6th MENA REGIONAL TERTIARY EDUCATION CONFERENCE, JUNE 15-16, 2017

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General Overview

• The Iraqi (including the Kurdistan Region) educational system was considered one of the best in the Middle East until the early 1980s. Schools and Universities were held in a very high regards.

• Numerous factors (Iran-Iraq war, the Gulf War and the overall geopolitical situation of the Region from the 80’s until 2003) negatively affected the Country and all its institutions including the Educational establishments.

• Kurdistan Region, the north part of Iraq, had been working as per the Iraqi education system until the last decade of the twentieth century. After the glorious uprising of the Kurds in 1991 and the establishment of the first Kurdish parliament ever in 1992, the Kurdistan Regional Government was established. The Ministry of Education was one of the ministries in the Kurdish first cabinet.

• In 2006, the Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research was also established as part of the KRG.
General Overview

• Population:
  – Iraq: 26,281,755
  – Kurdistan: 5,314,840

– No. of Students:
  • Iraq: 555,000
  • Kurdistan : 127,175

• No. of students admission:
  – Iraq: -
    • Public: 160,000
    • Private & Evening: 30,000
  – Kurdistan:
    • Public: 45,000
    • Private & Evening: 8,000
Structure, Number and Types of Institutions

The Educational system in Iraq and Kurdistan Region consists of:

- 2 years Pre-school Education for the 4-5 years age group (not compulsory);
- 6 years compulsory Primary Education for 6-11 years;
- 6 years of Secondary Education of 2 cycles of 3 years each;
- Higher Education of 2-6 years.

In addition to academic preparatory, there are also industrial, commercial, arts and agricultural schools, known as Vocational Secondary Education which consist of the same 3 years duration after 3 years of the first cycle of secondary education.
Structure, Number and Types of Institutions

Types of Teacher Training Education Institutions:

✓ Teacher Training Schools of 3 years study after the completion of the first cycle of secondary education
✓ Teacher Training Institutes which offer a two year course, culminating in the Diploma in Education for secondary school graduates
✓ Specialized Teacher Training Institutes such as the Institute of Fine Arts and the Institute of Special Education.

The Kurdistan Regional Government has taken significant steps to improve regional educational standards. Accordingly, English language classes in early grades and promoting creative thinking in classrooms were incorporated into school curricula.
Structure, Number and Types of Institutions

• Public Higher Education Institutions:
  – Iraq: 29
  – Kurdistan: 15

• Private Higher Education Institutions:
  – Iraq: 41
  – Kurdistan: 15

• Evening Sessions
  – Morning Sessions
Structure, Number and Types of Institutions

• No. of Faculty Staff:
  – Iraq: 39,445
  – Kurdistan: 8543 at Public Universities
  – + 1825 at private Universities

• No. of Graduate Students:
  – Iraq: 98,736
  – Kurdistan: 23,701 (from 2012-2016)
Main Achievements

Being able to maintain the Universities open and functional since June 2014 to date despite the threats of ISIS, Financial Crises & and Budget cut from Baghdad, Reduction of Oil Prices and overall geopolitical situation in the Region, also the influx of IDPs and refugees in the region.
Other Achievements

Ministry of Higher Education:

➢ Development of KRG New Higher Education Plan
➢ Strategic Planning for 2018-2023

SU-E:

➢ Partial Financial Independency
➢ Significant Increase in Scientific Promotion
➢ Significant Increase in Published Papers
➢ Significant Increase in Researches
➢ New University Campus
Main Challenges

• Dealing with the influx of IDPs and refugees. The University had to accommodate a large number of displaced students from higher educational institution from other regions of Iraq that were in the war zones (Tikrit, Mosul, Anbar ..) as well as refugees from Syria. This created an overburden in our already constraint facilities and physical plant.

