

Jordan and MCC: Empowering Women Through Building Networks, Capacity and Ideas

During a recent address in Amman, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma of Jordan cited women's participation in local government as essential in any community and critical for local development. With support from the United States Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), the Jordanian National Commission for Women, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Jordan's Women's Knowledge Network was successfully launched in October 2008 as part of the country's \$25 million MCC Threshold Program.

The Network, focused on empowering female municipal council members nationwide, is strengthening the ability of women to perform effectively by providing a platform for sharing experiences and learning. To date, the program has conducted several regional meetings, with over 260 female council members from over 70 municipalities in attendance. Most recently, the Network hosted a workshop series for participants focused on improving local government planning and capacity.

Working with Jordan's Ministry of Municipal Affairs, MCC and USAID continue to strengthen local governance and enhance the role of youth and women in local government.

Soon, capacity and awareness-building activities for female council members will be conducted and the Network will launch its first official website.



Local women engage at a workshop on Jordan's MCC compact development and consultative process in Amman. MCC is committed to ensuring gender is considered and recognized in all stages of its work with partner countries.



The MCC Threshold Program in Jordan supports the principle that gender integration of local councils is important to development by ensuring that women have a valued voice in society.

Studies suggest that women pursue policy objectives distinguishable from those of their male colleagues because of differences in social roles, responsibilities, and experiences. This brings to government important perspectives and priorities have been frequently underrepresented in the policymaking process. For instance, studies suggest that women are more likely to prioritize public policies related to children and families, health care, education, environment, housing, and the elderly, and are more likely than men to facilitate citizen participation in the political process. Female representation in government positions also has an impact the expectations of young women, who see them as role models.

For more information on how MCC is working to promote gender equality throughout its programs, please visit www.mcc.gov/programs/gender/index.php.