@j will contact the organizers thereof, and request an opportunity to deliver speeches or presentations on each event's specific topic and on the advantages Jordan offers to International ICT firms and investors.

Maintain contacts with international event organizers and reciprocate: To make sure Int@j is repeatedly invited to important events, the association needs to maintain close contacts with the organizers thereof, and provide them the same opportunities to speak during events that are organized by Int@j in Jordan and abroad.

Participate in GITEX: Int@j will participate in GITEX Dubai each year. This trade fair is the largest in the region and the most critical. Int@j's participation will be in the form of a national pavilion, whereby a number of member companies are consolidated and organized in one space which is properly

supported by a PR campaign, logistics, and direct marketing services. Direct expenses per participant are thus reduced significantly as all participants share such efforts. The cost of attending GITEX is currently subsidized through grants from USAID and the Business Development Center (BDC).

Measurement Criteria

- Int@j has established a comprehensive calendar of annual international events, maintains close communications with organizers, and offers such opportunities to speak during events organized by Int@j.
- Int@j will make available to members via its quarterly magazine its event recommendations so they can determine the probable value of each event to their business.
- Int@j's participation in GITEX Dubai yields enough funds directly from participants within five years to eliminate the need for subsidies from BDC.

Resources & Sustainability

Int@j reserves enough exhibition space at GITEX for ten companies. Then companies interested in attending GITEX apply to BDC for a subsidy. If approved by BDC, the companies pay BDC half of the costs, and BDC will pay Int@j the full amount for each company. The amount charged per company has been kept lower than the full costs in order to increase participation. There are other expenses, such as public relations and marketing that have needed additional support from USAID. Companies do pay their own travel expenses, and Int@j staff travel is considered an activity expense.

Over time, companies should come to see the value of attending GITEX and should be willing to pay more of the total cost themselves, without a subsidy from BDC. At the end of five years, BDC should no longer be subsidizing GITEX attendance for companies.

Time Table

Recurring annual events

3. ORGANIZING IN-COMING & OUTGOING TRADE MISSIONS

Description of Activity

Meeting potential vendors and clients at trade fairs and other events is a critical element in establishing business contacts. However, as final contracts and sales are usually not signed during such events, more follow-up work is necessary to attain tangible results. After participating in industry trade-shows, Int@j will arrange incoming and outgoing trade-missions for firms and investors from countries that show the highest interest in or potential for Jordan's ICT sector.

Objective

To take advantage of the contacts made during industry trade events, thus assisting members in completing the sales cycle, and encouraging inward investment into Jordan.

Tasks

Organizing trade missions following participation in International ICT trade events: Int@j will organize trade missions to and from target markets that have been identified as potential business opportunities. Outgoing missions will include representatives from Int@j and member companies, while incoming missions may include foreign firms and investors. These missions are co-organized with business associations located in the targeted regions. The counterparts will be required to assist in identifying local companies that may be interested in meeting with the Jordanian delegation, assist in logistics, and the overall successful execution of each trade mission. Int@j will require external counterparts in target regions to assist in planning, logistics, and execution.

Participate in the organization of Incoming Trade Missions arranged by others: In addition to arranging its own incoming trade-missions, Int@j will also participate actively in incoming trade-missions that are arranged by other entities, such as the government or other business associations. Int@j will assume the role of co-organizers, and ensure that incoming visitors operating in the ICT industry meet a sufficient number of local companies and stakeholders. Int@j will require close cooperation with – and support from – other business association and organizations that organize incoming trade mission for their members.

Measurement Criteria

- Int@j organizes at least one outgoing trade mission to potential target markets.
- Int@j participates in the management and logistics of incoming trade missions that are organized by other business associations.

Resources & Sustainability

Currently, participating companies pay their own travel expenses on the outgoing trade missions. Nevertheless, that leaves many other expenses to be covered by Int@j, including marketing and promotion of the trade mission, and Int@j staff travel. Over the course of five years, participating companies should be encouraged to pay more of the marketing and promotion costs themselves, leaving only the Int@j staff travel as an activity expense.

Time Table

Ongoing annual events

4. DEVELOPING PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING MATERIALS

Description of Activity

Marketing and Public Relations (PR) can be an effective tool in disseminating information about Jordan's ICT sector. Jordan's ICT accomplishments should be communicated in a professional and attractive manner.

