

INJAZ: Engaging the Private Sector for Greater Youth Employability in Jordan

Overview

This case study explores how INJAZ—an independent Jordanian nonprofit organization founded in 1999 and specializing in youth empowerment—links the public, private, and civil society sectors to bridge the skills gap between the educational system and the changing needs of the labor market. INJAZ’s demand-driven programs serve youth in and out of school from grade 7 to university level and after graduation with relevant and unique content and activities that improve students’ financial literacy, communication skills, interpersonal skills, ethical leadership, teamwork, and creative thinking skills. The programs’ learning and adaptation hinge on the Public–Private Partnership Model, on an experiential learning pedagogy that better meets the needs of local students and local businesses, and on reflective monitoring and evaluation practices.

Key Contextual Conditions

Although the Middle East and North Africa region’s economic growth during 2013–14 registered at 3 percent, the region has the highest unemployment rates in the world, particularly among youth ages 15 to 24 (World Bank 2016). In Jordan, for example, steady economic growth has not led to job growth. In response to a growing youth population with limited job opportunities, INJAZ (which in Arabic means “achievement”) was established in 1999 as an extracurricular afterschool activity under the Save the Children program with US\$4.9 million in funding (over five years) from the U.S. Agency for International Development. In 2001, INJAZ was formally launched as a Jordanian nongovernmental organization under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah.

Development Challenge

Jordan’s growing youth population has limited job opportunities. Only 40 percent of the total workforce (ages 15–64) is economically active, with unemployment rates in rural areas dramatically higher than unemployment rates in cities.

Addressing Delivery Challenges

- **Human resources and organizational capacity—stakeholder engagement and skilled manpower.** The INJAZ Entrepreneurship and Employment Program connects university and college students with veteran entrepreneurs and mentors from the private sector who engage with the students in a range of capacity-building programs for the development and long-term management of social and business enterprises.
- **Project finance.** A byproduct of INJAZ’s design and growth has been the formation of Jordan’s largest network of committed volunteers (27,309 corporate volunteers between 1999 and 2015) and the advancement of a culture of volunteerism (Huda Obeidat, interview by Mayyada Abu Jaber, April 15, 2015). This approach minimizes costs

PROJECT DATA

SECTOR:

Education

DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE:

Youth population with limited job opportunities

DELIVERY CHALLENGES:

Stakeholder engagement, skilled manpower, project finance, project design and objective backed by evaluation data

COUNTRY:

Jordan

REGION:

Middle East

This brief was adapted, with permission from the authors, by Sruti Bandyopadhyay at the World Bank, from an original case study published by the Center for Universal Education, Brookings Institution. To access the original case study published in July 2016, please click [here](#). Jenny Perlman Robinson and Priyanka Varma of the Brookings Institution and Claudio Santibañez of the World Bank provided helpful feedback and support during the preparation of this brief.

and ensures the sustainability of INJAZ's operations. Schoolteachers in classrooms have the option to support and supplement INJAZ training, but they are not mandated to teach the INJAZ curriculum.

- **Project design and objective backed by evaluation data.** INJAZ's strategy is to pilot, test, enhance, and scale up only those programs with the largest impact based on criteria identified by the programs' monitoring and evaluation protocols. In this way, resources are not wasted on scaling up risky programs, and INJAZ can ensure that its programs meet its overall vision.

Lessons Learned

- During the period of piloting and expanding its programs (2000–02), INJAZ adopted a unique approach to training students by forming partnerships with private sector companies and engaging their qualified staff members as unpaid trainers or “volunteers” to teach INJAZ programs at schools and universities.
- Orienting monitoring and evaluation functions toward programmatic and strategic questions, rather than reporting, increases the analytical capacity of teams.
- A significant element of INJAZ's programming is its grounding in experiential learning—learning by doing.

Reference

World Bank. 2016. “Data: Unemployment, Youth Total (% of Total Labor Force Ages 15–24) (Modeled ILO Estimate).” World Bank, Washington, DC. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS>.



WORLD BANK GROUP

© 2016 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank. Some rights reserved. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this work do not necessarily reflect the views of The World Bank, its Board of Executive Directors, or the governments they represent. The World Bank does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this work. This work is subject to a CC BY 3.0 IGO license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/igo>).