**JORDAN NOW- NEW WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN PILOT PROGRAM**

**Fact Sheet for Chambers of Commerce and Industry and all interested firms**

***What is Jordan NOW?***

The Jordan New Work Opportunities for Women (Jordan NOW) pilot program aims to increase female labor force participation amongst the 2010 cohort of the public community college female graduates. Two major interventions will be piloted in 8 community colleges:
i) job vouchers will be given to selected students, which provide a short-term subsidy for firms to take a chance on hiring these new graduates; and
ii) selected students will be given employability skills training which provides job seekers with interpersonal and professional skills that employers look for when hiring new graduates.
A very important component of the pilot is a rigorous impact evaluation which includes baseline and follow up surveys to learn whether and how they work and inform future policy making.

Jordan NOW is a joint collaboration between the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), Jordan National Commission for Women (JNCW) and the World Bank. A steering committee chaired by H.E. Asma Khader and with membership including Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Labor, Chambers of Commerce and Industry (JoCC and JCI), and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation provided guidance and oversight in the design and will continue to support the implementation.

***Which colleges are targeted?***

The following eight community colleges have been selected for the pilot, and students typically graduate with specializations in business administration and finance, information management and MIS, engineering, education and para-medical science, highlighted below.

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| **Community College** | **Governorate** | **Major specializations** |
| Amman University College | Amman | Administration and Finance |
| Princess Alia University College | Amman | Education, Administration and Finance, Information Management (MIS) |
| Al-Huson University College for Engineering | Irbid | Engineering, Administration and Finance, Applied Fine Arts |
| Irbid University College | Irbid | Administration and Finance, Applied Fine Arts, Education |
| Ajloun University College | Ajloun | Para-Medical, Applied Fine Arts, Education |
| Zarqa University College | Zarqa | Administration and Finance, Para-Medical |
| Al-Karak University College | Al-Karak | Administration and Finance, Para-Medical, Education |
| Al-Salt College | Al-Salt | Administration and Finance, Para-Medical, Education |

***Who are the eligible graduates for Jordan NOW?***

* All beneficiaries in the pilot are women.
* All female graduates who passed the Comprehensive Examinations are eligible for the program.
* From this eligible set:
	+ 375 female graduates receive employability skills training;
	+ 225 female graduates receive job vouchers; and
	+ 225 female graduates receive both training and vouchers.

In addition, while only 450 vouchers will be redeemable, we will in fact be offering 600 vouchers. After the first 450 graduates obtain successful employment, no more vouchers will be honored. The reasons we are offering more vouchers are: (a) To insure against a low take-up rate of the voucher offers; and (b) To encourage competitive job-seeking amongst these young graduates.

***What is employability skills training?***

Students selected for training will obtain 50 hours of interactive sessions that enhance their employability skills: it involves sessions in effective communication and presentation skills, CV writing and interviewing skills, team-building and team skills, excellence in service and business writing skills. The curricula is specifically designed to meet the needs of these young graduates and based on consultation with many private sector firms who highlighted such deficiencies amongst new job seekers.

The training will be provided by the Jordan based Business Development Center (BDC) with a proven track record in high quality skills training, especially for young entrants into the labor market. Training is scheduled to commence the week of September 19, 2010, and all selected graduates will receive a certificate upon successful completion of training.

***What is a Job Voucher?***

The job voucher is a letter of guarantee to pay **150 JD per month for up to 6 months** to the firm for employing graduates that have received the voucher. Female graduates who benefit from the voucher will highlight in their CV: (a) their participation in the pilot; and (b) their selection into the voucher component. Also, when interviewing in person for any vacancy, they will produce a photocopy of the job voucher as proof of their selection. The voucher will explain the terms and conditions under which the World Bank will honor the voucher. All vouchers expire on August 31, 2011.

This voucher is designed to encourage firms to take a chance on hiring new female graduates and help to assimilate them into the private sector. Firms often invest significant resources in specific on-the-job training when hiring new graduates. This voucher is intended to subsidize these costs for firms. Firms will benefit from the improved skills of these new employees, and thus contribute to a key development objective facing Jordan today- reducing unemployment by creating productive employment for young women.

The job voucher is attached to the graduate. Once a firm employs a graduate, the firm will be reimbursed the face value of the voucher for a maximum of six months, as long as: (a) the graduate continues to be employed at that firm; (b) the firm is eligible (as described below); and (c) all six months fall within the final expiration date of August 31, 2011. Should the employment relationship dissolve (initiated either by the firm or the employee), the voucher payments linked to that graduate will be terminated. Alternatively, a job-seeker with a voucher could be hired who has already expended a few months of the voucher in a different firm. In this case, the new employer can redeem the remaining months, provided: (a) the firm is eligible (as described below); and (b) the remaining months fall within the final expiration date. In case an employment relationship is terminated part way through a month, the voucher will not be valid for that month’s salary. In other words, voucher payments only cover full month employment periods.

The program will be closed to new voucher redemption when 450 vouchers have been redeemed (meaning 450 students have taken jobs). Students who have still not used their vouchers will be notified when this happens, so they know when the vouchers are no longer valid.

Finally, all participating graduates and firms that decide to recruit the graduates have to follow Jordanian labor regulations. There are no exceptions from participating in this project except that the World Bank will supplement the wages by paying the firm 150 JD per month for a maximum of 6 months employment. In other words, the firm is free to choose the monthly salary so long as it is (a) at least JD150 per month, and (b) any amount in excess of JD 150 will be borne by the firm.

***How does the job voucher work?***

**Registration and eligibility**

If any firm, public or private, agrees to employ the graduate, then the firm needs to satisfy the following eligibility conditions and submit documentation for verification:

* Valid municipality work permit
* Be registered with the JoCC or JCI
* Bank account
* Official offer of employment stipulating terms and job description
* Minimum wage offer of JD 150 per month

The firm should fax or email the following as proof of eligibility in order to register into the voucher program to the program administrators (whose contact details are provided below):

1. Photocopy of the municipality work permit
2. Photocopy of registration certificate with JoCC and JCI
3. The employing firm must have a bank account to receive the payments
4. Full address
5. Business phone contact number
6. Offer letter with the graduate’s name stamped with the firm’s seal and which states the salary and explains duties and responsibilities under this position
7. Year of establishment

This registration is compulsory to avail of the job voucher; no payment will be released until the program administrators verify that the firm is eligible to participate.

**Conditions for receiving payments**

After the start of the employment, both the firm and the graduate will be required to confirm their employment with the program administrator by the 25th of each month. A grace period of 7 days from the 25th will be allowed. Failure to confirm employment status on either side beyond that will result in payments being reimbursed at the next monthly cycle, along with any reimbursements that may be due for the next month. Failure to confirm employment status for two continuous monthly cycles may risk a termination of benefits from the program.

The employment should be at least one month long to receive the first payment. The firms and students will also be monitored each month to verify continued employment in the firm. In addition, random visits will be paid to firms reporting having hired a graduate by the administrator of the voucher program to ensure that reimbursement claims are legitimate. If these conditions are not satisfied, the program administrator will stop the job-voucher payments and bar the student and the firm from further participation.

***Newspaper Advertisement of Jordan NOW***

An advertisement in XXX newspaper will be launched on date1 and date2 encouraging all firms to participate in the Jordan NOW, and giving details about an informational session in early October.

I have read and understood all the terms and conditions above and agree to participate in the Jordan NOW pilot program.

**Name Signature Date**

**Contact Information**

Phone: Student affairs of the local college

Website details