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**EVALUATION REPORT**



**TRANSTEC**  
PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT

**UDF-JOR-07-164 - Student Civic Action: Engaging and Empowering Emerging  
Leaders in Universities in Jordan**

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All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the authors.

## **Disclaimer**

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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## I. Executive Summary

### (i) Background

The Student Civic Action: Engaging and Empowering Emerging Leaders in the Universities of Jordan (UNJOREL) project sought to strengthen university students and youth Civil Society Organization (CSO) leaders for active and democratic citizenship and community development by: 1) improving their capacity and awareness of participation in democratic processes and community development; 2) increasing emerging leader (EL) representation in existing political and civil society institutions; and 3) developing and strengthening existing networks to build alliances of youth-led and youth-directed CSOs for more effective programming and sustained participation. The project also intended to increase the awareness of CSO and local leaders on the value of youth involvement.

The project was implemented by World Learning through the Jordanian Center for Civic Education Studies (JCCES), a Jordan-based NGO that focuses on increasing civic engagement and training. JCCES intended to achieve these objectives through advocacy, training, dialogues, open forums with government institutions, small sub-grants to CSOs, youth internships, and creating a youth agenda. This USD 400,000 project ran from October 2008 through November 2010. The evaluation field work took place in February 2011, well after the project had been completed. As a result, the evaluators relied on 1) project and other documents; 2) interviews; and 3) project-related products to conduct the evaluation.

### (ii) Findings

The project objectives and activities seemed appropriate and **relevant**. Youth are the largest demographic group in Jordan with 60% of its population under the age of 24. They are marginalized in civic and political affairs and most of the youth-focused CSOs are run by adults. UNJOREL targeted youth 18 - 25 to build their capacity to participate and become youth leaders. At the same time it worked with CSOs and CBOs to change their attitudes towards youth so they could provide more opportunities for youth to participate. JCCES used existing structures and activities which grounded them, and the activities addressed real-world concerns and impacted daily lives.

UNJOREL reached youth across Jordan and from very different socio-economic conditions. Although the same basic training was used across the board to strengthen their “soft skills” (leadership, planning, public speaking), and its sub-grantees received the same amount of funding, the activities reflected the needs and interests of its participants and their locality. One school principal used the grant to put problem students to work fixing up their school. He thought this volunteer work created a sense of accomplishment and pride which they then transmitted to their peers. In the north, a small CSO identified illiteracy as a major problem and with its intern and sub-grant started classes with 20 women. This proved to be an empowering experience for all concerned.

Addressing both the supply and demand side of the youth issue seemed to be **effective**. Participating youth seemed empowered by their training and the use of sub-grants to CSOs opened the door for youth participation. Once the CSOs saw the results of including youth in its activities, it changed their attitudes and renewed their enthusiasm. This also increased local ownership of the UNJOREL activities and their impact. Training for youth focused on the how-tos of tackling problems, which they were able to practice through their volunteer work and internships. They brought their successes and new attitudes back to their homes and friends which extended the reach of the project’s lessons. At the same time, the youth’s

work and sub-grant activities helped to improve the lives of the people they were assisting. In short, UNJOREL was a well thought out and synergistic project.

UNDEF asked the evaluators to assess the value added of going through an international partner instead of directly funding the national NGO. In this case, World Learning brought the methodology to the project while JCCES brought the local knowledge and implementation ability. Together they made a very good project which would not have happened without World Learning's approach and experience in emerging youth projects. The project was implemented **efficiently** and it met or exceeded most of its targets. World Learning provided a sub-grant to JCCES which managed the activities in country, including the 8 sub-grants. World Learning provided oversight and assisted JCCES with implementation issues. One of these was the realization that it would take months to make an agreement to work with the universities as originally planned. JCCES switched quickly to working through CSOs and other institutions it knew. This broadened the criteria for participating youth and the project ended up with an eclectic mix of students, graduates and unemployed youth. This probably increased project impact as it was able to reach a more diverse group, including more marginalized youth.

The **impact** of the project was in the empowerment of its youth participants and in their changes of attitude and practices. The project was over by the time of the evaluation but the evaluators found the youth and CSOs still using the skills they had learned for the better. Every youth interviewed had stories of what they had done or learned. Some had run for student council and succeeded. Others volunteered at local charities or had created CSOs. The group "Shababak Ya Watam" which had 9 volunteers before UNJOREL assistance now has more than 2,000 and wants to go global. The intern who designed a project to assist handicapped youth with UNJOREL sub-grant funding has been chosen as one of the ten finalists of a prestigious regional award for youth achievement and will travel with the King of Jordan to Davos Switzerland where the winner will be announced. The project youth interviewed projected an image of leadership and a sense of purpose. This sense of vision and strategic planning was not visible in the other youth interviewed, although to be fair, the evaluators only saw a limited number of other youth. The project appears to have made less of an impact on the development of the national youth strategy. It did hold workshops on the new strategy and submitted a list of recommendations to its representatives, but the youth and JCCES thought the representatives had not been receptive. The new strategy was not out by the time of the evaluation so it is unknown whether any of their recommendations were integrated.

The project incorporated **sustainability** elements into its design as it taught the students how to do things for themselves, and then gave them the opportunity to put those skills to use. The links it developed between some of the youth and the CSOs appeared to be strong, with some of the youth still working with the same CSOs. The social impact of the project is also likely to be sustained. The youth took their new attitudes and activities home to parents and friends. In North Badia, the youth who - prior to UNJOREL training - had never sat and worked with a man before who was not a relative, brought her training back home to 30 male and female friends. They subsequently organized literacy training for illiterate women, who then brought their friends. These changes are empowering and are unlikely to be reversed. Breaking traditional beliefs and raising issues of youth participation can be sensitive in some spheres within Jordan, but the UN funding is seen with less suspicion and this was **UNDEF's value added** to this project. It reduced suspicions as to the motive of the project and raised the credibility of JCCES and its activities.

### ***(iii) Conclusions and Recommendations***

The project was successfully implemented and made a major difference in the lives of its participants, improving their ability to participate and increasing the opportunities for that participation. It developed the key skills of strategic planning and vision which are essential components of good leadership. It was an investment in the future of Jordan and planted the seeds for more constructive youth participation in civic affairs and more inclusive democratic governance. The recent events in the region highlight the importance of these types of youth leadership projects and ensuring the constructive participation of youth.