Objectives

Int@j will at all times maintain informative and professionally presented marketing materials, including brochures, literature, a CD-ROM about the industry and other materials that provide important information about Jordan. These products will be distributed in packages, which will also be made available to other organizations that continuously disseminate information about Jordan.

Tasks

Publish a quarterly magazine: Int@j produces a quarterly magazine entitled, "Eye on Technology." This magazine has grown from a simple newsletter into a full fledged publication about the ICT Sector in Jordan. Int@j currently distributes the magazine for free to its membership and to other stakeholders throughout Jordan and in the Gulf. Int@j also sells advertising in the magazine.

Maintain updated corporate brochure: As an organization, Int@j will provide a corporate brochure that includes the association's mission statement, objectives, and other important information about the association.

Maintain updated documentation on latest accomplishments: A number of press-releases and publications will be prepared and included in the package. Visitors and others that receive the package will at all times be informed about Jordan's most recent accomplishments and success stories. CD-ROMs will also be developed for all major events that are organized by Int@j, such as the annual Jordan ICT Forum and others.

Maintain hard copies of the National ICT Strategy: The National ICT Strategy is probably Jordan's most critical marketing tool, as it clearly demonstrates the Kingdom's unified and aggressive vision.

Measurement Criteria

- Int@j publishes a quarterly magazine. At the end of five years, income from advertising in the magazine should cover all of Int@j's printing expenses.
- Int@j's corporate brochure is continuously updated and offered within the package and an updated and comprehensive CD-ROM about Jordan's ICT sector is available at all times.
- Recent accomplishments are well documented and made readily available to interested parties.

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- Int@j package includes small flyers & brochures about Jordan's major initiatives, stating their respective mission statements, objectives, visions, and purposes.

Resources & Sustainability

The goal, over time, is to have all of the Int@j PR expenses paid entirely from advertising in the quarterly magazine. That would require selling perhaps JD5-6,000 in advertising for each edition. Costs to produce the magazine may go down over time as it becomes a regular publication.

Time Table

Ongoing activity

5. CREATING A “JORDANIAN AMBASSADORS’ PROGRAM”

Description of Activity

Jordan is experiencing an exodus of human resource talent to the Gulf countries, Western Europe, and the United States. Most of these individuals are expected to remain and work abroad.

Int@j firmly believes that such individuals can still form a significant advantage, and contribute significantly to the development of Jordan's economy by assuming the role of “ambassadors” and representatives.

Many Jordanians that immigrated to other countries hold powerful positions within their organizations and social statuses, and are in position to generate a significant amount of “deal flow” to Jordan. Additionally, influential Jordanians residing abroad are able to encourage foreign investors to consider Jordan as a destination for their ambitions.

Objective

To capitalize on such individuals, Int@j will develop a “Jordanian Ambassadors” program, that is designed to equip influential Jordanians residing abroad with the necessary knowledge and support needed to effectively represent their country among their peers. This program includes continuous updated information about Jordan's accomplishments, statistics, promotional material, and as many “tools” as possible to support Jordan's reputation and cause abroad. Outstanding Ambassadors will be recognized at the bi-annual ICT Forum.

Tasks

Develop guidelines of the “Ambassadors” Program: In order to ensure a successful program, implementation needs to be planned very carefully, providing detailed guidelines as to the various components, objectives, methodology of selecting and recruiting ambassadors, and the continuous support thereof. Once the program has been fully designed and is ready to be launched, Int@j will host a large-scale reception inviting potential candidates to a presentation and “pitch” to participate.

Identify and recruit a national patron for the program: As most other national initiatives, a champion or patron willing to adopt the program will play a critical

role in attracting as many potential candidates and supporters as possible. Ideally, His Majesty King Abdullah would be the ultimate candidate for this program's champion, as His Majesty's call for assisting Jordan will be heard and abided.

Web-based portal for exchange of ideas and contact: An online portal will be developed and maintained for the exchange of ideas, business opportunities, and contact information. Int@j will be responsible for maintaining the site.

