Queen Rania attends launch of new partnership to boost education

Amman, Feb 25 (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah today witnessed the launch of a new partnership between the Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA), the Ministry of Education, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The partnership aims to strengthen the quality of education in Jordan as well as improve teachers’ skills by providing them with various trainings and workshops.

According to the new partnership, USAID awarded QRTA a grant of $3.2 million to implement a
program called "Cultivating Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environments" in Jordanian schools.

The academy will use the grant to hold trainings and build the capacity of teachers from 200 public schools in Jordan. The program’s target is to train 4,000 teachers, and by doing so, the reach of the program will span to benefit more than 130,000 students across the kingdom.

U.S. Ambassador Stuart E. Jones, USAID Mission Director Beth S. Paige and Minister of Education Mohammed Thneibat also attended the ceremony.

During the event, Queen Rania said that challenges in the education sector, such as the lack of resources and the growing numbers of refugees, are best faced through creativity and coming up with new programs that empower teachers and "immerse technology into the learning process".

The Queen added that such programs will help bridge the gap between efforts made in education and outcomes. Her Majesty noted that it is very important that those programs reflect tangible results on students’ performance and provide them with skills that help them enter the job market.

Thneibat said that the program is yet another result of the continuous collaboration between the ministry and the USAID to support education and the learning environment in Jordan.

The minister said that throughout the last three decades, Jordan has received tens of thousands of students from Arab countries into its public schools.

The Kingdom, he said, is currently providing education for about 120,000 Syrian students distributed across 200 public schools. The minister explained that despite the lack of financial resources and international aid, Jordan is providing education to Syrian students at an annual cost of JD 400 million. The minister said that he hopes to build strong partnerships with different international organizations in order to establish more community schools that elevate the level of education in Jordan. “This new partnership between Jordan and the United States is one more example of how our nations are responding to the needs of Jordanian children,” said U.S. ambassador Stuart E. Jones.

Director of QRTA, Haif Banayan highlighted the importance of the partnership in how it will enable the academy to empower teachers in Jordan and improve the quality of basic education in the country. Banayan added that the partnership will also support the government's efforts in providing education to Syrian students in Jordanian schools.

The implementation of the program will also improve the overall learning environment in classrooms and support the Ministry of Education in meeting the needs of a burgeoning population in public schools across the Kingdom. Through utilizing several teacher-training packages, the program will help build the capacity of teachers in psychosocial and interactive teaching methods.

QRTA will also establish "Model Community Schools" and "Community-Parent School
Coalitions" in order to increase the involvement of community members and parents in the education process.

During the event, attendees had the opportunity to listen to stories of teachers who attended different training courses provided by QRTA. Previously trained teachers explained how the training they received helped them hone their teaching skills and improve their performance in classrooms.

To date, QRTA have benefited more than 14,000 teachers from 500 public schools in Jordan.

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