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JORDAN

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FY 2009 FOREIGN ASSISTANCE GOALS

The United States-Jordanian relationship has never been stronger, and U.S. foreign assistance is a central element of this 60-year-old partnership. Assistance enhances Jordan's ability to advance reform, moderation, and stability both domestically and regionally by addressing the Jordanian people's most pressing development needs, and positions Jordan to serve as a model for reform and tolerance in the region.

United States Government (USG) assistance to Jordan is central to advancing President Obama's message of openness to the Muslim world, as conveyed in his landmark June 2009 Cairo address. State Department programs actively partner with Muslim leaders, youth, and women to promote United States-Jordanian engagement and interfaith dialogue, while U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs focus on economic opportunity, gender equality, and youth empowerment. Host country commitment to U.S. foreign assistance in Jordan remains extremely strong, with U.S. assistance supporting Jordan's ability to police its borders, modernize its armed forces, and further the country's National Agenda, a 10-year plan that aims to institute economic and legal reforms, develop human resources, ensure proper health care, promote rural development, and make government more efficient.

Jordan's most pressing development challenges include a heavy reliance on imported and costly energy, a burgeoning youth population, and widespread urban poverty. While Jordan's tourism, commercial, and industry sectors have all experienced rapid growth in recent years, they also place increasingly higher demands on energy resources. With Jordan importing 96 percent of its energy supplies, the country's economic well-being is vulnerable to price fluctuations in international markets. USAID activities in FY 2009 therefore focused on increasing capacity in Jordan's electricity sector in order to ensure long-term stability, efficiency, and economic growth. With 70 percent of the country under age 30, Jordan's demographics present dramatic challenges for the country's continued peace and prosperity. Despite Jordan's economic reform efforts, high unemployment and increasing urban poverty demand attention. Increased growth is needed to reduce unemployment, which disproportionately affects women, the young, and the poor. New U.S. assistance programs therefore focus on energy efficiency, youth employability, civic engagement, and

poverty. USAID's youth programs aim to reduce youth unemployment and poverty by equipping young persons with the entrepreneurship skills needed for the 21st century.

HIGHLIGHTS BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

Peace and Security

The importance of Jordan's role in regional security cannot be overstated. U.S. assistance facilitates border security and the modernization of the Jordanian Armed Forces. In FY 2009, Jordan strengthened regulations governing the import and transit of dual-use items and established the "Export Committee for Dual-Use Items." U.S. assistance also initiated 28 law enforcement and security training programs in Jordan during FY 2009, training more than 500 law enforcement and security officers.

Military assistance in the area of counterterrorism seeks to ensure secure borders and comprehensive communications systems as a means to deter, prevent, and interdict the transit of weapons, narcotics, and foreign fighters in the region. Military assistance to Jordan helps to modernize Jordan's defensive capabilities; improve interoperability with U.S. and other forces; promote Jordan's ability to participate in regional stability operations, deployments, and international humanitarian assistance missions; and maintain regional stability through a strong defensive posture.

In 2009, the United States and the Government of Jordan (GOJ) partnered on an ambitious array of 11 joint exercises designed to enhance Jordan's technical capabilities. Funds supported significant deployments, allowing Jordan to continue operating its military field hospitals in Kandahar, Afghanistan and Fallujah, Iraq. The GOJ also remains the fourth largest contributor to United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Operations and the largest contributor to UN police missions internationally. In May 2009, Jordan opened the King Abdullah Special Operations Training Center, partially funded with U.S. assistance, as an international facility for training Special Operations Forces, and has conducted training and joint exercises with regional partners from Bahrain, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates.

Finally, U.S. Peace and Security assistance has helped to prevent money laundering, counter the financing of terrorism, promote the protection of intellectual property rights, and strengthen law enforcement efforts to reduce gender-based violence.

Governing Justly and Democratically

Effective governance, including accountable institutions and transparent practices, is essential for sustainable development and long-term stability. In FY 2009, the United States helped build the capacity of key judicial institutions by promoting the transparency and efficiency of the courts, including the consistent application of stricter sentencing for the perpetrators of so-called honor crimes. The Parliament also adopted new legislation to protect trafficked persons, and an interagency group is meeting to ensure full implementation of the new law. Finally, USAID programs have resulted in the automation of 100 percent of Jordanian courts, increasing both transparency and efficiency.