Comprehensive promotional package is developed: To support the future endeavors of the "ambassadors", Int@j will develop an attractive and comprehensive promotional kit about Jordan's ICT sector, and distribute such to regional distribution hubs (Jordanian diplomatic corps) for further distribution to Jordanian expatriates. Kits will include economic & market data, information about Jordan's legislative environment, a booklet highlighting success stories, testimonials, and several other promotional tools.

Measurement Criteria

- A Patron has been identified and prepared for this responsibility.
- The "Ambassador's Program" is fully developed and ready to be launched and implemented.
- A comprehensive and highly interactive web-site is developed, launched online, and maintained up-to-date.
- A comprehensive promotional package is developed, distributed, and updated on a continuous basis.
- The program is recruiting more and more expatriates and continues to grow in significance, recognition, and success.

Resources

Budget for developing the website and marketing materials.

Time Table

The kickoff of the Jordanian Ambassadors program should begin by the end of 2007

FUNCTION TWO: REGULATIONS, POLICY AND STRATEGY FORMATION

1. SETTING THE "GO FORWARD" STRATEGY FOR JORDAN'S ICT INDUSTRY

Description of Activity

The last REACH strategy, Version 4.0, came to an end in 2006. Most of the targets of the REACH initiative were achieved but due to constant change and development of the sector, Int@j needs to build on the previous strategy and develop a new one for the next five year period. Successful implementation of a new strategy entails the support of MoICT, the private sector, TRC and other government institutions.

Objective

The objective of this activity is to carry out the National ICT Strategy and enable Jordan to meet its ICT goals. Int@j will develop a National ICT Strategy that picks up where the last REACH program ended. The strategy will guide the efforts of all of the industry stakeholders over the next five years, and coordinate their efforts to achieve national targets under each of the four pillars.

Tasks

Develop National ICT Strategy: Int@j will facilitate the development of a new five- year National ICT Strategy for the sector. The strategy will be developed with the participation of all national stakeholders, including Int@j, academia, MoICT, the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Education and key private sector stakeholders.

Organize committee meetings: Int@j will facilitate monthly committee meetings to discuss and address the activities under each of the four pillars. Int@j will organize the meetings and provide logistical support with items like Agendas, scheduling and facilities.

Measurement Criteria

- The National ICT Strategy Committees will meet monthly
- The commitments of stakeholders are being met on time

Resources & Sustainability

Committee meeting expenses will be paid out of the Int@j operating budget.

Time Frame

Ongoing activity

2. DEVELOPING AND ADVOCATING ICT SECTOR POSITIONS

Description of Activity

To assist in improving the policy environment and to promote good ICT sector regulation, Int@j will foster a partnership with the government. This advocacy should reduce the risk and cost of doing business in Jordan, improve competitiveness and empower consumers.

Objective

To ensure the continuous strengthening and renewal of Jordan's legislative environment, Int@j will identify the most critical ICT sector policy and regulatory issues each year, develop advocacy position papers, and work with the government to resolve any inefficiencies or outstanding problems.

Tasks

Build advocacy capacity at Int@j: Int@j will develop an advocacy strategy, network, and action plan. It will build data collection capacities such as surveys or business test panels to support analysis and recommendations. Int@j will build skills such as regulatory impact analysis in assessing business impacts of government policies, and in identifying lower-cost options that the government should consider. Finally, Int@j will develop analytical tools for identifying, quantifying and advocating for governmental reform.

Host public awareness meetings and networking opportunities: To maintain established ties and support, Int@j will ensure that all supporters are invited to all the member events that are organized by the association. Furthermore, Int@j will organize quarterly public awareness meetings with all supporters and other stakeholders to discuss current advocacy efforts by the various other entities, which in turn will ensure coordination and eliminate duplication of efforts.

Form coalitions with other business associations and non-governmental organizations: Many issues that are identified and addressed will affect more than one sector, so Int@j will create and nurture close coalitions with other business associations. Having more than one business association advocate for a particular cross-sectoral cause will strengthen the issue's position significantly, leading to more fruitful results.

Measurement Criteria

- Int@j's capacity to effectively advocate for change has been improved
- Int@j organizes public awareness meetings each year, including relevant stakeholders and business associations to discuss overall advocacy issues.
- Int@j successfully identifies, and forms coalitions with other business associations and stakeholders to advocate for shared interests.

