



SUCCESS STORY

Building Life Skills through Sports in Jordan



Photo by: ERSF

Nour el Din (left) and Gassem (right) participate in the LStS festival at Al Hashmiyeh Secondary School for Boys in Zarqa.

“I even see sports games in a different light now, knowing that a game can teach you so many skills to apply in your daily life”

– Gassem Al Batarneh,
16 year old LStS participant.

In Jordan, youth unemployment reaches 28%. Young people struggle to gain the skills that will help them become active, productive citizens in their nation’s economy and workforce. Now, the “*Life Skills through Sports*” (LStS) program uses games and sports to teach young people conflict resolution, time management, decision-making, teamwork and communication skills that can be readily applied to their daily lives.

Nour el Din Zoyoud and Gassem Al Batarneh, 16 year old high school students, have only been part of the LStS program for one year, but they are learning skills that will last a lifetime and prepare them for the future.

Supported by the USAID-funded Education Reform Support Program (ERSF), the “*Life Skills through Sports*” program helps students learn basic life skills through team sports such as football, handball, basketball, and volleyball, skills that support youth to prepare for employment in today’s knowledge economy. “I was always shy at school and stubborn at home,” said Nour el Din. “But after the skills I learned here, I now participate confidently in class discussions and communicate with my family more. This made me gain their trust because they see my new sense of responsibility.”

“At our age, we rely on adults or family members to solve our problems for us, but I learned through LStS how to make decisions, resolve conflict, and problem solve to take matters into my own hands and think maturely for myself, which is how I deal with things now,” said Gassem. Both young men have ambitions of becoming engineers to help rebuild their country and feel that the skills they gained throughout the past year will put them ahead when entering the workplace.

Through social media and school events, participants are teaching other students and their families the skills they have learned through LStS, extending the program’s impact. “We want to continue building these skills as assistants to the teachers in order to pass what we learned to younger students,” said Gassem.

By learning constructive new skills and sharing their new-found knowledge with the next generation, young people are realizing their dreams of creating a better Jordan.