Looking to the future, the evaluators recommend that World Learning and JCCES continue their collaboration and seek other donor support to build on the foundations started under UNJOREL. These activities should be expanded to other youth and CSOs within Jordan. The sub-grant component was an effective incentive and increased the project's reach and impact, and the percentage of funds allocated for this should be increased for future projects. Equal importance should be provided to small CSOs and CBOs as sub-grantees, as this small amount of funding can make a significant difference in the marginalized areas where they work. JCCES and World Learning should also maintain a mentoring relationship with their ELs and develop an interactive portal for their use so that they can maintain their networks and the links developed under the project. This would be extremely useful as the ELs move into their professional lives and as they discuss the important social and political issues of reform for the future.

## II. Introduction and development context

### (i) Introduction

The Student Civic Action: Engaging and Empowering Emerging Leaders in Universities in Jordan project was a two-year USD 400,000 project implemented by World Learning through the Jordanian Center for Civic Education Studies (JCCES). The project ran from 1 October 2008 to 30 November 2010, which included a two month no-cost time extension. The project worked to develop the capacity of young Jordanians (18-25) in universities and NGOs to become youth leaders and build on their socio-political awareness and energy to help community development and to build active and democratic citizenship.

The evaluation of this project is part of the larger evaluation of the Round 2 UNDEF-funded projects. Its purpose is to contribute towards a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project which will in turn help UNDEF to develop future project strategies. Evaluations are also to assist stakeholders to determine whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved.<sup>1</sup> The evaluations are more qualitative in nature and follow a standard set of evaluation questions that focus on the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and any value added from UNDEF-funding. This is to allow meta-analysis for cluster evaluations at a later stage. This report follows that structure.

The evaluation took place February - March 2011 with the field work in Jordan done 19 - 23 February 2011. The evaluation was conducted by Sue Nelson, an expert in democratic governance, and Khaled Al-Hassan, a development expert. The evaluators reviewed available documentation on the project and the youth sector (Annex 1). Interviews started with World Learning project management staff in Washington, DC by Skype, followed by in-country interviews with JCCES, its project participants, sub-grantees, other youth and youth assistance projects, and government youth agencies and commissions (Annex 2).

During the preparatory work, the evaluators identified several issues which they followed up on during the field work in Jordan. These included:

- **Use of incentives** (sub-grants) and issues of replicability and sustainability, and whether they provided value-added to a project such as this one;
- **Leveraging social media** to extend programme reach and its benefits in terms of project objectives and approaches; and,
- **Measuring attitudinal changes** and determining if changes could be attributed to the project given the recent events in Egypt, which were likely to have energized some of the youth in Jordan.

In addition, the team explored the issues raised by the UNDEF evaluation note:

- **Channelling funding** through an international NGO (World Learning) for an activity implemented in Jordan by the national NGO (JCCES);
- **Impact of activities** on the set outcome and **sustainability** of the project; and
- **Influence** of the project on the new National Youth Strategy.

### (ii) Development Context

The promotion of youth is a development priority in Jordan which has 74% of its population under the age of 30, with 60% of these being under the age of 24.<sup>2</sup> This youth bulge has

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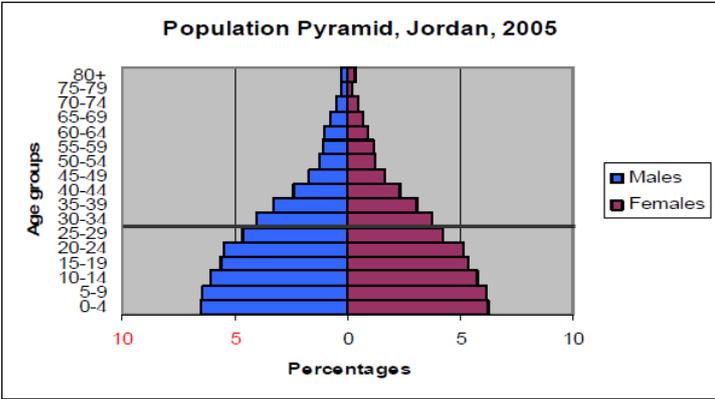
<sup>1</sup> Operations Manual for the UNDEF-funded project evaluations, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> National Youth Strategy 2005-2009 and USAID/Jordan, Country Strategy respectively

created enormous challenges for government and civil society to meet the growing needs in education, training, employment, health and recreation. Jordan's population is expected to continue growing, reaching 7 million by 2015 (up from its current 5.85 million).<sup>3</sup> Most of the population is urban and lives in the governorates of Amman, Irbid, Zarqa and Balqa.<sup>4</sup>

Jordan is considered a lower middle-income country, with an unemployment rate of 12.7% (10% for men and 24.4% for women).<sup>5</sup> Seventy percent of Jordanians are employed by the private sector. The poverty rate is 13%, with most of the poor living in the urban areas.

Gender inequality and the persistence of tribal culture have compounded the problems for some youth. Women have comparatively lower social status and representation in government, education and the labour market. Tribalism remains problematic and according to interviews, is one of the main causes of violence in schools. Jordan has a strategic political and economic location within the region, situated



www.escwa.un.org/popin/members/Jordan.pdf

between Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Palestine and Israel. This makes it susceptible to regional tensions and issues. 1.9 million Palestinian refugees and displaced persons are in Jordan, 337,571 of these in 10 camps managed by UNRWA, the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East.<sup>6</sup> In addition, up to 500,000 Iraqi refugees are thought to be living in Jordan, with only a fraction registered with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.<sup>7</sup>

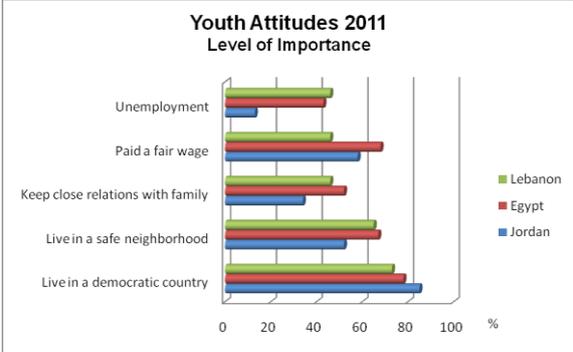
The profile of youth was taken during the development of the first National Strategy for Youth (2005-2009). This process was assisted by UNDP and UNICEF. According to those studies, a third of the youth were unemployed, with the unemployment rate for young women nearly three times that of men. A third of 15 to 24 year olds worked, but among women only 1 in 20 had a job. Women have the same opportunities for education, but nearly two thirds of girls 15 and over were housewives. Jordanians share traditional views for the most part. Almost half the men and a quarter of the women believe women are not equal to men in status.<sup>8</sup>

The National Youth Strategy targets youth 12 to 30 years old and has different strategies for the different age groups (12 - 15, 16 - 18, 19 - 22 and 23 - 30). It provides the framework for assistance efforts for youth focusing on three strategic objectives: 1) institutionalization of democracy through strengthening youth participation (in political parties, parliamentary elections, councils of civil institutions, student council in schools); 2) strengthening youth participation in economic life, especially in the private market, and 3) in community life.

