



USAID | JORDAN

Economic Growth Sector PROJECT PROFILE

April 2012

Maharat Training & Employment Program

BACKGROUND

The Maharat program works to prepare recent Jordanian graduates for the workplace by providing them with career guidance, practical capacity-building programs and work experiences in the private sector. At the same time, Maharat facilitates companies' identification of qualified young employees with management potential.

Originally an initiative of the USAID-funded Jordan-U.S. Business Partnership (1998-2005), this was one of the first organized employment-oriented internship program for recent university graduates in Jordan. It responded to private sector employers' common complaint that graduates were not "workplace ready," lacking both the skills and professional behavior required of productive employees. The program helped new graduates to develop themselves into attractive candidates for employment instead of relying mainly on traditional networks and family contacts. Named "Maharat," it was further developed and expanded as part of the USAID-funded Business and Export Development Project for Jordanian Enterprises – Tatweer (2005-2010), implemented by the Business Development Center (BDC). The expanded Maharat program is now an independently funded USAID project.

ACTIVITIES

- Providing graduates with career-oriented, intensive capacity-building programs in specialized areas most demanded by the Jordanian labor market through Maharat Pioneers
- Linking Maharat graduates with employers from various sectors at Maharat Face-2-Face job fairs
- Securing hands-on work experience with a subsidized salary for Maharat graduates at companies in governorates and Eastern Amman
- Providing a career head start for university students by offering accredited elective courses in workplace skills as part of Jordanian university curriculums, through Maharat University Course
- Encouraging Jordanian youth to improve themselves and expand their general knowledge base by reading and using self-development techniques, through Maharat Book Club



Maharat students take part in a team-building activity during a workshop, part of their preparation for hitting the job market with the practical and soft skills most sought by employers.

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Implemented by: Business Development Center

Duration: 2005 – 2012

Total Funding:

Phase 1 - \$13.6 million (2005-2010)

Phase 2 – \$4.5 million (2010-2012)

Beneficiaries: University graduates; employers

Geographic Coverage: Nationwide

<http://www.tatweer.org.jo/mharat.shtm>



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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Maharat programs emphasize learning by doing; here a student participates in a subsidized internship at an advertisement newspaper in Irbid.

- Providing current students with mentors, coaches and assistance from Maharat program alumni, who also access ongoing skills training, networking and volunteer opportunities
- Offering students an opportunity to participate in social responsibility initiatives to help develop their communities and their country, through Maharat Cares

PROGRESS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Provided career development opportunities to 6,240 university graduates
- Qualified 196 trainers (more than half of them women) through Train-a-Trainer workshops
- Facilitated employment for 3,650 Maharat participants
- Engaged 630 enterprises in Maharat Face-2-Face Job Fairs; 441 hired Maharat participants
- Contributed more than 60,000 hours of direct support to community welfare through Maharat Cares
- Conducted 451 road shows and awareness sessions about Maharat

PARTNERS

- Business Development Center
- Jordanian public universities
- Amman and Zarqa Chambers of Industry and Commerce
- Small- and medium-size enterprises and other employers
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