Resources & Sustainability

- Int@j will need access to legal expertise and research resources. Retainers and fees for such services will be paid out of the Int@j operating budget.
- Quarterly public awareness meetings will generate a small income from sponsorships
- Extensive support from the PR & communications committees will be required for effective dissemination of current, ongoing, and accomplished projects to members and the public. In-kind support for this activity may also be received from SABEQ.

Time Table

Ongoing annual activity

FUNCTION THREE: CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ICT COMPANIES

1. SPONSORING AN ICT COMPANY AWARD

Description of Activity

The King Abdullah II Award for Excellence in the Private Sector (KAAPS) is the highest level of recognition of quality in Jordan. It aims at enhancing the competitiveness of Jordanian businesses by promoting quality awareness and performance excellence. There are several categories under which different types of companies may receive this award, but there is none for ICT companies. Perhaps as a result, few ICT companies have competed for the award.

Objective

To address this need, and encourage ICT companies to improve their standards through competition for the KAAPS-ICT award, Int@j will advocate for the King Abdullah II Center of Excellence (KACE) to create a new award category for the ICT private sector.

Tasks

Develop a methodology for selecting top ICT companies in Jordan: Int@j will work with the KACE to develop a methodology for selecting top ICT companies. CMMI certification will be one of the critical factors in the assessment of ICT companies, which will reinforce the standard of excellence of the KAAPS award.

Assist in selecting the Panel of Assessors: Int@j will assist in the selection of qualified individuals from industry, academia and government to serve on the Panel of Assessors.

Measurement Criteria

- In the next cycle of KACE awards (2007-2008), there will be a new category for ICT companies in Jordan
- Int@j, in conjunction with the KACE, will nominate the members of the Panel of Assessors.
- One ICT Company will be awarded the Award for Excellence in the private sector in the next cycle of KACE awards.

Resources & Sustainability

Volunteers from industry, academia and government are needed to serve on the Panel of Assessors

Time Table

The next cycle of KACE awards has begun. Int@j will meet with KACE to determine the timeframe for developing the ICT category and the evaluation criteria.

The project should be set up before the end of 2007. The rating system will be ongoing annually thereafter.

2. PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR IMPROVING SERVICE QUALITY STANDARDS

Description of Activity

In Jordan today there are no Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) certified ICT companies. The CMMI is a model for improving and appraising the performance of software development organizations. It was developed and is managed by the Software Engineering Institute (SEI). ICT training companies may partner with SEI to provide training in CMMI and perform SCAMPI (Standard CMMI Appraisal Method for Process Improvement) appraisals. Currently there are no authorized SEI partners in Jordan who can provide these training services to the local ICT market, although some companies are beginning to test the market by partnering with SEI affiliates in Dubai and elsewhere.

Objective

To address the urgent need for CMMI training services in Jordan, Int@j will support local software development companies who want to gain the needed accreditation by reimbursing some of the cost of training and consulting fees in Jordan. Additionally, Int@j will reimburse some of the cost to Jordanian IT Training companies who wish to become SEI partner organizations themselves and Centers of Excellence for CMMI training.

Tasks

Host a CMMI educational seminar announcing the support Int@j will provide to its members: Int@j will announce the project to its members and organize a seminar to educate members on the benefits of CMMI. At the seminar Int@j will provide details on program eligibility and costs.

Make grants available to member companies for CMMI training: Int@j will provide reimbursement grants available to those companies wishing to gain CMMI level certification and training. Companies will sign an MOU with Int@j expressing their desired objectives from the training (i.e. Level 3 certification), and Int@j will pledge to reimburse some of the costs – via SABEQ – upon successful completion if the company's objectives.

Measurement Criteria

- At least three software development companies in Jordan will sign MOU's with Int@j for reimbursement funding for CMMI training and certification.
- At least three ICT training academies in Jordan will sign MOU's with Int@j for reimbursement funding for CMMI Trainer and Lead Appraiser training.

Resources & Sustainability

This program will be funded by SABEQ as a line item in the Int@j 2008 budget. It is a temporary support program and is intended to phase out once a critical mass of companies has received the desired training.

Time Table

All training and reimbursements will be completed before the end of 2008

3. ORGANIZING A FUND FOR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Description of Activity

A major driver of innovation in the ICT sector is Research and Development (R&D). Firms that invest in R&D will likely do better than those that do not. However, investment in R&D requires financial and technical resources that are often beyond the scope of many small and medium sized ICT firms in Jordan. By facilitating access to funding for R&D research, Int@j can enable the ICT sector in Jordan to grow at a faster rate.