The Youth Strategy is managed by the Higher Council for Youth. It has a vision of “Raising and developing Jordanian young men and women who are aware of themselves and their abilities, loyal to their country and proactively take part in its progress and development, able

<sup>3</sup> Mapping Study of Non-State Actors in Jordan, EU, p 35  
<sup>4</sup> 82.6%, EU Op Cit  
<sup>5</sup> Ibid  
<sup>6</sup> Jordan Country Information, UK Foreign Office  
<sup>7</sup> 2011 UNHCR country operations profile- Jordan  
<sup>8</sup> UN Profile of Youth in Jordan, p 6

to deal with the variables and developments of this age in a confident, aware and steadfast manner, within a secure and supporting environment.” The Council had a USD 6.5 million budget for the 5 year strategy and sees Jordan as a model for youth programmes in the region. It works through the All Jordan Youth Commission which has offices in all 13 governorates and has 100,000 youth in its database. There are 130 youth centres in country (divided 55-45 M/F) with about 35 more built by the King,



3<sup>rd</sup> Annual ASDA’A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey

The attitudes of youth in Jordan are fairly similar to other youth concerns in the region as shown in the chart left which was measured in January 2011. They showed a strong desire for democracy, and worry about the cost of living. The project was completed before the recent events in the region which have energized youth and focused them towards more civic action and democratization. Polls taken in March 2011 show a significant difference between those taken in January 2011. All of these indicators

rose for the Jordanian youth. The importance of living in a democracy rose from 85% to 90%, living in a safe neighbourhood from 52% to 65%, and keeping close relations with the family went from 34% to 90%.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual ASDA’A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey White Paper

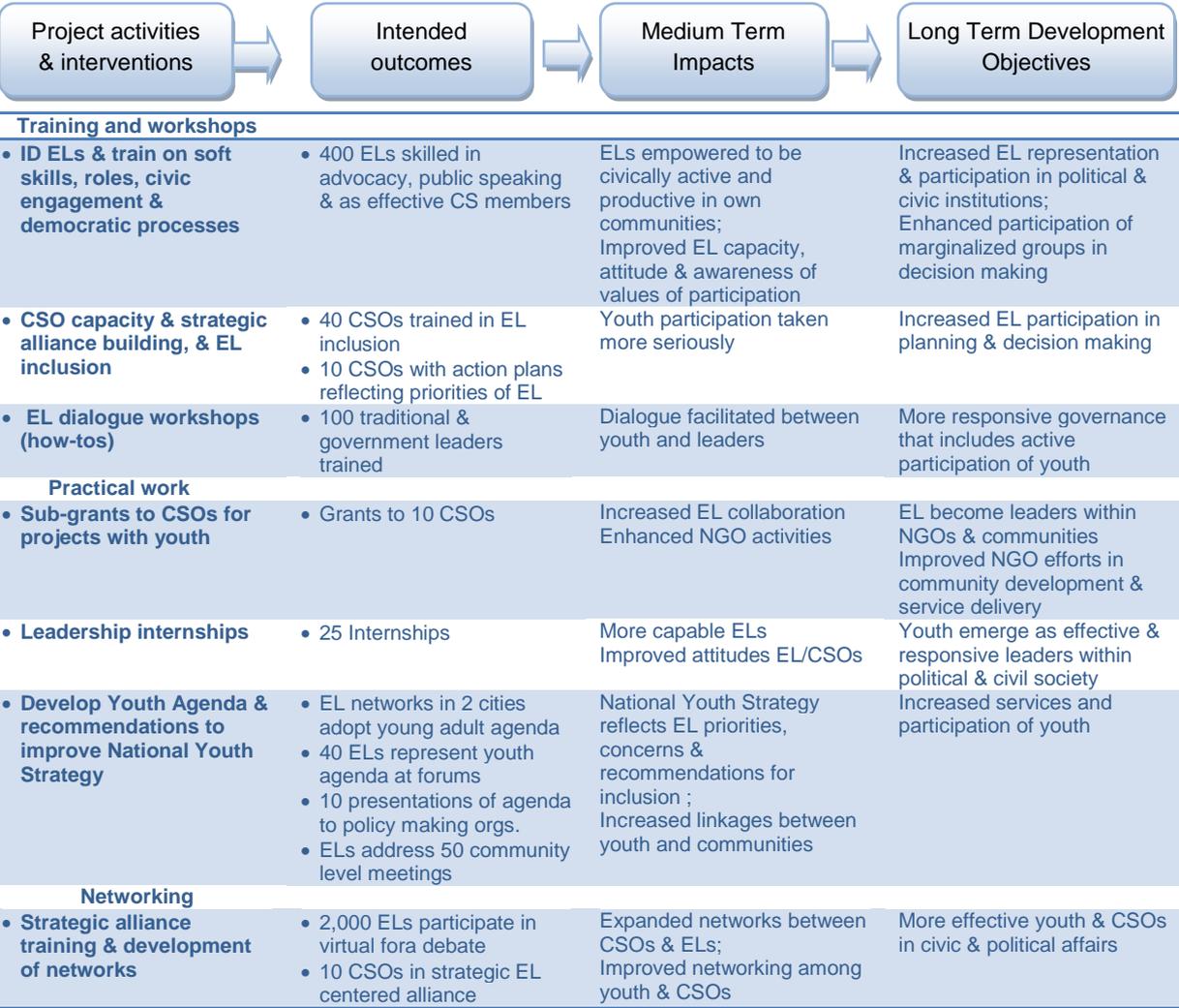
### III. Project objectives, strategy, and implementation

**(i) Project objectives and strategy**

UNJOREL sought to strengthen university students and youth CSO leaders for active and democratic citizenship and community development by: 1) improving their capacity and awareness of participation in democratic processes and community development; 2) increasing emerging leader representation in existing political and civil society institutions; and 3) developing and strengthening existing networks to build alliances of youth-led and youth-directed CSOs for more effective programming and sustained participation. The project also intended to increase the awareness of CSO and local leaders on the value of youth involvement.

