

INJAZ AL-ARAB: COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

October 2020

Part 1. Statement of Continued Support

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

I am pleased to confirm that INJAZ Al-Arab supports the ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption. With this commitment, we express our intent to support the Global Compact advancing these principles and will make a clear statement of this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public. We also pledge to participate in and engage with the UN Global Compact by comprehensively engaging with the Social Responsibility and Sustainability initiatives of organizations across the MENA region.

The unique model of INJAZ is based on developing partnerships to economically empower youth, achieving positive change for the entire community through our belief in the boundless potential of young people, and we are proud to support and be a part of the sustainability initiatives across the region. We recognize that a key requirement for participation in the global compact is the submission of a Communication on Engagement (COE) that describes our organization's efforts to support the implementation of the ten principles and to engage with the Global Compact.

INJAZ supports public accountability and transparency, and therefore commit to report on progress every two years according to the Global Compact COE policy.

Sincerely Yours,

Akef Aqrabawi

President & CEO

INJAZ Al-Arab/JA MENA



Part II. Description of Actions

About INJAZ Al-Arab & JA Worldwide

Out of belief in harnessing the mentorship of Arab business leaders, INJAZ Al-Arab helps inspire a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation among Arab youth throughout 13 countries in the MENA region. Recognized by the NGO Advisor as one of the world's top 500 NGOs, INJAZ Al-Arab's programs bridge the gap between classroom education and real-world experience. INJAZ Al-Arab implements programs targeting youth between the ages of 5-25 in schools and universities across the MENA region. These programs have been developed and refined over the course of decades with input from education experts at the regional and global level. Unique to our programming is the model of volunteer-led implementation; INJAZ Al-Arab works with a robust network of volunteers from the private sector and professional corporate sustainability community. These volunteers are a valuable component of our strategy, enabling INJAZ programs to deliver mentorship, key networking opportunities, and real-world experience.

Support for the 10 Principles

- **Human Rights:** INJAZ at Arab believes that economic empowerment is a fundamental human right. As such, we have implemented hundreds of programs in support of youth workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy in 13 countries across the MENA region. As a result of our initiatives, more than 3.7 million MENA youth have become better prepared to join the world of work.
- **Labor:** The INJAZ mission directly supports individual agency in the labor market, by preparing students with essential workforce readiness skills and mentorship opportunities. We abhor forced labor, child labor, and discrimination in employment and occupation.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** INJAZ Al-Arab is a small office-based organization, and as such, we maintain a light environmental footprint. Additionally, we work with our private sector partners to implement several green entrepreneurship and environmental sustainability initiatives for MENA youth.
- **Anti-Corruption:** INJAZ Al-Arab has a zero-tolerance policy for corruption. We are audited on an annual basis and work closely with our board of directors and external stakeholders to maintain financial transparency.



Alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations has outlined 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets covering a broad range of economic and social issues. The INJAZ mission contributes positively to the pursuit of several of these goals and targets in the MENA region, most notably:

- **Goal #1, No Poverty:** Today, nearly half of the world's population lives in poverty, and together, we can ensure that everyone has a chance to prosper. Eradicating poverty is not an act of charity, but the key to unlocking enormous human potential. The MENA region suffers from some of the highest rates of poverty in the world — a problem which is compounded by unemployment, and other social, economic, and political factors. INJAZ programs work directly to address this issue, providing youth with skills required in order to make their own success, both as entrepreneurs, and in the increasingly competitive private sector.
- **Goal 4, Quality Education:** As the key to prosperity learning benefits every human being and should be available to all. The lack of quality education is a major challenge throughout the Middle East in many cases, public education for support the standard required to prepare youth for employment in the private sector. INJAZ Programs address this shortfall, providing high-quality free supplementary education to MENA youth. Education builds skills and unlocks the imagination, and opens a world of opportunities, making it possible for each of us to contribute to a progressive healthy society.
- **Goal 5, Gender Equality:** Gender bias undermines our social fabric and wastes human potential. By denying women equal rights, we deny half of the population a chance to live life as its fullest. Political, economic, and social equality for women benefits all world's citizens. The MENA region has some of the highest rates of female unemployment in the world, despite a vast pool of ambitious intelligence and hard-working woman. INJAZ helps to increase gender equality in MENA by implementing many programs which specifically target female youth. Over the last 14 years, approximately 60% of INJAZ program beneficiaries have been female.
- **Goal 8, Decent Work & Economic Growth:** INJAZ Al-Arab's initiatives directly support decent work and economic growth in the MENA region by providing youth with essential workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy skills. Economic growth can be a positive force for the entire planet by ensuring the financial progress creates decent and fulfilling jobs while not harming the environment. When we promote job creation with expanded access to banking and financial services, we ensure that everyone benefits from entrepreneurship and innovation.



- **Goal 10, Reduced Inequalities:** INJAZ Al-Arab's unique volunteers model provides youth with role models, mentors, and networking opportunities, all of which contribute to reducing regional inequalities. With so much of the world's wealth held by so few, we must work to make equality and prosperity available for everyone, in every nation, regardless of gender, race, religion beliefs, or economic status. When every individual is self-sufficient, the entire world prospers.
- **Goal 17, Partnership for Goals:** Partnership and corporate social sustainability are critical for INJAZ Al-Arab's operating model. We maintain a broad network of supporters and stakeholders, including some of the most influential businesses in the MENA region, a dedicated board of trustees representing the highest levels of the private and public sector, thousands of corporate volunteers, and ministers of education throughout the region. The Global goals will be met only if we work together. Global investments and support are needed to ensure innovative technological developments, fair and free trade, and market access, especially for developing countries. To build a better world, we need to be supportive, empathetic, inventive, passionate, and above all, cooperative.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

Across the region, INJAZ has worked with 13 ministries of education and higher education, over 4,213 schools, 346 universities and a network of 88,000 corporate volunteers who implement a series of business and entrepreneurship programs that impact the lives of nearly 500,000 young people a year.

Over 3.7 million students across MENA have participated in a broad base of entrepreneurship training opportunities since 1999, aimed at developing basic business skills to start and run their own businesses while obtaining soft skills increasingly demanded by the private sector.

All of these achievements align closely with our commitment to the UN sustainable development goals, as well as the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact.

