



Corporate
Social
Responsibility

Partnership for Lebanon

Creates Jobs, Fuels Economic Growth, and Modernizes ICT Infrastructure to Improve Global Competitiveness



The issue

Lebanon's lack of broadband access, job opportunities, and business development threatened recovery and long-term economic growth after a 2006 conflict



Five-year commitment brings hope for long-term growth and economic prosperity to nation's industrious workforce.

When the 2006 conflict displaced one-quarter of Lebanon's population, the Partnership for Lebanon was established to support post-conflict reconstruction and increase access to opportunities for education and economic participation. Cisco committed to investing resources to create internships, disperse micro-loans, consult on a comprehensive broadband strategy, and enable public schools with technology, all to better prepare young Lebanese citizens to succeed in the global economy.



Networks

Human Networks:

nonprofits and non-governmental organizations, Lebanese government and private businesses, multi-national corporations, interns, Cisco employees

Technology Networks:

routers, switches, international Internet gateway, Internet exchange point, Flip cameras

Jobs Created



100

internships completed in U.S. and Lebanon



90%

percent of interns employed



44

Cisco Networking Academy locations, up from 22

Business & Community



729

(and counting) small businesses received micro-loans



1.5 Million

in micro-loans dispersed to rural residents



10 Million

investment in promising small to mid-sized companies



640

destroyed homes rebuilt

ICT Capacity



1

Internet exchange point in Lebanon: Beirut IX



13

rural community centers networked to offer resources and job training



52

public secondary schools connected

you + networks = impact^x



Lebanese youth learn valuable ICT skills through Cisco Networking Academy

“People who completed the internship program are now more adventurous and dedicated to their work. They saw global innovation centers and know that nothing is impossible if you do it the right way. When you see other companies initiating great applications and services after starting out with nothing, it changes the way you look at things. It not only helped the people who were part of the Partnership for Lebanon, but it affected their families, their neighbors, their friends, and their entire network.”

– Hilal Chouman, Former Partnership for Lebanon intern, now a social media strategist with Cisco

More Information

For more information on the Partnership for Lebanon, please contact:
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The Issue

A conflict in 2006 disrupted services and left parts of Lebanon uninhabitable. Lebanon’s highly educated and creative workforce had limited job options and many citizens began to seek opportunities elsewhere, causing the economy to suffer. Business growth was further threatened by Lebanon’s outdated ICT infrastructure, which was slow, expensive, and lacked adequate bandwidth. While Lebanon needed immediate crisis relief, only a deep commitment to modernize its ICT infrastructure and create jobs would lead to lasting prosperity.

Human Network

The Partnership for Lebanon began when leaders from Cisco, Intel, Microsoft, GHAFARI, and Occidental Petroleum agreed to help Lebanese citizens find a path to long-term stability and economic growth. Cisco partnered with Lebanese government agencies to help develop a national broadband strategy and standardize technology implementation for public schools. One hundred Lebanese youths completed internships in the U.S. and in Lebanon at Cisco and other Lebanon-based organizations. Nonprofits and non-governmental organizations were instrumental in rebuilding and networking schools. Local microfinance institutions managed a loan program for rural businesses wanting to expand their technology capabilities.

Technology Network

To create a communications infrastructure as sophisticated as Lebanon’s workforce, Cisco donated two powerful routers as an international Internet gateway and provided the equipment and technical expertise to establish Lebanon’s first Internet Exchange Point (IXP), enabling Internet traffic to move more quickly and efficiently. Cisco connected 52 public high schools, provided Flip video cameras, and trained teachers and students to use technology in the classroom. The project demonstrated the value of technology in education and inspired the Lebanese government to commit to wiring the rest of the public schools and equipping them with broadband access.

Impact^x

The Partnership for Lebanon has created educational and economic opportunities for thousands. Of the 100 interns, more than 90 percent found jobs and are contributing a global business perspective and technological expertise to their home country. A US\$1 million grant from Cisco provided micro-loans to more than 720 citizens, enabling them to enhance their businesses with technology. Students who once lacked Internet access can now conduct research online, give multimedia presentations, and share resources with students and teachers in other parts of the country. And, the Partnership for Lebanon helped lay the groundwork for a robust ICT infrastructure that will help its citizens compete and succeed in the global economy.

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Cisco Corporate Social Responsibility

We believe that businesses have a responsibility to operate in ways that respect and ultimately benefit people, communities and the planet we live on; we call this Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Our core CSR philosophy is that impact multiplies whenever human and technology networks combine to solve a problem.

This is why we approach CSR the same way we approach business – by applying our technology, employee expertise and partnerships. We are focused on four primary goals: improving the well-being of people and communities around the world, reducing our environmental impact and helping our customers do the same, conducting our business ethically, and creating a workplace where our employees thrive.