

*The Adolescent Girls Initiative is part of the World Bank's Gender Action Plan: Gender Equality as Smart Economics. In Jordan the AGI is called Jordan NOW—New work Opportunities for Women.*

## The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: Country Overview

- Population: 5.9 million
- Per-capita GNI: US\$3,310
- Life expectancy at birth: 73 years
- Adult literacy rate: 92.2%
- Male unemployment: 10%
- Female unemployment: 24%
- Female youth employment: 38%
- Labor force participation rate: Male-70%, Female-23%
- Young women account for only 9% of the economically active population.

## Project Overview

Jordan NOW is a pilot program that aims to increase female labor force participation through two main interventions:

- *Job vouchers*: 600 young women have been selected to receive job vouchers which provide a short-term subsidy to firms to take a chance on hiring new graduates who do not have work experience, and to provide firms with an opportunity to overcome stereotypes through directly observing young women working for them; and
- *Employability skills training* providing 600 new graduates with interpersonal and other basic job skills that employers identify as constraints which make them reluctant to hire these young women.

## Demonstrating the World Bank's Commitment to Women's Economic Empowerment

In light of these challenges, discussions were held between the World Bank President, Mr. Robert Zoellick and H.E. Former Prime Minister of Jordan, Nader Al Dahabi.

The Jordanian government requested assistance from the World Bank to design and implement a pilot initiative focusing on two target groups: 1) female senior year community college students; 2) private sector firms.

World Bank Photo: Ghada Haddad



*Irbid Community College graduates signing up to Jordan NOW during the program orientation session.*



World Bank Photo: Ghada Haddad

Graduates of Irbid Community College attending Jordan NOW orientation session.

# Jordan NOW

## Implementation and Timeline

- Since securing initial funding of \$1 million from the AGI in March 2010, implementation of the Jordan NOW pilot has moved at a rapid pace.
- The July 2010 cohort of female graduates from 8 community colleges across Jordan were surveyed to identify the target population and benchmark outcomes.
- In August, a lottery was conducted and selected graduates were informed through outreach activities led by the community colleges, the World Bank and counterparts.
- College information sessions for graduates began September 2, 2010 and will be completed by September 21, 2010.
- Employability skills training sessions will take place between 25 September, 2010 and 2 November, 2010.
- Dissemination and outreach activities are being implemented continuously with the support of the Jordan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the World Bank team, counterparts and the Business Development Center.

## A Rigorous Impact Evaluation

- A rigorous evaluation design underpins the Jordan NOW pilot.
- The randomized lottery design allows us to compare young women who receive the intervention to similar young women who did not.
- This is an innovative pilot not only because the evaluation design allows us to compare job vouchers and training to determine which is more effective; it also allows us to measure how effective training and job vouchers are when given jointly.



World Bank Photo: Ghada Haddad

Graduates of Irbid Community College attending Jordan NOW orientation session.

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### For more information on Jordan NOW, please contact—

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<https://sites.google.com/site/aginowjordan/> • <https://sites.google.com/site/jordannowarabic/>  
For information on the World Bank's multi-country Adolescent Girls Initiative, please visit  
[www.worldbank.org/gender/agi](http://www.worldbank.org/gender/agi)