• Operating the University under very limited resources as a result of the financial crisis, the ongoing war on ISIS, lack of Budget allocation from the central government, and the reduction in oil prices. (e.g. only 25-30 % of the required academic staff budget was being provided; only 20 % of the required operational and other direct costs was being provided; most University Projects were stopped).
Governance within Tertiary Education

Autonomy:
1- Finance:
• The Issuance of a new legislation from KRG (No. 86 on 17.08.2016)
  Partial Financial Decentralization
  70% SU
  23% Ministry of Finance
  7% Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Researches
2- Scientific:
The University has almost the autonomy of scientific decisions

3- Management:
The University has almost the autonomy of management
Attempts have been made to develop a quality management, evaluation and assurance system for the region, by senior staff, academic and external visitors from UK and Sweden which carried out an initial needs assessment included a review of quality documents and interviews with staff and students. A report on this study in 2006 was produced and included a number of observations:
The plans build on the conferences & Reports and will focus on:

1- Developing on administrative structure and institutional planning strategy which includes:

   a- Quality Assurance.
   b- Reform higher education programs.
   c- Review of the higher education’s structures and developing
capacity building in these areas.

2- Updating teaching support such as:

   a- Laboratory equipment’s.

   b- Advancing teaching and learning methods and organizing extra curricula activities of students
Capacity Building--Continued

3- Creating an information database to link educational institutions to all related areas:

a- Establishing complementary research centers.
b- Establishing a modern admission system.
c- Establishing welfare services.
d- Reviewing academic and administrative employment and recruitment procedures.
e- Improving the general working environment for staff including remuneration and assessment of performance.
Papers of the Conferences dealt with the following eight key issues:

• Papers dealt with the following eight key issues:
  • 1- Models for interactive higher education.
  • 2- Capacity Building.
  • 3- Developing Curricula.
  • 4- Quality Assurance.
  • 5- Higher Studies and Scientific Research.
  • 6- The role of University in Society.
  • 7- Different types of Higher Education.
  • 8- Decentralization of Higher Education
The Outcomes

The outcomes of the conference were similar to the external reports. They concluded that:

1- Universities are a leading part of Society and teaching faculties are the care of the Universities.
2- A Quality Assurance board should be set up.
3- Specializations in higher studies are needed.
4- Quality Research should be developed to meet the needs of employers.

Steps should be taken to decentralize the higher education sector in Iraqi Kurdistan.
Quality Assurance system at Kurdistan Region Universities

• As a part of long term strategy for higher education reforms in Kurdistan Region, QA system has implemented by all Kurdistan Universities. The main pillars of this system:
  • Student Feedback.
  • Continuous Academic Development (CAD).
  • Teacher Portfolio.
  • Peer Review and Questions Bank as far as the academic’s performance is concerned.
On the other hand

- All academic departments are now annually assessed by external professional academics.
- The academics are involved in assessing their heads of departments and deans to get their feedbacks on their academic leaders.
- The academic promotion of all members of teaching staff is now linked with their QA scores.
- In September this year the Ministry of Higher Education will do survey for the Universities and make a kind of a third round of ranking system.
- Recently, the decision has been made to have Accreditation Bord
Social Responsibility

1. The University has maintained an active and integral role in support of the regional government and the community.

2. The University has also joined forces with some Government Ministries in organizing Technical Conferences & Workshops in support and development of the technical capabilities of the ministries.

3. Organizing Art & Sports events ..... 

4. Training Sessions through Continuous Education 

5. Displaced Students( Iraqi Yazidi and others, Syrian,..
Educational System in Kurdistan covers minorities’ rights in education such as Turkmani; Assyrians and Arabs. Aftermath Kurdish Uprising in March 1991, for the first the minorities of Turkmanis and Assyrians has gained their rights in Education and their languages become medium of instruction. Since the previous Iraqi Baa’th regime put Turkumani and Syraic languages in the corner of domestic function and forced their users to change their real nationality into arabs through many channels. Concerning Syriac language, the Iraqi Baa’th regime had attempted to put in the corner of religious function only. But after the Kurdish uprising of March, 1991, Turkumani and Syriac languages have gained their real status as native language for Turkmans and Assyrians respectively. For the first time some primary schools for Turkmani and Syriac were opened in the areas where the majority of population are Turkmani or Syriac speaker. By the academic year 2001-2002 Turkmani and Syriac schools has expanded.
Social Responsibility

- by the academic year 2010-2011, the range of the expansion of Turkmani and Syriac schools has increased, the number of Turkmani has increased by 18 schools and the number of Syriac schools has increased by 57 schools and the number of students has increased by 2123 students in Turkmani education and by 8696 students in Syriac Education.
Participation in decision making

The University has organized and/or facilitated the planning of several workshops aimed at discussing pressing issues in the Region (e.g. Articles of the Constitution; How to prevent the spread of the ISIS Ideology; Governance; Independence, etc.)

