

The Lebanese International Business Council is an organization whose mission is to pave the way for Lebanese to position themselves as a powerful economic and financial community in the international business world. One of the ways that the organization has worked toward achieving that goal was through the implementation of technology education programs in Lebanon. As we all recognize, technology has become an integral part of our daily functioning. What was once considered a marketable skill on a resume, computer literacy is now the most basic requirement from potential employers. Additionally, technological infrastructure affects the culture, efficiency and relationships of a society as a whole. Unfortunately, many citizens of Lebanon come from impoverished and undeveloped communities; hence exposure to this type of training is scarce.

In response to this need, the LIBC has established two fully functioning self-sustaining computer centers in the villages of Lebanon. These centers provide opportunities for exposure to and training in computer technology for people whose opportunities may otherwise be limited. Through diligent efforts, and in partnership with the Koudourat Association, the LIBC has inaugurated two training centers: one in Tebnine (South Lebanon) in 2007 and one in Machgharrah (West Bekaa) in 2008. With the money raised by the LIBC, the computer centers were provided with 20-25 computers, all including a USB and a desk. Additionally, the money raised provided the centers with a projector and screen, air conditioning system and generator if necessary for power. For a nominal fee, citizens of these villages can receive multiple training in different fields, some of which include computer programming (i.e. word, excel and windows) computer languages, agronomy, first aid and basic internet use. The small fee collected is used to sustain the center. The money is used for staff salary, computer maintenance and all other miscellaneous expenses. The training is provided by college graduates who specialize in computers and are selected from the village where the computer center is located.

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The Koudourat Association is an organization that has worked collaboratively with the LIBC to bring these missions into fruition. It is with their efforts that the centers are able to be implemented and run effectively. In essence, the Koudourat Association receives the money and travels to the village to meet with the Municipality (City Hall) or the school. They facilitate the legal aspects of the transaction. Additionally, they hire the various specialized people to install the hardware and the software. The software is also purchased by Koudourat and they ensure the maintenance. Finally, they provide instructions and guidelines to the teachers as well as certifications for the students when they have graduated. It is with great confidence that we entrust the proper and professional supervision of the centers to the Koudourat Association.

Due to the enormous success of the previous two centers the LIBC intends to open a new center, this time in a Northern Village of Lebanon. Our past experiences give us the confidence to move toward our latest endeavor. The benefits of computer technology training in these regions of the world are infinite. It is projects such as these that help create more productive and functional citizens who could profit the international community as well.