



**PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
DEMOCRACY FUND**

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EVALUATION REPORT



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

Date: 31 March 2011

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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.

Authors

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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

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

(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,

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.¹ 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:

- x **Use of incentives** (sub-grants) and issues of replicability and sustainability, and whether they provided value-added to a project such as this one;
- x **Leveraging social media** to extend programme reach and its benefits in terms of project objectives and approaches; and,
- x **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:

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

(ii) Development Context

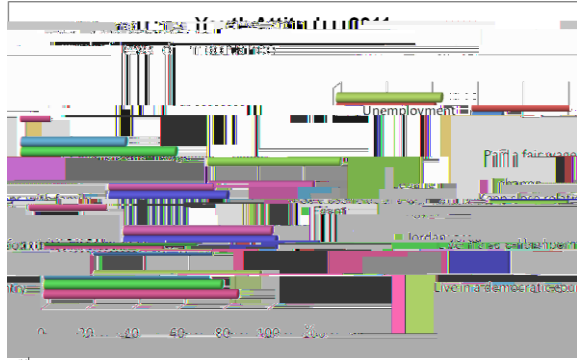
The promotion of youth is a development priority in Jordan which has 74% of its population under the age of 30, with 60% ae

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).³ Most of the population is urban and lives in the governorates of Amman, Irbid, Zarqa and Balqa.⁴

Jordan is considered a lower middle-income country, with an unemployment rate of 12.7% (10% for men and 24.4% for women).⁵ 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

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,



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%.⁹

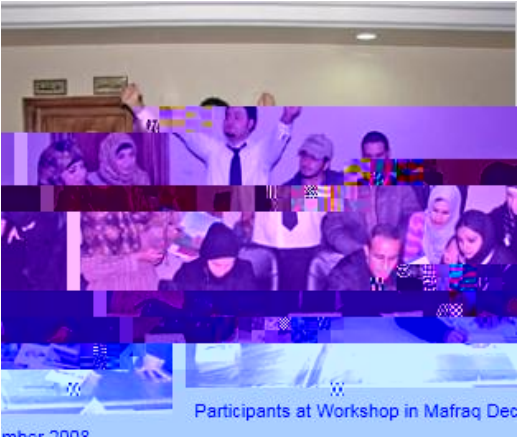
⁹ 3rd Annual ASDA A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey White Paper

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, Israa Almasa'ed, worked in the Child Care Society in her rural home town of North Badiya. 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



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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.

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. JCESS 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



Training workshop in Ma an

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

(iv) Im 0 535pac

(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.”¹¹ 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

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:

- x Participating youth and CSOs improved their capacity to participate in democratic processes and community development;
- x 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,
- x 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

- x 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;
- x 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;
- x 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;
- x 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

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, 3rd

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

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