



Jordanian Entrepreneurs Achieve Their Dreams



Photo: Mahmoud Shawkat

“I had a vision for starting my own business, but I had no understanding of the details of entrepreneurship, like marketing or licensing. Through the Young Entrepreneurs Association, I got indispensable advice from experienced business leaders. Now, the company is growing and attracting more clients and bigger projects.”

- Samer Al Jabari, co-founder, MENA Tech

When Samer Al Jabari started his software development and consulting company in 2002, he had no experience and no customers. He went to the Young Entrepreneurs Association (YEA), established in 1998 to promote entrepreneurship in Jordan and encourage national economic development, to get help in running his business. USAID has helped build the capacity of the YEA by providing technical assistance, training, and a development grant of more than \$415,000.

The YEA offers training programs and networking opportunities, as well as direct support, such as assistance in creating a business plan. Samer, a YEA member since 2000, began seeking one-on-one advice from the YEA in 2002, which led to his company landing its first client. Realizing the value of personalized assistance for a new entrepreneur, the YEA began a pilot mentorship program which paired new entrepreneurs with seasoned business professionals who provide guidance on topics such as management, marketing, and financing.

“Being an entrepreneur is like being a pilot who wants to land a plane in the dark on an unlit runway,” explains Samer. “You know where you want to go, but can’t see how to get there. The YEA mentor helped me develop my business plan, market the company’s products, and adopt a more customer-friendly business philosophy. Without the support of the YEA, we could not have dealt so effectively with the complex issues of running a business. Now, we have six clients instead of one, and we win larger projects.”

First Person