The project intended to build upon Jordan’s National Youth Strategy, and link awareness raising campaigns on the value of youth participation with skill building to increase the participation of ELs (aged 18 to 25) in community development. The strategy considers ELs as positive, contributing stakeholders in society’s well being. UNJOREL intended to work with universities and NGOs for a sustainable impact.

Project intervention strategy:



## (ii) Implementation

The project was implemented by World Learning, an international NGO based in Washington DC, through the JCCES, an NGO in Jordan that focuses on increasing civic engagement and training. World Learning trained JCCES in its methodology on empowering youth. JCCES identified the activities to support in country and embedded the training methodology within those activities. It was implemented in three phases, (i) capacity building through training; (ii) expanding the JCCES programme to other youth and CSOs; and (iii) linking CSOs working with community service delivery with the participation of youth. JCCES hired local trainers to conduct the training of ELs which was done throughout the country. JCCES used its contacts with CSOs and in the All Jordan Youth Commission to identify the ELs and then used some of those ELs as recruiters to bring in other youth. It used small grants for CSOs as an incentive for them to use EL in their activities. It held workshops to discuss the draft for the new five-year National Youth Strategy and made recommendations to improve the strategy that it shared with the Strategy's representatives.

The Project Director was Mona Al Alami who is also the JCCES Director. World Learning hired a Program Officer within Jordan who managed the day-to-day activities of the project, En'am Malkawi. Ms. Malkawi had worked previously at the International Republican Institute's Election and Youth Development program. The project also used the JCCES accountant, Sanaa Abu Azza. The UNJOREL office was housed within the JCCES office in Amman and the project purchased some modest equipment (computer and printer). Steffen Krueger, a World Learning Program Officer, provided the primary oversight and training for the JCCES, with support from Scott Lansell, the Director for Civil Society and Governance Department within World Learning.

JCCES selected the eight sub-grant recipients from among 40 submissions. The projects ran from three to nine months and each sub-grantee received USD 3,838 for the activities detailed in the chart below.

Sub-Grant	Location & Target Group	Purpose	Grantee
Enhancing political awareness to promote political conduct	Northern Badia 30 students & working youth (aged 17-25)	Support political dialogue & youth leadership & volunteerism	Child Care Society (North Badia Youth Center)
Maintenance of Al-Qadisieh mosques	Al-Tafileh/Al-Qadisieh area 38 Youth (aged 18-30)	Involve youth in social work & generate spirit of cooperation, initiative, leadership	Al-Qadisieh Charitable Society/Al-Tafileh
Youth and Community Service	Al-Ramtha 85 youth and people with special needs (above 18)	Enhance culture of volunteerism, productive participation & local community development	Devotion Society for the Care of Those with Special Needs
Encourage youth to participate in public life	Tafileh Governorate/Basira district 100 youth (18-25) at Al-Tafileh technical University	Encourage youth to participate in public life	Fatima Al-Zahra' Women's Charitable Society and Al-Tafileh Technical University
Al-Balqa Voluntary Youth Assembly	AL-SALT 41 young people	Promote volunteerism in local communities	Friends of Jordanian Parliament Society
A trainer in our neighbourhood	Irbid 329 youth (aged 18-25)	Develop skills for effective leadership in communities	All Jordan Youth Commission
Youth for Human Rights	Ma'an Youth 18-35	Support youth who are aware of their duties and responsibilities	Al-Tamayouz Cooperative
A trainer in our neighbourhood	Jerash 288 youth (aged 18-25)	Develop skills for effective leadership in communities	All Jordan Youth Commission

## IV. Evaluation Findings

### (i) Relevance

The project objectives and activities seemed appropriate and relevant to needs within Jordan at the time. It targeted not only the youth in its activities, but the attitudes of the elders towards youth which had served to marginalize them, and it looked for changes in attitudes from both sides. Its use of existing structures and activities to ground its programme, kept the project activities pertinent to the youth, CSOs and their communities. They addressed real-world concerns and their activities impacted daily lives. The youth also selected the activities themselves, which increased the relevance to the participants.

As an example, one of the EL interns, Isra'a Almasa'eed, worked in the Child Care Society in her rural home town of North Badia. She identified illiteracy as a major issue and developed a literacy training programme for women. This was an empowering experience for these stay-at-home women, who then started encouraging other women to attend. Another EL, Mahmoud Abdulghani, did a study on the quality of medical services in Ma'an hospital, distributing surveys on the quality of care to about 200 people. He used the findings to start discussions with the public administration on how to improve the medical services.

Ma'an is another poor and conservative area in the southern part of Jordan. This project gave the unemployed girls a chance to be active volunteers as their parents thought that the All Jordan Youth Commission, where the UNJOREL training had been based, was a safe place for them to go.



Women's literacy class in North Badia



Participants at Workshop in Mafraq December 2008

Project activities also tapped into the youths' increasing use of the social media. For instance, it worked with the nine youth that had created the Shababak Ya Watan network. They wanted to work on community problems and participate in local development activities. The skills they learned from the training helped them to expand their virtual network to over 900 members in two months and to establish bases in eight governorates. As of the time of the evaluation, they had grown to more than 2,000 volunteers with focal points and activities in every governorate.

Youth are the largest demographic group in Jordan. The recent events in the region clearly illustrate the importance and relevance of youth leadership programmes such as this one, and the benefits of channelling the energy of youth into constructive mechanisms for participation.

