

Starting them young: Goethe-Institut school initiative lays foundation for future leaders

JT jordantimes.com/news/local/starting-them-young-goethe-institut-school-initiative-lays-foundation-future-

December 16,
2019

AMMAN — Developing entrepreneurial mindsets, competencies and practices at an early age will most likely have long-lasting and transformational effects on students' readiness for a university education and individual career planning, enabling them to become future leaders both in the business world and in their own communities, according to a recent statement from Goethe-Institut.

Believing in this kind of transformation, Goethe-Institut Jordan and the German Institute for Economic Education (IÖB, University of Oldenburg), in cooperation with the German-Jordanian University, as well as five Jordanian schools, launched the project "Entrepreneurship in school practices in Jordan" in 2019, the statement said.

The main goal of the project is to lay the foundations for teacher trainings and curriculum development for entrepreneurial thinking and 21st Century competencies in participating schools, which included the Ahliyyah School for Girls and the Bishop's School for Boys, Al Assriyya Schools, the Islamic Educational College (Jubaiha and Jabal Amman), Al Saadah Schools and the Jubilee School.

As a first step, directors of the partner schools travelled to the city of Oldenburg in the north of Germany to gather and exchange ideas on entrepreneurship education in workshops organised by the partnering Institute for Economic Education, the statement said.

The principals "welcomed the opportunity" to network, share experiences and hear about new ideas for entrepreneurship education.

"The most important aspect gained from the trip was the networking, which was an important step to exchange the ideas of the two educational systems," one of the participants was quoted in the statement as saying.

Based on the discussions during this encounter, two pilot teacher trainings took place focusing on project management, career planning and teaching methods in entrepreneurship education. The trainings were accompanied by tailor-made material and handouts ready to be used in the classrooms. Teachers were encouraged to put what they learned into action by receiving a fund for school projects, the statement said.

The students' project ideas reflected environmental awareness and sustainability. Student entrepreneurs said that they wished to create businesses that enable them to have a "good impact on society", and they were very proud of their achievements. "I

believe in giving equal opportunities to those with unequal conditions, so I took the opportunity to design a product for people with disabilities," one of the participating students said in the statement.

Laura Hartz, director of Goethe-Institut Jordan, said: "The success of this pilot year gives a great perspective for the next phase of the project starting in 2020. This phase will again provide more teacher trainings but also introduce a train-the-trainer component."

The project is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office within the German-Arab Transformational Partnership Programme, the statement noted.