Objective

The objective of this activity is to promote innovation in the ICT sector through the careful management and application of funding for investment in R&D. To accomplish this objective, Int@j and SABEQ will work together to perform the following tasks:

Tasks

Advocate for the creation of an R&D Fund: The government currently levies a 1% R&D tax on all publicly traded companies in Jordan. An idea has been raised by Int@j to direct just the funds that are raised by taxing the Telecommunications industry into R&D for the entire ICT sector. This would yield approximately \$6 million annually that could be used to capitalize an R&D fund and invest in the entire ICT sector.

Develop a management plan for the Fund: Once permission has been granted by the government to use these funds to invest in R&D for the ICT sector, Int@j would develop – with assistance from SABEQ – a management plan for the Fund. This plan would specify the Fund's board of directors, accountability for the funds, the strategy for investing in the Jordanian ICT market, and the methodology for determining which companies or research to invest in. The Board of directors will include several representatives from academia and the top scientific organizations in Jordan.

Provide grants to ICT firms for R&D: SABEQ, Int@j and the Fund's Board of Directors will together determine which research exhibits the most potential for producing an innovative and marketable technology. Grants will be provided to those firms and organizations conducting the research.

Measurement Criteria

- The government permits the use of the 1% telecommunications tax for investing in ICT

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- An R&D investment strategy for Jordan is developed
 - A Board of Directors has been appointed, bylaws are developed for the management of the fund and a methodology is adopted for the disbursement of funds
 - The Board of Directors contain representatives from government, industry and academia

Resources & Sustainability

The resources for organizing and managing the Fund would be paid out of the same 1% R&D tax on Telecoms.

Time Frame

The Jordan R&D investment strategy should be completed before the end of 2007. A Board of Directors should be appointed by the end of Q1 2008. The first disbursements of funding should be made by Q4 2008.

4. ENHANCING THE BUSINESS SKILLS OF ICT GRADUATES

Description of Activity

Skilled people are the most important component of the Jordanian ICT industry as they provide the foundation of the sector. The future of the Jordanian ICT industry lies in the capacity of Jordanian education and training systems to supply skilled people to the ICT industry. Yet many technical universities in Jordan teach outdated skills, or do not teach ICT students enough business management skills. Int@j will bridge this gap through industry-based collaborative projects that will strengthen the ties between the local ICT industry and universities in an attempt to provide a skilled and trained workforce that meets the ICT industry's demands.

Objective

The objective of this activity is to bridge the gap between the skills demanded in the ICT marketplace and those provided by universities in Jordan. Int@j will promote human resource development by working with educational institutions to focus on critical skills. It will strengthen ties with local universities, collaborate with overseas universities, and initiate industry programs to benefit university students.

Tasks

Conduct a survey to identify business needs: Int@j will conduct a survey of ICT companies and other stakeholders in Jordan to identify the perceived gaps in the business skills of recent graduates of ICT Universities. The survey will be managed under the Labor Pillar of the National ICT Strategy through workshops and roundtable meetings between the private sector and universities. At the end of each year, the survey will be repeated and in this way the curriculum will be constantly updated.

Develop a Curriculum to address the gap: Once the gaps in skills have been identified, Int@j will work with the Princess Somaya University (PSUT), the Ministry of Education and other industry stakeholders to develop a curriculum for teaching students these necessary skills. These skills may include such things as analysis, critical thinking, decision-making, communication, and accountability. Up to four classes will be developed and integrated into the standard coursework for ICT students.

Teach new classes at Universities: PSUT will be the first to integrate these new classes into its coursework for ICT students starting in the second year of University. The following year, additional classes will be offered in the first year. Int@j will work with PSUT to create standards and targets for quality in their curriculum that can be measured and demonstrated so that students, as well as IT employers, can accurately gauge the quality of education being offered. Once the project at PSUT is in operation, Int@j will expand the program to other universities.