### (ii) Effectiveness

World Learning appeared to have developed a very effective approach to empowering youth and creating opportunities for their participation. Its strategy worked on both ends of the problems, providing youth with capacity building that increased their skills and awareness of issues at the same time as working with community leadership and civil society to increase their appreciation for the value of youth participation. The advocacy element helped to create



Introductory training workshop in Mafraq

a more enabling environment for the youth, and increased the opportunities for participation. The training was practical and taught youth how to make things happen--starting with how to identify the problem, collect information, make recommendations and prepare an action plan to address the problems. It taught them communication skills so they could get their plans across and seek support from the community and government offices. This was coupled with hands-on experience for some youth created through the internships, sub-grants and volunteer activities. Combined, this gave the youth the tools needed to tackle problems

and lead others. As explained by Majid Ghazal, one of the UNJOREL trainers, *“before the project, the youth thought they couldn’t do anything, but after the workshops, they were more aware and active, they felt that they belonged to the country and could contribute to it positively. If you let them feel socially responsible, they will do anything in the spirit of volunteerism.”*

The youth brought this new attitude and activities back to their homes and friends which extended the benefits of the project beyond its primary target group. At the same time, the youths’ volunteer work helped improve the lives of the people they were assisting. This proved to be a very effective approach and a project design that should be replicated by other similar projects.

JCCES was also very practical. When it found out that it would take months to work out an agreement with the universities with which it had initially intended to collaborate, it tapped into institutions where it already had relationships. One of these was the All Jordan Youth Foundation, where many of the project activities and trainings were subsequently held. The Foundation has offices in every governorate which allowed for a nationwide reach. This facilitated project implementation as many of the youth interviewed said they had heard about the EL training from them. This included Isra’a, mentioned above from North Badia. It was an eye-opening experience for her as the UNJOREL training was the first time this college student had sat next to a male who was not a relative. The training was empowering not only because it broke a gender barrier, but because it gave her the tools to make changes herself. She said her friends were surprised by her can-do attitude and ability to make change. She interned at the Child Welfare Society where she implemented a sub-grant that extended the EL-type training to 30 other male and female students in her town.



Leadership training in Amman Governorate

They organized literacy classes and their results changed the attitude of the head of the Child Welfare Society, who said he saw the benefits of males and females sitting and working together and it energized him to do more projects for the community. Their experience also made their parents more aware of the importance of having their daughters engaged in social and voluntary work, and they were even willing to send them to distant Amman to receive training and participate in meetings related to the project activities.

The project used sub-grants as an incentive to increase CSO participation with youth. The evaluators were sceptical about this, as these can sometimes undermine local ownership and raise sustainability issues. However, the sub-grants were an indispensable part of the success and effectiveness of this project. It enabled some of these small CSOs to undertake activities using youth which they could not have done otherwise, and in most cases would not have thought of, prior to the project interventions. JCCES started by sensitizing 53 CSOs and then asked for proposals. As part of the process, the CSOs learned how to do a project design, action plan, and develop a funding proposal, which the smaller ones had never done before. JCCES received 21 proposals from which they selected 8 for the sub-grants. It also provided 27 of the ELs as interns which provided the CSOs with additional help and practical experience for the ELs.

The sub-grant activities appear to have actively integrated youth and volunteer work and to have been successful. One of the sub-grant implementers was Ahmad Al-Zoubi who had been a youth activist. Following the EL training, he undertook a survey of the handicapped youth in his community and found they were isolated from the rest of the community and lacked marketable skills. So he developed a training programme for them in job skills such as communications, time management, feasibility studies writing, and as trainers. This was funded by a sub-grant through the Devotion Society for the Care of those with Special Needs. This practical training enabled some of them to find jobs and others to rejoin the social community. These activities cost far more than the UNJOREL sub-grant, so Ahmad used it as leverage to raise USD 7,000 in additional funding from the University of Irbid, the private sector and others. So far his project has reached 1,200 youth and he became one of the finalists for the King Hussein II Award for Youth Innovation and Achievement for 2011.

**(iii) Efficiency**

The project was well conceived and implemented, with constructive relationships built among all of the partners. One of UNDEF's questions for the evaluation was the value added of working through an international partner, such as World Learning, rather than going directly to the national NGO. In this case, the evaluators found that one of the key factors for the success of this project was this partnership. Each one brought a piece of the project to the table and together it made a very successful whole. The project idea and methodology were World Learning's but JCCES was able to adapt these to conditions within Jordan. This helped to ensure the project had a quick start, set realistic targets and was able to use existing trainers, networks and community activities. This element, combined with the sub-grant component, ensured local ownership and increased the activities' effectiveness and efficiencies.



Tafila University volunteers clean up Dhana Reserve as part of Fatima Alzahra Society sub-grant activities

This element, combined with the sub-grant component, ensured local ownership and increased the activities' effectiveness and efficiencies.

The total funding for the grant received by World Learning was USD 400,000 with USD 25,000 retained by UNDEF to cover the evaluation costs. Of this, World Learning provided a sub-grant to JCCES in the amount of USD 241,849. The cost for World Learning to manage and implement its part of the project was USD 133,151, or about a third of the overall cost. JCCES managed its sub-grant funds, most of which went for programme activities and advocacy. Its sub-grant funding for CSOs was less than 1% of the total grant, and given the results found by the evaluators, it was a very worthwhile use of the funds. It enabled the project activities to reach more beneficiaries across Jordan and beyond the core group of youth and participating CSOs. One of the questions asked by UNDEF in its evaluation notes

was the “effectiveness of the ‘remote’ control type of the project” through an international NGO. In this case, there would not have been a project without the participation by World Learning. They initiated the idea, they found the national partner, they transferred the needed skills and knowledge to that NGO to implement this type of an emerging leaders programme and they provided oversight and mentoring throughout the project and quality control. In addition to the UNDEF funding, World Learning provided in-kind staff time and administrative support towards project administration and implementation valued at USD 23,892 as cost-sharing to the project. JCCES told the evaluators that they appreciated World Learning’s role in the process for both its capacity in terms for JCCES but for its mentoring and care of the financial and other administrative requirements of UNDEF. This left JCCES freer to focus on the substance of project implementation. Thus in this case, working through an international NGO was an effective strategy.

The main implementation problems were difficulties in communicating with areas outside of Amman, and the inability of the project to engage Jordanian youth from Palestinian origin who were frustrated by their social and political conditions. The work plan was implemented more or less as planned and the project met or exceeded its anticipated outputs. JCCES made a quick switch when it found it would take months to work out a memorandum of understanding with public universities to have activities on campus, and thus reverted to CSOs and the All Jordan Youth Federation to recruit its participants. This eliminated the need to create new structures and helped avoid the creation of parallel efforts. It also enabled UNJOREL to quickly and easily identify its core group of emerging leaders and participating CSOs.

UNJOREL used no selection criteria to pick its core group of youth, other than they had to be under the age of 30. Normally selection criteria would be a prerequisite for this type of activity, but the JCCES approach appears to have given them a diverse group to work with and included high school and university students, graduates, employed and unemployed youth. This probably resulted in a better outcome than if they had only worked in universities as it gave unemployed youth and stay-at-home girls the opportunity to learn and participate and for these youth it was a particularly empowering experience. JCCES used its one day training in civic education in the 12 governorates to identify the most enthusiastic youth participants, and then asked those youth to bring their friends, assuming their friends would share the same enthusiasm and qualities. This approach seems to have worked well to identify the emerging leaders to train, and by encouraging them to bring their friends with them, they had a mutual support group as they went through training and started implementing its lessons. This probably increased the efficacy of its training and the internalization of its lessons.

JCCES reduced the number of anticipated sub grants from 10 to 8 in order to increase the amount of funds it could give to each sub-grantee. This seemed appropriate as some of these rural CSOs had no means other than their volunteer labour. The project tried to capitalize on the use of social media, developing a website to extend its reach into the youth networks. It also created a Facebook page; however, apart from World Learning posting some of the photos of participants and a few initial entries, the site had seemed underutilized when checked by the evaluators in 2011. UNJOREL’s main achievement for social networking was in helping youth who had already started websites to improve their networking. In particular with the volunteers of “Shababak Ya Watam” in the north and “the Electronic Students



Training workshop in Ma’an

Forum” at Tafila University in the south, this reached an additional 1,500 youth.

**(iv) Impact**

The primary impact of the project lies in the youth that participated in the EL training, their circle of friends and families. It increased their awareness of civic issues and the importance of participation and gave them the tools to participate more effectively. The youth felt empowered by the experience and the evaluation found them using the skills taught to them for the better. Some had become student leaders at school, others were working with communities to solve social problems and others had found employment. They all had a positive outlook and a can-do attitude and were articulated, confident and with a sense of purpose. They demonstrated strategic thinking and planning which the evaluators did not find in the non-project youth interviewed, although that sample was extremely small. These are the essential qualities of leadership and in having a successful life. For the rural areas, where the youth had fewer opportunities and faced more constraints than their urban counterparts, the project made a substantial difference in their lives.

The JCCES Director characterized the UNJOREL project as an incubator. From the stories related to the evaluators, it does appear that UNJOREL did indeed serve as an incubator for young leaders and increased community action. A few examples:

- The 30 youth in North Badia felt confident and articulate enough to approach the USAID director to ask for assistance for their town. They learned he was going to visit their area, identified what help they wanted to ask for, arranged for UNJOREL to coach them on how to approach and speak to the director, identified a place where they could intercept him during his field visit and did so. Although he had a full schedule, he returned at the end of the day and spent an hour talking with them. This gave them a great sense of accomplishment in the fact that they were able to speak to the head of an international donor agency and to get their ideas across, and it is likely that this type of spirit will bear fruit in the end.
- As a finalist in the King Abdullah II Award for his UNJOREL activities, Ahmad Al-Zoubi will be travelling with the King to Davos, Switzerland where the winners will be announced. He is one of the ten finalists picked from 1,300 applications from across the region. The award is for young social entrepreneurs with innovative projects that tackle demonstrated need and use partnerships. According to the King Abdullah II Fund for Development which gives the award, his application showed confidence, mobilization, due diligence, and incorporated sustainability elements as he trained the handicapped to be trainers. They felt his activities bridged the cultural sensitivities of families who had kept these youth at home and had shown them the benefits of being proactive and getting out despite their handicap.



Youth working on school in Al-Salt

- Alaa Barhour formed a group of 18 young volunteers who surveyed needs in eastern Amman, a poorer section of the capital. She provided her findings to the Municipality

of Amman and the Ministry of Social Development and subsequently created the NGO “Ata” (Giving) where 128 volunteers work on Saturdays.

- Fatimah Tawaeer is looking for funding to do a documentary on sexual violence on minors after seeing a story on the news about the rape of a girl under 15. She credited the training with giving her the skills to be able to talk to people at different levels about the problem, such as psychologists, and to have the confidence to do such a project.
- Ibrahim Klob, the head of the Al-Balqa Voluntary Youth Association, used his grant for an after-school project to rehabilitate the school using the voluntary labour of 20 “naughty boys”. He used the project to teach them life skills as well as carpentry and other skills. They then used their new skills to fix up their own homes and those of their relatives and took pride in their school facilities. This inspired other students and the boys ended up receiving certificates from the Ministry of Education as future leaders.

Measuring attitude and practice change requires survey data. The project did a good baseline survey before its workshops and has disaggregated data, but its follow up survey asked a different set of questions. Although this shows how some of the youth were using their training, it does not allow for comparisons against the baseline data. This could have quantified the degree of change in these individuals. JCCES is still mentoring many of the youth individually and it should document their progress which could help demonstrate the long-term impact of their efforts. Some of the interesting data that was provided by the follow up survey showed that 33% of the youth respondents were using their skills related to youth while 80% said they had contacted a government official or community leader.

UNJOREL did track a number of indicators<sup>10</sup> against which it set targets at the start of the project. This enabled JCCES and World Learning to make sure their project was on track and that it was meeting its targets. However, the indicators were the project outputs so they measured numbers of people or meetings rather than results of those meetings and trainings. As an example, indicator/output 2 was *“100 traditional leaders and government officials sensitized in the value of ELs.”* This indicator reflects the number of leaders who attended a project-sponsored meeting and provides no information on whether they had a change of attitude or practice because of the sensitizing. A 5 minute survey administered before an event, and repeated 2 months later, could have provided information on whether any of the participants had internalized the project’s messages and changed their attitudes and/or practices. Another example is the indicator for CSO participation: *“10 CSOs were involved in strategic EL-centred alliance.”* This indicator has no measurement other than the number of CSOs that participated in UNJOREL workshops, so the extent of their participation in a youth alliance (both pre- and post-project) is unknown.

The project’s work with youth to develop recommendations for the new five-year national youth strategy was presented to civic leaders and the Commission’s representatives. However, the youth participants and JCCES thought their input was not appreciated by the Commission’s representatives who were running the process. The evaluators spoke to the National Youth Commission Chairman about this issue. He explained that the strategy was the result of a two-year consultative process with youth, civil society and others done in coordination with UNDP and thought all of the input received was appreciated. The strategy is not yet adopted so it is unknown the extent to which the UNJOREL recommendations were incorporated, if any. The impact at this stage was the experience for the youth in reviewing a national strategy, developing recommendations and presenting it to officials.

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<sup>10</sup> 13 in list in its proposal, with 11 used for the Final Report plus 1 outcome indicator.

### **(v) Sustainability**

The JCCES training aspect of the project is not sustainable without continued donor funding, although some of the train-the-trainer work has built a pool of youth that can replicate some of it. Neither JCCES nor World Learning seems to have sought other donor funding at the end of the project. This is unfortunate as the project was effective and had a good base on which to build. However, the UNJOREL methodology focused on providing the youth with the know-how and skills to be able to make things happen and gave them the opportunities to apply these lessons. This was a good way to help ensure the institutionalization of the lessons by the participants. The youth appeared to still be using these skills in their current activities. The links that developed between the youth and CSOs with the internships and other activities, also appear to be strong, and in some cases they were continuing to work together.

The social impact of the project is likely to be sustained. The change of attitude and activity of the youth also changed the views of their parents and some within the community. The linking of youth with CSOs helped break some of the traditions of youth groups being adult-led and linked to the government. According to a recent EU study, *“a positive sign is the emerging category of CBOs run by youth for youth. These groups seem able to mobilize young volunteers, and offer the possibility of social transformation.”*<sup>11</sup> The UNDEF-funded project contributed to this positive change, and this is another element that can help sustain the changes.

Example of continued relationships and sustainable activities undertaken through the sub-grants and internships include: the Child Welfare Society and Isra'a in North Badia who continue to work together and where the Society received governorate funds to continue its women's literacy classes; and Ahmad, the award finalist who has taken a leadership role in the Devotion Society for the Care of Those with Special Needs. The Shababak Ya Watan group is another example. It is now well connected with NGOs and government, and they continue to build their network of volunteers. They have plans to go regional and then global, and have 2,300 followers so far on Facebook. Yet another is Samah Bani Hani and her friend Haneen Hjazi who realized that youth could affect change after their EL training and participation in the national youth strategy discussion. Now both volunteer with SOS and the King Hussein Orphan House in Irbid.

### **(vi) UNDEF Value Added**

The development of youth leadership and the breaking of cultural barriers against inequality are sensitive areas. So is western funding for some organizations. World Learning was an American NGO which was noted with suspicion by some of the universities that JCCES initially contacted. The branding of the project as UNDEF-funded mitigated some of the concerns about the source of the project's funding and nature of its activities. UN funding in Jordan raises fewer issues than bilateral donor funding. The UNDEF branding also lent credibility to the JCCES activities, especially as the national youth strategy was assisted by the UNDP and UNICEF. This added to the perception that the UNDEF-funded activities were part of this broader national programme.

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<sup>11</sup> EU, Op. Cit, p 21

## V. Conclusions

The project design worked well within Jordan as did the relationship between World Learning and JCCES. The project successfully developed a constructive sense of youth participation and strategic thinking, which are essential traits of future leaders. The project was an investment in the future of Jordan and has planted the seeds for more constructive participation in civic affairs and more inclusive democratic governance. These objectives assume even greater importance with the democratic movement in the region and the role of the youth in that process.

The purpose of the project was to empower youth as potential leaders in their communities and to increase their participation in democratic processes and community development. The evaluators found that the UNJOREL project met its objectives:

- Participating youth and CSOs improved their capacity to participate in democratic processes and community development;
- EL representation increased in civil society institutions. The youth were active volunteers and most worked through existing CSOs. However, there was not enough information for the evaluators to determine if there had been improved representation in political institutions. With the events in the region, the youth were actively involved in political discussion, but the degree of the EL involvement in political institutions was unknown; and,
- Youth-led and youth directed networks were strengthened. The alliances built with other networks and CSO/government efforts resulted in more effective activities and action and some of the youth did assume more leadership roles within some CSOs.

## VI. Recommendations

- JCCES and World Learning continue collaboration for a follow up emerging leader programme that builds on the foundations provided by UNJOREL and expands the opportunities to other youth within Jordan. World Learning and JCCES should seek funding for this programme among the international community;
- Increase the level of funding allocated for sub-grants within these types of projects, so that the number of sub-grants to CSOs and CBOs can be increased. These small rural and nongovernmental organizations should be prioritized as the small amount of sub-grant funding can make a significant difference in these less affluent and marginalized locations;
- World Learning's approach to youth leadership training should be replicated by similar types of projects as it appears to have been an effective method in the Jordanian context;
- Continued mentoring and tracking of the ELs. It is likely that several of these ELs will emerge as regional and national leaders, and having a mentor as they enter their professional life and face, tough choices could be extremely useful and effective to

the longer term democratic governance goals. Continued use of the baseline survey over time could also help measure the longer-term KAP changes (knowledge, attitudes and practices) of this group, especially if compared to a similar demographic control group. This could help document the long-term impact of the project and efficacy of this methodology;

- Increase use of the social media such as Facebook and Twitter, and virtual networks used by youth. Many of the youth in the project were already communicating through these tools. If UNJOREL could develop or leverage an existing interactive portal for its youth participants, this could help them maintain contact with their ELs and their EL database. It could also help the ELs continue their interactions and EL networks even though they are now scattered across Jordan. The cost of building such a portal could be included in the budget of the next youth project undertaken by JCCES and/or World Learning. This would be extremely useful now as the youth are discussing important social and political issues, such as democratic reforms, on line, as well as joining social movements through their social networks.