Several of the Academic Staff also serve an advisory role in several government committees.
Internationalization of Tertiary Education

1-This is integral part of our mission and vision. We have completed the design of our new campus taking in consideration the latest trends in higher education and providing the necessary infrastructure to support its continued development and integration with the most recognized institutions in the world.

2-Active MOU

3-Sholarships, HCDP

4-Erasmus Plus Program, DAAD, Split-site projects
The undergraduates 2001-2002 while by the academic year 2010-2011, the range of the expansion of Turkmani and Syriac schools has increased, the number of Turkmani has increased by 18 schools and the number of Syriac schools has increased by 57 schools and the number of students has increased by 2123 students in Turkmani education and by 8696 students in Syriac Education.
Religious Rights in Educational System

- Aftermath Kurdish Uprising of March 1991, for the first time the Christian and Yazidian Religious have been taught in the schools in which the most students are believer of these religious. Since before the Kurdish Uprising these religions are not allowed to be taught, the believers of these religions only right they had not to attend the religion lesson which was devoted to Islamic religion, but after the Kurdish uprising special schools have been opened for them. nowadays, in 57 schools the Christian religion has been taught particularly in Erbil and Dihok Governments and the Yazidian religion has been taught in schools especially in government Duhok and some districts such as Sinjar, Bahshiqa and Shekhan.
Private Schools

• Since 1997 the phase of private education in the Kurdistan region has improved in the interest of the modern educational system under the auspice of the Ministry of Education of KRG. Many private schools have been opened and this is due to the policies have been adopted and to the globalization order in the world, therefore; many private sectors and foreign companies contributed in opening private schools as join-ventures and this is due to the Ministry which is encouraging private sectors to participate in the education process in Kurdistan involve in enhancing education level. The KRG provides private sectors which land and legal contribution. Recently, a considerable wave of private contribution in education witnessed in Kurdistan, which is likely to grow.
Available Opportunities

• The key challenge for our educational system lies in the decline in efficient education opportunities (enrolment-equality-efficiency)
• provision of efficient education opportunities to all.

• Opportunities have been expressed in three basic themes:

1))) Enrolment Theme :

• Objectives:
  • Increase net enrolment ratio in kindergarten, primary, intermediate, secondary, vocational school, higher education and post graduate studies
  • Increase the contribution of the private sector
Achievement of the Objectives

- Achieving these objectives requires the following:
  - 1- Amendment of the constitution by making compulsory education up to the intermediate (basic) level.
  - 2- Provision of financial incentives
  - 3- Expansion of admission opportunities of vocational training graduates in technical education and employment opportunities.
  - 4- Giving a greater role to universities in the selection and admission of new students.
  - 5- Expansion of admission opportunities in the various programs of postgraduate studies.

Equality Theme:

2 )))) Equality Theme:

- 1- Increase the percentage of females, provision of financial incentives to females in general, and in rural areas in particular.
- 2- Expansion in opening schools for females in rural areas
- 3- Adoption of community awareness programs
• In order to achieve these objectives, the following must be carried out:
• 1- Diversification of funding sources for the education sector.
• 2- Involvement of society sectors (government and private) in funding
• 3- Increase the contribution of international organizations in the development of educational programs.

• **Third Theme: Spending**
• Objectives:
• 1- Increase allocations
• 2- Adjust the benefits and rights of faculty members
• The Kurdistan Region Ministry of Education & Higher Education are enthusiastic about educational reform and announced that "the new education system should develop a well balanced curriculum that will be geared towards creating a productive and skilled new generation".

• UNESCO contributes to curricular rehabilitation by sharing experience, expertise, and evaluation. Ministry of Higher Education & Education's partnerships with several other stakeholders, including the World Bank and UNICEF has motivated and incentivized the reforms.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION