



Public Private Partnership for Workforce Development

Challenges:

The gap between the skills needed in Jordan's industries and the capabilities of the graduates from its large network of universities and other educational institutions is especially acute and the resulting high unemployment is a constraint to Jordan's continued economic growth. While educational reform efforts are underway, these are long-term in nature and don't address the immediate need to match employers with appropriately skilled job seekers.

USAID's Jordan Economic Development Program (SABEQ) believed that one solution was to get the private sector more involved in workforce development activities right at the source – in the universities. Already working with Al-Huson University College in Irbid, one of Al-Balqa' Applied University colleges, through a grant to develop a Career Development Center (CDC) there, the Program responded to a challenge from the Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC) of Morganti Group, Inc. to fill its vacancies for skilled pipefitters.

The opportunity was to build a public private partnership to address a problem and, in doing so, develop a partnership model that could work for other companies' workforce challenges. Public Private Partnerships are often an effective way to address common problems facing a country. But because each party has a different set of needs, the challenge is to do so in a way that everyone is a winner. While the private sector often needs rapid return on investment, the public sector has different requirements. In this case, the company had an urgent need for pipe fitters that the University knew would take time to find and train.

Initiatives:

The USAID project brought each partner together under the sponsorship of the Ministry of Labor (which, in Jordan, has responsibility for vocational training). The Career Development Center identified trainees, provided them with the necessary computer skills, workplace preparation, and English proficiency training, while the University provided classrooms and workshop space, covering rent and utilities. The company CCC/MORGANTI supported all costs associated with renovating and equipping the workshop with the necessary equipment and all upfront development costs needed to get the program underway in October, 2009. The sole cost to USAID was the project staff time to bring the partnership to fruition.

Results:



As a result, in the first 6 months since the partnership was announced, the classroom/workshop has been renovated, 25 students recruited and on their way to graduation in August 2010.

In Arabic, the word for partnership is "Sharaka" and this is the word chosen by the USAID project as the name for the partnership program. Several additional partnerships are now being developed.