## VII. Overall assessment and closing thoughts

The evaluation took place after the departure of Mubarak in Egypt and when the demonstrations in Libya were turning violent. All of the youth interviewed were aware of the events happening in North Africa and in the Middle East, and were discussing it among their friends. Some were participating in the Friday demonstrations that were happening in Amman by those looking for constitutional change. The youth seemed to have a mature and cautious attitude in these discussions. Although some of this could have been because they were talking to evaluators, all noted the importance of maintaining political and social stability which they felt was the strength of their country. As a youth in Irbid explained: *“We are loyal to the regime, love our leadership and we teach this to others. We can discuss issues, but not go into violence.”* At the same time, they had a list of issues that they wanted to discuss with government: *“Our discussion group has a list of challenges. We will discuss it with the government officials and find the way to go forward in a civilized way.”*

Projects that mentor youth and work to developing constructive leadership skills are important in these circumstance. The youth are becoming more interested in politics and in participating in policy making because of the events in the region. These are also affecting attitudes, which are changing quickly. In a January 2011 regional survey, 68% of the Jordanian youth answered yes to the question, “do you think things are going in the right direction?” In March 2011, only 38% answered yes. As noted by an activist in Amman: *“Youth has the ability to make change. This is a golden opportunity for youth in Jordan to seek and participate in change.”* Jordanian youth have little experience with politics. Parents reportedly told their children to avoid politics at the universities, remembering earlier days of political violence. *“However, “now it’s different, recent events are shaking them in a positive way. They are all now talking about politics. It’s the right time to increase awareness among youth for social causes.”* The UNJOREL project sought to increase these youth-government linkages and it is an important time to continue this type of youth leadership programme.

## VIII. Limitations, constraints and caveats

The evaluation took place well after the end of the project and relied on project documents and interviews to make its assessments. Had the evaluation taken place during project implementation, the findings would have been more focused on implementation modalities and issues such as the quality of training and sub-grant activities. But with such a gap in time, the evaluation focus was primarily on what seemed to have been accomplished and what effect and/or impact was still visible by the time of the evaluation. The Round Two UNDEF evaluations also anticipate evaluation work will be done mainly within capitals or nearby places, and as a result the evaluators were only able to visit sub-grantees and former youth participants in two localities in the north of Jordan, although it met with participants from other parts of Jordan in Amman. The evaluators were also only able to meet with a limited number of youth who had not participated in the project, which limited their ability to compare project-assisted youth with other youth.

## IX. Annex 1: Documents Reviewed

ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller, 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Arab Youth Survey; White Paper 2011

Charitable Childcare Association, Mafraq, Northeastern Badia, Pamphlet of Activities

European Union, Mapping Study of Non-State Actors in Jordan, Summary Report, July 2010

Freedom Messengers Network, Creativity as a pathway for Democracy, undated

Higher Council for Youth, National Youth Strategy 2005-2009

Shababak Ya Watan, Promotional CD on activities

UNDEF: Project Specific Evaluation Notes for UDF-JOR-07-164

UNDP, Project of the Government of Jordan, National Youth and Sports Fund, Project Document, 2002; Profile of Youth in Jordan

United Kingdom Foreign Office, Jordan Country Information, Office <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/country-profile/middle-east-north-africa/jordan/> ).

UNHCR, 2011 Country Operations Profile - Jordan; <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/telex/vtx/page?page=49e486566>

UNJOREL Project (World Learning and JCCES):

- Project Document UDF-JOR-07-164
- UNDEF Project Extension Form for UDF-JOR-07-164
- First Milestone Report
- Mid-Term/Annual Progress Report
- Second Milestone Report
- Final Narrative Report
- Success Stories, undated
- Surveys: Needs assessment survey (pre-workshops); Post surveys; analysis of surveys
- MOU Between World Learning and JCCES

USAID/Jordan, Gender Assessment, March 2003; Country Strategy, 2005

## X. Annex 2: Persons Interviewed

Scott Lansell, Director for Civic Education and Governance, World Learning, (by phone)  
Steffen Krueger, Program Officer, World Learning (by phone)  
Mona A. Al-Alami, Executive Director, JCCES  
En'am Malkawi, World Learning Program Office for UNJOREL  
Sanaa Abu Azza, UNJOREL Accountant  
Majdi Ghazal, UNJOREL Trainer  
Bashar Al-Khatib, UNJOREL Trainer  
Ibrahim Klob, Director Friends of Jordanian Parliament Society; Center Director for Musa Al Saket Development Organization, and UNJOREL sub-grantee, for "Al-Balqa Voluntary Youth Assembly", Al-Salt  
Faree Farhan Al-Mesaeed, Director, Child Welfare Society, UNJOREL sub-grantee "Enhancing political awareness to promote political conduct", North Badia  
Maen A. Al-Hammouri, EL, Coordinator for Irbid All Jordan Youth Foundation sub-grant "A trainer in our neighbourhood", Irbid  
Ahmad Dahoud Al-Zoubi, EL, Intern, for sub-grant "Youth and Community Services" in Al-Ramtha  
Laith Utoum, EL, Intern for sub-grant "A trainer in our neighbourhood", Jerash  
Fatmeh Fawaeer, EL, Strategy and Youth Network, Salt  
Suhaib Alkofahi, EL, Intern, Amman  
Alaa Barhoum, EL, member Ata CSO, Amman  
Eman Kreshan, EL, Amman  
Isra'a Al-Masaeed, EL and Intern, North Badia  
Qutaiba Al-Tameemi, EL, Shababak Ya Watan network, Irbid  
Tariq Shatnawi, EL, Shababak Ya Watan network, Irbid  
Mohammad Al-Momani, EL, Irbid  
Mo'men Balasmeh, EL and Intern, Ramtha  
Samah Bani Hani, EL, Irbid  
Haneen Hjazi, EL Irbid  
Mahmoud Abdulghani, EL, Ma'an (by phone)

Dr. Sari Ahmad Hamdan, Secretary General, Higher Council for Youth, Amman  
Emad B. Al-Shehab, EL, Program Coordinator, All Jordan Youth Commission, Amman  
Ashraf A. Al-Khawaldah, Governorates Coordinator All Jordan Youth Commission, Amman  
Dr. Mohammad Al-Hamad, Director Local Community Development Center, Irbid  
Dr. Jaser Mo'd Shobaki, Professor of Nuclear Physics, Amman  
Basel Al-Hamad, Activist, Amman  
Zaman Khazaleh, Youth activist, Amman  
Khaled Al-Manaseer, Youth activist, Amman  
Tareq Awad, Abdullah II Fund for Development  
Adlah Al-Kurdi, Abdullah II Fund for Development  
Nidal Mansour, Executive President, Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists, Amman  
Fateh Mansour, Program Manager, Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists, Amman  
George Kara, USAID/Jordan, Amman (by phone)  
Niki Shehu, National Democratic Institute, Amman (by phone)

## **XI. Acronyms**

CBO	Community Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EL	Emerging Leader
JCCES	Jordanian Center for Civic Education Studies
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNJOREL	Engaging and Empowering Emerging Leaders in the Universities of Jordan Project
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USD	U.S. Dollar