Teaching skills to recent graduates and current professionals: Since it will take time for current students to be taught the required skills before graduation, there will still be a large pool of recent graduates who lack these skills in the meantime. To address this need Int@j will work with several training institutes in Jordan to teach these critical skills to current ICT professionals, senior-year students and to unemployed graduates looking to improve their job prospects. These new training courses will provide individuals with techniques and best practices for managing business issues such as human resources, finance, planning, sales, marketing, PR, communications and presentation skills.

Measurement Criteria

- The first year of graduates who received the supplemental curriculum at PSUT will find jobs at a higher rate within the first three months following graduation than those from previous years.

Resources & Sustainability

- The survey and the training curriculum development will be sponsored by SABEQ. In succeeding years, the funds for updating the survey will come from the Labor Committee budget
- Companies may sponsor sending their own employees to the Business Skills training.
- For unemployed ICT graduates, SABEQ and the workforce development team may provide assistance for the training.

Time Frame

The first classes in business skills for ICT professionals will be developed and taught by January 2008. The first PSUT classes in business skills for ICT students will be developed and taught by the 2009 school year. By 2010, the program will begin expanding to other universities.

5. PROVIDING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Description of Activity

Int@j will provide training workshops on various subjects of interest to members and individuals. Int@j will outsource the training to qualified third parties that are in a position to deliver the content efficiently and cost effectively.

Objective

To ensure that ICT professionals continuously acquire new skills in state-of-the-art technologies.

Tasks

Provide technical and non-technical training opportunities: Int@j will make its facilities available to member companies to receive training in technical skills of a direct ICT related nature (programming, development). The purpose of such training sessions is to elevate the skills of individuals that are employed at member companies. Int@j will contract member companies that provide training services to deliver the training, thus promoting the services and business thereof.

Measurement Criteria

- Int@j organizes up to six technical training workshops per year.

Resources & Sustainability

Int@j will make its training room available for the delivery of the courses. Students will pay a fee for attendance, which will be shared with Int@j to cover the costs of promoting the training and providing the venue.

Time Table

Ongoing activity

FUNCTION FOUR: INFORMATION AND RESEARCH

1. ICT COMPANY CLASIFICATION PROJECT

Description of Activity

In Jordan there is no standard methodology for classifying the many different types of ICT companies that inhabit the sector. More than 1500 companies are listed under the single heading of ICT at the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT). In order to properly manage and regulate the sector, it is important to accurately categorize each of these companies. However, neither the Ministry of ICT (MoICT) nor MIT has the capacity to perform this task.

Objective

To fill this gap, and address the urgent need for standardization, Int@j has the support of both MoICT and MIT to become the classification body for the ICT sector. Int@j will develop a world-class methodology for categorizing ICT companies in Jordan, based on international best practice. Int@j will become the sole ICT classification body for the industry in collaboration with MIT and MoICT. Through this service Int@j will gain better insight into the makeup and overall development of the industry.

Tasks

Investigate international standards for classification: Int@j will identify key information sources and entities regulating the classification process in other major economies. The identified sources will be investigated for the classification methods and categories applied.

Develop a new classification methodology for Jordan: Int@j will define and justify the suggested company categories in the new classification scheme. It will propose an end-to-end methodology for classifying ICT companies to be managed at Int@j. A small working group of several Int@j member companies from each new classification category will be created to review criteria for classifying companies under the proposed scheme. The committee will also review the checklist for companies to fill out when applying for classification. Lastly the committee should decide what to charge companies for classification service.

Determine how the new classification process will be managed at Int@j: Int@j will develop operating procedures and determine staff needs and management oversight for the program. It will determine which benefits new companies will be entitled to after they have been classified and registered with Int@j.

Develop database for managing and tracking new companies in the ICT sector: The new database will be used for marketing and research purposes. Int@j will also use it to compile some critical statistics associated with the sector.

Measurement Criteria

- A methodology for classifying ICT companies will be in use by the government
- Int@j will be producing improved data on the ICT sector in Jordan
- Int@j will be earning revenue from this activity

Resources & Sustainability

The work will be performed either by consultants from SABEQ or will be outsourced to local consultants. Once in place, Int@j will earn some revenue from performing this service to the government that will contribute to its long term sustainability.

Time Table

End of 2007

2. PUBLISH STATISTICS ON THE ICT JOB MARKET IN JORDAN

Description of Activity

In a market as small as Jordan, it is critical to match available skills to the needs and demands of the private sector – the employer. Although the number of graduates per year is increasing tremendously, employers continue to complain about the lack of certain skills that can not be found.

