

Partnership for Lebanon

Program Overview

The Partnership for Lebanon was established in September 2006 to support post-conflict reconstruction and help the people of Lebanon find a path to stability and long term economic growth by leveraging public-private partnerships and collaborative technologies to create scalable, replicable, and sustainable solutions for country transformation. The Partnership was founded by Cisco, Intel, GHAFARI, Occidental Petroleum, and Microsoft. Cisco committed US\$20 million in support of the Partnership, and Cisco's end of engagement is planned for the end August 2010.

Why Cisco?

The Partnership for Lebanon leverages Cisco's core competencies in information and communication technologies (ICT), networking, education, and public-private partnerships to promote sustainable economic growth in Lebanon.

Updates and Impact

ICT Infrastructure Workstream:

- **Beirut-IX:** Cisco facilitated the establishment of the first Internet exchange point in Lebanon in December 2007.
- **National Broadband Strategy:** In January 2008, Cisco presented a national broadband strategy to Lebanon's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority; promoting infrastructure development for the delivery of fast, reliable, and affordable broadband services.
- **Broadband Manifesto:** June 2008, the Partnership produced a 10-point manifesto outlining the steps government and industry should take to facilitate broadband connectivity. The manifesto has been signed and endorsed by more than 6000 individuals and organizations.
- **Lebanese Broadband Stakeholders Group (LBSG):** In October 2008, Cisco helped launch LBSG with the support of the Lebanese Economic Organizations – an informal and independent coalition working to create broad, nonpartisan support for broadband access.

Workforce Training and Education Workstream:

- **Cisco® Networking Academy:** Increased the number of networking academies in Lebanon from 22 to 44.
- **Internships:** 36 internships have been completed in the United States and 37 internships were completed in Lebanon. In December 2009, Cisco announced an \$800,000 commitment to recruit the final 27 interns. Ninety-two percent of interns who completed the program are now employed.
- **National Education Network (NEN):** At the end of 2008, the Partnership collaborated with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education and OGERO, a Lebanese state-run Telecom provider to help establish the first national education network (NEN). Cisco donated networking equipment and wireless access points to 50 public schools and two TP500 units and digital media signage to two model schools, and funded the installation and operating costs. The NEN will support collaboration among learners, teachers, and the Ministry of Education.
- **School in a Box:** In March 2008, the Partnership launched a pilot program in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Education to facilitate the integration of ICT in public schools. This program was funded by \$250,000 Cisco grant and piloted in 7 schools.
- **Dialogue on Education:** In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Partnership held five workshops between November 2008 and September 2009 to spur dialogue among education decision-makers and practitioners about the future of education in Lebanon.
- **Tawassol (ICT Youth Summer Camp):** In August 2008 and August 2009, the Partnership hosted a week-long summer camp that offered Cisco Networking Academy® classes and courses on conflict resolution, leadership, and civic responsibilities. Approximately 100 youth attended each session.

Job Creation/Private Sector Revival Workstream:

- **Venture Capital Funding:** Cisco committed \$10 million in private sector investments over three years. In 2008, Cisco invested \$500,000 in the Berytech fund, which provides incubation and support for startups.
- **Executive Mentorship Program:** This program was launched in October 2007 and seven mentees have been

matched to date.

- **Cisco Rural Enterprise Development for IT (CREDIT):** In January 2008, Cisco announced a \$1 million grant to Relief International to fund microcredit loans for small businesses in rural areas of Lebanon. In partnership with two microfinance institutions, Al Majmoua and Ameen, 370 loans have been disbursed as of February 2010.
- **Creative Cluster Initiative:** Two workshops were held by an external consultant to develop a plan of action to establish Lebanon as a creative hub for the region and enhance capabilities in the media, entertaining, and advertising sectors.

Connected Communities Workstream:

- **Connected Community Centers:** Based on input from focus groups and leaders, the Partnership equipped ten ICT training centers with computer labs in collaboration with ANERA, and enabled five community centers in collaboration with Mercy Corps that deliver PICTA ICT Literacy training and meet PICTA standards for infrastructure, human resources, and equipment.
- **Connected Communities and Business Initiative (CCBI):** The Partnership collaborated with the YMCA Lebanon and Digital Opportunity Trust to establish community centers that deliver small business support, Networking Academy courses, Microsoft IT courses, and other professional training programs. The Partnership contributed \$515,000 in support of the CCBI pilot. Eight community centers opened in December 2009 with an innovative approach to sustainability and local ownership.

Relief and Response Workstream:

- **Technical Shelter Assistance Program (TSAP):** In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, the Partnership has helped more than 640 families rebuild their homes and communities. The TSAP web portal connects families with the tools and information they need to successfully manage home reconstruction projects.
- **Leveraging Education through Access, Rehabilitation and Networking (LEARN):** In March 2007, the Partnership collaborated with Mercy Corps to deliver a one-year program that provided extracurricular activities (including ICT training) to students at 12 underserved public schools.
- **Marshall Legacy Institute:** The Partnership donated \$65,000 to the Marshall Legacy Institute in March 2008 to sponsor the training and transportation of two dogs that can detect land mines.

For More Information

To learn more about the Partnership for Lebanon, please visit www.partnershipforlebanon.org.