U.S. assistance in promoting the rule of law and human rights was highly successful in FY 2009. The most notable achievements included greatly improved case management in all 74 of the First Instance Courts in the Kingdom, a 21 percent increase in the number of cases referred to mediation over last year, the introduction of legal ethics courses at four Jordanian law schools, and the engagement of the National Center for Human Rights in raising awareness among law students on

human rights issues through a legal writing competition. These successes are promoting the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of the judiciary, in addition to creating an enabling environment that will allow for the promotion of increased judicial accountability and independence over the coming years.

Within the judiciary, the USG is supporting efforts to increase the number of women judges. In partnership with the Ministry of Justice, the USG is supporting the Future Judges program which provides scholarships to high school and university students (a majority of whom are women) to study law in exchange for a commitment to join the judiciary.

Additionally, U.S. assistance in this area has helped to launch the USAID Civil Society Program, pass amendments to the Civil Society Law to address significant civil society concerns regarding the 2008 Law, assist the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities, develop a national network of Disabled Persons Organizations, and establish the first advocacy agenda for persons with disabilities. It also helped establish a Complaints Office in partnership with the Jordanian National Commission for Women, which provides women with a mechanism for support when faced with abuse or discrimination. These many and varied successes are supporting the overall goals of increased citizen participation among Jordanian citizens.

Investing in People

The United States remains committed to expanding Jordanians' access to quality healthcare, public education, and water supply and sanitation services. U.S. assistance in 2009 helped to improve Jordan's health indicators. For example, assistance was provided for early detection of breast cancer, including development of national guidelines and training in the use of mammogram screening. Both the Jordan National Cancer Registry and the King Hussein Cancer Center reported an increase in detection of breast cancer in the early stages (up from 30 percent in 2005 to 58 percent in 2009). In FY 2009, USAID continued to work closely with the GOJ to improve health delivery systems, strengthen capacity building in the public and private sectors, advocate for policy reforms and behavior change programs, and reduce infant and maternal mortality by improving the quality of care provided at hospitals and primary health care centers. USAID supported improvements in the physical environment of obstetric and neonatal wards in six major hospitals, and built capacity at public hospitals to improve safe motherhood interventions. Foreign assistance also helped the Ministry of Health improve management systems for primary healthcare through operational planning, implementation of the essential services package, and monitoring and supervision. Finally, USAID improved the quality and safety of health services through an accreditation program that has developed standards and established a local entity to assist health facilities in meeting these standards and award accreditation.

The United States is Jordan's primary partner in education reform and continues to provide relevant education and training for Jordan's youth, partnering with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to ensure that future youth programming complements market demands in a global economy. In FY 2009, USAID funded the renovations of 20 existing schools, benefiting approximately 15,000 students by providing more than 80 new and renovated classrooms, including kindergartens, computer labs, and furniture and equipment. Another 16 new schools are currently under construction.

U.S. assistance to Jordan in FY 2009 helped design a five-year implementation plan and detailed first-year action plan that was aligned with the second phase of the Education Reform for the Knowledge Economy goals. Both plans were collaboratively developed with MOE staff.

Additionally, four assessments of past USAID interventions are underway which will better inform future activities. These assessments focus on the Management Information Stream online curricula, the School-to-Career project, the renovation of school playgrounds, and the efficacy of school-based training programs, which currently engage 40 percent of Jordan's teachers. Furthermore, USAID financed the development of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework that will govern both internal and external M&E processes and build existing capacity to facilitate and ensure data driven decision-making in the future.

To alleviate severe overcrowding, USAID initiated support for the construction of 28 new schools and the renovation of another 100 existing schools. USAID also funded the expansion of 20 existing schools and the beginning stages of construction for 16 new schools, benefiting approximately 15,000 students – both boys and girls. Meanwhile, USAID's complementary Community Mobilization Program has established 21 active Community Parent School Committees in FY 2009. These committees boast approximately 535 members to achieve greater community school engagement and ownership and help local stakeholders organize innovative and participatory events that engage the community.

Additionally, USAID job creation and education programs reached more than 85,000 youth in FY 2009, a number that will increase in coming years as a result of a new five-year youth program, as well as a pioneering poverty alleviation initiative currently under development.

