

**Initiative on Good Governance for Development (GfD) in the Arab Countries:
Conclusions and recommendations of the thematic panel's meetings convened
during the Dead Sea Conference, 6-7 February 2005.**

**Theme Four
Public-Service Delivery, Public-Private Partnership, and Regulatory Reform**

Synthesis of points discussed and agreements reached.

I. Challenges:

1. The psychological barriers that still hinder partnership between the public and private sectors, the complexities and lack of clarity in the legal environment and unclear policies and visions.
2. The supremacy of the financial objectives over social considerations in the private sector.
3. The low quality of public services in some cases and the poor infrastructure (communications, transport, energy and water).
4. Relatively poor foreign investment in Arab countries and poor financial markets.
5. Existence of public and private monopolies.
6. The high cost of public services and the absence of electronic access to these services.
7. Lack of knowledge regarding successful methods for developing partnerships between the public and private sectors due to poor training.
8. Generally low level efficiency and complex procedures in public institutions.

II. Prospects and fields where the private sector's contribution for rendering public services can be developed

1. Infrastructure (roads, harbors, airports).
2. Environment protection (water, sanitation, re-cycling of solid waste material, etc.).
3. Power (electricity and gas) production and distribution.
4. Distribution of potable and irrigation water.

5. Education, training, sports, and cultural services (kindergarten, theatres, sports arenas, etc.).
6. Health and social services (hospitals, clinics emergency services, houses for caring for old people).
7. Communication and modern technology (telephone, cellular phone, internet, etc.).
8. Media (TV, radio stations, etc.).
9. Establishing private industrial zones and technology parks.
10. Research centers, think tanks and technology development.

III. Recommendations for priority actions:

1. Formulation of policies and definition of roles of partners; simplification and clarification of the concepts leaving out any ideological content.
2. Developing the legal and organizational framework of partnership while ensuring stability of the regulatory rules and policies. Developing and supporting the agencies responsible for the formulation of such policies.
3. Developing proper mechanisms for consultation among all the stakeholders, particularly the beneficiaries of the public services, taking into consideration those with special needs (the disabled, the elderly, etc.)
4. Promoting transparency in outsourcing activities and projects to the private sector. This may be done as follows:
 - Declaring a clear policy of the State in this field and enhancing the observance of the rules of constructive and fair competition..
 - Selecting contractors in accordance with declared competitive procedures to ensure equal opportunities.
 - Providing clear information and instructions regarding tender documents and giving companies ample time to submit their offers.
5. Enhancing cooperation and exchange of experience in the field of partnership between the public and private sectors in the Arab countries and learning from the pioneering countries in this field.

6. Developing information system and dissemination of know-how regarding effective patterns of engaging the private sector.
7. Establishing a monitoring mechanism and disseminating successful experiences.
8. Developing and implementing special training programs for civil servants.
9. Defining and observing standards of qualifications of staff involved in public contracting.