Success Story

School Based Professional Development Conference in Aqaba Hailed a Success

From April 1–3, 2008 Aqaba, Jordan was the setting for the first School Based Professional Development Conference to be held in the kingdom. Hosted by the Jordanian Ministry of Education and the USAID-funded ERKKE Support Project (ESP), this conference, opened by His Excellency Minister Tayseer Al Noami, drew over 200 teachers and supervisors as well as key decision-makers from the Ministry and Directorates of Education. Members of the Education Royal Commission were also in attendance throughout the three-day conference.

In his opening speech HE Minister Tayseer Al Noami spoke about the role of leadership in school based professional development. The conference sought to disseminate the lessons learned from the implementation of school based professional development in the pilot schools and identify strategies for scaling up and sustaining the model in all schools in the country.

The conference provided a forum for pilot schools to share their achievements and challenges in implementing the new professional development system while allowing other participants to understand and critically evaluate the new designs. The conference also saw the dissemination of the USAID-funded evaluation study on these designs.

His Excellency Minister of Education
Dr Tayseer Al Noami addresses the conference

The event also allowed participants to be introduced to regional trends in teacher professional development, which further enhanced their discussions on the potential for scaling up and sustaining the school based model.

However the conference was not just a forum for listening to others but a chance for the teachers to share their thoughts through the many workshops held over the three days in areas such as financing, implementation, and evaluation of school based professional development.

For many teachers it was also a chance to meet colleagues from across the country and discuss common issues and how they dealt with these issues.

Ministry staff and teachers listened to speakers and contributed to the discussion

By the end of the third day those attending agreed on a set of recommendations at the policy and program levels for scaling up and sustaining the school based professional development model.

For many of the participants this was an important event as they shared in the development of their future working environment and sought answers to issues they faced.
The conference was hailed as a great success by many who attended:

“It’s the first time for us that we are allowed to present what we did at the school level as teachers working together, learning from each other. We felt like a community of learners.”

Wafa’a Zhaimat
Teacher from karak

“It’s different from other conferences – it shows the real experiences from the field. We didn’t have lectures we didn’t have theories instead we had real experiences from schools and teachers—what they were actually doing in the schools.”

Amal Abu Shab
Curriculum Department

“The conference shows the collaboration between the Ministry, USAID, and ESP.”

Ahmed Ayassarah
Training Department

“The conference recommendations are aligned with the policies of ERiKE II.”

HE Minister of Education Dr Tayseer Al Noaimi