

Partnership for Lebanon

This initiative is expanding education and workforce training, creating jobs, building ICT infrastructure, and connecting communities.

Narrator

The Partnership for Lebanon was formed in the fall of 2006, in response to the July conflict, with the main purpose of contributing to the reconstruction efforts in Lebanon and to help build a better future for the Lebanese people.

John Chambers

In September, we visited Lebanon and we saw a country that can achieve many of the goals itself, but with the proper assistance can achieve them at a much faster pace and rebuild the country for the future, not just rebuild back to where they were before.

Craig Barrett

I met with political leaders. I met with education leaders and business leaders. And I think the Lebanese people recognize what can be done.

Yousif Ghafari

I think the main issue that the country is facing right now is rebuilding their economy. The geopolitical region of the whole Middle East has a major effect on what happens in Lebanon.

Narrator

The Partnership for Lebanon defined its long-term goal to help the people of Lebanon find a path towards stability and long-term economic growth. The partnership's first focus was on the immediate needs of crisis relief and response in the war-damaged areas of Lebanon. So it partnered with reputable NGOs, to deliver those much-needed services. Anera equipped 10 IT centers with computer labs, offering various training, including basic computer skills and computer and cell phone repair. MercyCorps identified the needs of 12 under-served public schools.

They provided ICT training with enhanced learning environments and diverse academic and extracurricular activities. With Habitat for Humanity, the Partnership assisted 560 families with design, architectural, and civil plans for their homes.

The Partnership is helping to develop and implement a National Broadband Strategy. Broadband will give Lebanon a strategic advantage over regional competitors and will level the playing field in global markets, enabling innovation, attracting investment, growing key industries, and creating jobs.

To enable economic prosperity, social cohesion, and regional competitiveness, the partnership is also working with Lebanon's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority to create a competitive environment in the Internet communications sector, to lower costs and improve quality. The strategy recommendation document was delivered by Cisco's technical experts on January 11, 2008. The partnership has donated two high-end communication routers to the incumbent provider, Ojero, to set up a state-of-the-art international Internet gateway.

In addition, the Partnership helped to establish the first Internet exchange point in Lebanon by donating equipment and offering technical expertise. The launch of the Internet exchange point took place on April 1, 2008.

Through the Partnership, the Cisco Networking Academy has expanded to community centers and secondary schools. It is a global education initiative that delivers information and communication technology skills to improve career and educational opportunities. And, through the partnership, establishment of the first Microsoft IT Academy at the Lebanese University with a primary objective of supporting 1600 public schools

The Microsoft IT Academy has expanded to the Lebanese University. It is an academic program of learning solutions enabling faculty and students to acquire new technology skills in an academic setting. The Partnership is working to plant the seeds of long-term economic growth by placing qualified Lebanese interns in Lebanese businesses and government agencies, as well as in top U.S. corporations. Interns learn critical skills to help them build successful careers and businesses.

Ingrid Salloum

The Partnership for Lebanon and its internship program has changed my life and the lives of my fellow interns, forever. It has given me hope that, moving forward, not only is there a possibility for a future in Lebanon, but that in some small way, with my acquired training and skill set, I could play a role shaping that future.

Graphic: Ingrid was hired by Cisco in Beirut as part of its global education team.

Grace Harb

We need to forget about our past and focus on the future. The partnership investment in time and energy means that the next generation will have more opportunities in rebuilding a stronger future for our country and its people.

Narrator

The partnership installed 25 Intel Classmate PCs in the Burj el Barejne public school and the teachers' training was completed. The students are currently using Classmate PCs during their weekly IT class. Under the partnership, IntelTeach trained 375 teachers last year.

In 2007 and 2008, the partnership invested \$1.5 million in the Berri-Tech Investment Fund, for small to medium enterprises in the ICT sector. With the objective of reviving the local private sector, the partnership worked on facilitating business matches between local ICT companies and U.S.-based organizations.

The Partnership has completed the first phase of the Connected Communities Program by setting up five community centers in the war-damaged areas of Nabatieh, Alma al Chaab, Bint Jbeil, Burj el Barejne, and Baalbek. All five communities were able to implement relevant and useful projects using ICT as a tool. Also, ITE Cisco Networking Academies and the Microsoft Unlimited Potential Program were incorporated in various community centers.

Intel increased technical training support for a TeleMedicine program at the American University of Beirut Medical Center and the Nabatieh Governmental Hospital. The systems provided the hospitals

with real-time video consultation between physicians and the ability to share data and diagnose patients from afar.

With a remarkable collaboration between public, private, and NGO partners, the Partnership for Lebanon was able to meet the objectives of the first phase. Committed to help the Lebanese build a better future for their country and reach a sustainable economic growth, these achievements are only prerequisites for the continuous efforts that will be deployed in the future.

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