A study first conducted by Int@j in 2001 entitled “ICT Skills in Jordan”, revealed that graduations almost doubled from 1999 to 2000, with ICT related fields increasing at the same ratio. Many fresh graduates are not able to find employment. Likewise, according to the same report, the private sector complained of a significant shortage of individuals with particular ICT skills currently in demand.

The study conducted by Int@j was the first of its kind and provides a wealth of information for universities, educational institutions, students, and employers.

Objective

It is essential to update the report and findings on a continuous basis, at the same time aiming at expanding the sample sizes of the segments that provide feedback. Providing the education sector, students, and employers with updated reports about Jordan’s available and needed ICT skills is a critical need that will provide the foundation for curricula, education, career, and employment planning.

Tasks

Publish updated annual reports: To provide ongoing updated information and monitor trends, Int@j will update the ICT Skills report on an annual basis, and increase the sample sizes of respondents (individuals and companies).

Conduct public presentations: Prior to publishing reports and updates, Int@j will invite representatives of educational institutions and employers to

presentations about the most recent findings to discuss such, solicit feedback, and create a dialogue between both sectors to address the problems in today's educational sector.

Measurement Criteria

- The report "ICT Skills in Jordan" is updated and published on an annual basis
- Int@j organizes an annual meeting prior the publication of each updated report, inviting representatives of the educational and private sectors to discuss findings and address the issues stated within the findings.

Resources & Sustainability

The annual research and updates will be outsourced to the private sector in Jordan. These contracts will be paid out of the annual Int@j operating budget, with some potential support from SABEQ. Over time, the report should pay for itself through sponsorship and advertising by companies. Int@j will sell the report to non-members in Jordan and will license the data to information subscription service providers.

Time Table

Ongoing quarterly activity

3. PUBLISH STATISTICS ON THE ICT SECTOR IN JORDAN

Description of Activity

As Int@j strives to encourage the growth of the ICT sector in Jordan, it requires a process for benchmarking and reporting on the industry. Int@j collects data on Jordan's ICT industry and provides a regular reporting mechanism upon which stakeholders can evaluate the industry's progress. The research and reporting is carried out with complete confidentiality and strict non-disclosure procedures and measures.

Objective

The objective of the survey is to provide a clear benchmark of the local ICT sector on an annual basis and enable more effective marketing of Jordanian ICT products.

Tasks

Publish annual report: To provide ongoing updated information and monitor trends, Int@j will update the ICT Sector report on an annual basis, and attempt to continuously increase the sample sizes of respondents. Prior to publishing reports and updates, Int@j will invite stakeholders to presentations about the most recent findings.

Measurement Criteria

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- The report “ICT Industry Statistics” is updated and published on an annual basis
 - Int@j organizes an annual meeting prior the publication of each report, inviting stakeholders to discuss findings and address the issues stated within the findings.

Resources & Sustainability

The annual research and is outsourced to the private sector in Jordan. The statistics are gathered online. The funds for this contract will be paid out of the annual Int@j operating budget, with some potential support from SABEQ. Over time, the report should pay for itself through sponsorship and advertising by companies. Int@j will sell the report to non-members in Jordan and will license the data to information subscription service providers.

Time Table

Ongoing annual activity

FUNCTION FIVE: MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

1. MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENTS & RETENTIONS

Description of Activity

Recruiting and retaining members is crucial to the long-term viability of the association. Int@j will assign one membership services representative for every 50 members. Each membership officer will be responsible for an identified number of members, and look after their individual needs and best interests.

Objective

Increase recruitment and maintain current memberships

Tasks

Employ one “membership services officer” for each fifty (50) current members: As the association’s membership grows, member companies need to receive the same level of personalized attention and service. Int@j will therefore expand its membership services department at a ratio of 1 staff member per 50 member companies. Membership services officers will be responsible for recruiting new member companies and retaining current members

Train staff members in professional membership recruitment & retention techniques: In addition to the membership recruitment officers, board members and other staff members should continuously act as the association’s ambassadors, and assist in recruiting and retaining as many members as possible. This is especially critical for board members and the chief executive officer.