Finally, USAID implemented significant water and sanitation programs in 2009, undertaking water and wastewater infrastructure projects that benefited over two million people, improving institutional capacity to pave the way for future progress in management of the water sector, and in advocating for policy gains at the national and regional levels.

Economic Growth

U.S. assistance enhances Jordan's fiscal position and macroeconomic policy, boosts its competitiveness, and develops a more skilled workforce. As Jordan's second-largest export partner, the United States has helped accelerate Jordan's economic reform process by expediting the process of privatization and export orientation. Assistance in developing public-private partnerships in multiple sectors and support in developing a national trade strategy also helped promote Jordan's competitiveness, as did targeted assistance to specific sectors including tourism, water, and energy. U.S. economic growth programs are designed to benefit women and youth. For example, the establishment of garment factories within 5 rural satellite Qualifying Industrial Zones boosted bilateral trade, and complemented women's empowerment efforts by employing 320 Jordanian women. Likewise, workforce development efforts have complemented education programs by equipping young Jordanians with market-ready skills.

The United States is working closely with the Jordanian Ministry of Finance to increase revenues and thereby ease the burden on Jordan in terms of debt and debt service payment. U.S. assistance is helping Jordan to transform the current public expenditure system – which is not clearly tied to revenues – into a system that incorporates a unified tax code and budget law, a fully-functioning tax policy unit, a customer service-focused tax department, less onerous tax filing rules and payment procedures, increased numbers of registered taxpayers and returns filed, a Government Financial Management System that operates according to international standards, and results-oriented budgeting.

USAID programs also help improve Jordan's business environment by assisting with international and bilateral trade agreements compliance, helping the GOJ to reap the most benefit from such

agreements. Specific USAID activities in FY 2009 included support to the Ministry of Industry and Trade for a national trade strategy and training for government officials in international property rights. Additional support was provided to assess the impact of current and potential trade agreements. USAID support allowed the GOJ to strengthen the enforcement of intellectual property rights laws and regulations through training of Jordanian judges and prosecutors, conduct legal reviews of laws to facilitate final negotiations for accession to the Government Procurement Agreement, and to join the Madrid Protocol and Patent Cooperation Treaty.

Many USAID activities were undertaken in the tourism sector in FY 2009. A competence and capability audit for the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA), the Department of Antiquities, and the Jordan Tourism Board was designed and conducted. The audit resulted in improved performance and responsiveness to the needs of private tour operators. Another key activity launched in FY 2009 in partnership with MOTA and the private sector was the hotel classification system that is developing a set of modern standards to meet and exceed the expectations of today's tourists.

As Jordan continues rapidly to develop its tourism, commercial, and industrial sectors, greater attention to capacity building in the energy sector is needed to facilitate this growth. Capacity building for Jordan's Electricity Regulatory Commission staff is well underway. The Commission has committed to a new approach for regulation and, with USAID support, it has established a working group to revise the regulatory structure that includes representation from the regulated utilities. Twenty-eight Commission staff received training on incentive-based regulation of utilities. To facilitate the restructure of electricity utility regulation and to promote a collaborative approach, USAID is including regulatory commission staff in training programs for the utilities. An enhanced understanding of the constraints faced by the utilities will help the regulators devise and improved regulatory structure.

U.S. assistance in the economic growth area also helps Jordan address constraints facing the private sector by preparing youth to thrive in the global economy and assisting firms to expand jobs for the projected 60,000 annual new entrants into the job market. In FY 2009, U.S. assistance in this also focused heavily on the environment. Major environmental achievements this year include a multi-agency U.S. approach to help train Jordan's Environmental Rangers and a new industrial wastewater tracking system. In FY 2009, USAID developed regulations for a new Environment Fund, helped the GOJ create nine new protected areas, and sponsored a major international conference on environmentally friendly eco-cities.

Moving forward, U.S. foreign assistance to Jordan will continue to focus on the critical areas of Peace and Security, Governing Justly and Democratically, Investing in People, and Economic Growth with a crosscutting focus on youth, poverty alleviation, and energy. U.S. assistance is well poised to meet Jordan's most pressing development challenges in support of a well-governed, prosperous, and secure Jordan that enjoys stability within its borders, responds to the needs of the people, reduces widespread poverty, and champions peace as a trusted U.S. ally in a troubled region.