Conduct periodic visits to members: The membership services officers, membership services coordinator, and the CEO need to meet with each single member at least twice a year. Such meetings will ensure that any potential problems and dissatisfaction with services offered are detected at early stages, and well before renewal times. Detailed records of all visits need to be stored in a database accessible to all, and monitored very carefully.

Maintain updated “exit interview” records for lost members: Losing members is inevitable and will occur for a number of reasons. However, such incidents will provide the association with valuable lessons and information about the reasons for why companies decide not to renew their memberships. Such “reasons” need to be kept on record and monitored very carefully, in order to eliminate as many causes as possible.

Assess member needs on an annual basis: In order to serve members properly, Int@j needs to update its information about what members expect on an annual basis. This can be largely accomplished during the individual visits, but should also be properly documented through at least one annual comprehensive membership survey. To that end, Int@j will distribute an

annual survey, soliciting the members' feedback in terms of what they expect from their association, and whether those expectations are being met.

Measurement Criteria

- Membership recruitment increases each year over the five years
- Staff members are trained in professional membership recruitment & retention techniques.
- Each member company is visited at least twice each year.
- Members resigning from the association are interviewed and detailed records are maintained and analyzed.
- Int@j conducts an annual "members' needs assessment" analysis to determine the level of client satisfaction with their association.

Resources & Sustainability

- One full-time membership services for each 50 current members.
- Strong support from the PR & communications committee to develop updated membership recruitment and retention materials.

Time Table

Ongoing Activities

2. PROVIDING ADEQUATE MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Description of Activity

Membership benefits that can be measured in received (or perceived) value are necessary to maintain existing members and to recruit new members. Effective membership services will assist in recruiting new companies as well as provide valuable sales tools to the membership recruitment officers.

Objective

In order to ensure highest retention ratios, Int@j will offer a comprehensive set of membership services to ensure that members realize and appreciate the value of their investment.

Tasks

Quarterly Power Breakfasts: To ensure appropriate networking activities amongst members, Int@j will organize quarterly power breakfasts, to which top level executives are invited. To ensure significant attendance, distinguished speakers will be invited to join the meeting and address the guests briefly.

Annual gala event: Following each ICT Forum, Int@j will hold a gala dinner to celebrate the previous year, provide a high level networking opportunity, highlight special achievements, and honor a number of member companies.

Semi-annual members' social events: To provide further networking opportunities among member companies and their staff members, Int@j will

hold semi-annual social events that are designed to gather individuals of all levels working at member companies in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

Develop membership recruitment & retention materials: In cooperation with the marketing, public relations & communications committee, Int@j needs to maintain a comprehensive set of publications, membership kits, and gifts. Such materials need to be updated on a continuous basis to ensure that the latest publications, success stories, and information are included. Furthermore, the association will develop a “members’ welcome kit”, providing a complete and comprehensive set of publications that will orient new members about the benefits they have invested in.

Access to research services: Members are in continuous need to access recent industry related reports and research resources. Many of such services are very expensive and unaffordable to many small and medium sized companies. To provide members with access to such critical resources, Int@j will maintain current subscription with a number of service providers, and allow members to access such. Examples of such services include the Gartner Group, the Arab Advisors Group, etc. Int@j has a current subscription with the Arab Advisors Group, providing members with valuable information that focuses on ICT, the Internet, and communications trends in the MENA region. This subscription will be kept current by renewing on an annual basis. Int@j will attempt to secure two additional research services for its portfolio, while current and existing subscriptions will be kept up-to-date.

Measurement Criteria

- Int@j is successfully organizing one “power breakfast” per quarter.
- A bi-annual gala dinner is hosted following each ICT Forum.
- Two social events are conducted per year.
- Int@j offers a complete members’ welcome kit, and provides updated information packages to current members, stakeholders, and other interested parties.
- Research services are accessible at the Int@j offices.

Resources & Sustainability

- Quarterly power breakfasts will each be sponsored by one or more of the membership, and should generate a small profit for Int@j.
- The funding for general assembly meetings, gala dinners and social workshops will be paid out of the Int@j operating budget.
- The funding for membership recruitment and retention materials will be paid out of the Int@j operating budget, with some potential support from SABEQ’s marketing component.

Time Table:

Ongoing activities