Higher Education In The State Of Palestine

Ministry of Education & Higher Education
Palestinian Higher Education has witnessed fast development in the past four decades; it started to present educational and learning models whose outcomes brought out students and graduates capable in the local, regional and international labor markets as a competent human power with high qualifications.
HE Institutions – Type

- Governmental: 13
- Public: 15
- Private: 21
Registered students for the academic year 2014/2015 were 221,395

(60.2% female & 39.8% male)

distributed as follows:
- Traditional universities: 132,449 = 60%
- Open Education: 60,230 = 27%
- University colleges: 16,446 = 7%
- Community colleges: 12,270 = 6%
Challenges

- Any financing strategy does not aim at covering universities budgets, but to rationalize public funding in a way that will improve the quality, relevance, and equity of HE.

1. **Funding Tertiary Education**: has a serious negative impact on the quality and relevance of higher education.

2. **Teaching and Training Staff**: low salaries affect the quality of teaching. The professional development of staff members is restricted due to the absence of regular fellowship and scholarship programmes.
3. **Quality and Relevance**: the weak link of programmes to the needs of the labour market. The high student/teacher ratio is a factor leading to the lowering of standards of teaching and learning.

4. **Research** is still not considered a priority by the national and the international funders of higher education. Funding is therefore limited and irregular.
4. **Access**: The demand on higher education (universities), is already very high
   - Further attention is needed to improve the enrolment rates of other segments in the society like student with special needs and the poor; they need the loan programs to be improved.
Higher Education Governance

1978, Council of Higher Education
1994, Ministry of Education & Higher Education
1996, Ministry of Higher Education
1998, Law of Higher Education
2002, Ministry of Education & Higher Education

- HE in State Of Palestine was legislated through the law of the Higher Education no. (11), for the year of 1998.
- Law of Higher Education is being updated
Higher Education Governance

- HE in State Of Palestine was legislated though the law of the Higher Education no. (11), for the year of 1998, the Law combines two approaches:
  1. central national planning and supervision by MOEHE and the Council for Higher Education.
  2. self-management, self-monitoring and self-control at institutional level.

- Governance within higher education institutes is built on five pillars (1):
  1. Context, mission and goals
  2. Participation,
  3. Management orientation
  4. Autonomy
  5. Accountability
Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC) established in 2002

The AQAC is a member of several international networks for quality assurance, such as (INQAAHE) and (ANQAHE).
The Palestinian QA system is based on the fact that internal QA is the basis for external QA evaluation.

External QA system is compulsory at public and private institutions, university and non-university sectors and all types of academic and vocational programs.
Accreditation comprises three elements and generally involves three steps with specific activities as follows:

- **Self-assessment** is a self-evaluation process conducted by the faculty, the administrators, and the staff of the higher education institution (HEI).
- **Peer review**: a study visit conducted by a team of peers selected by the AQAC,
- **Decision-making**: examination by the AQAC board.
Governance: 2) Student Loan Revolving Fund (SLRF)

- Established in 2001
- soft loans and grants.
- # of Beneficiaries: more than 270,000 students from all higher education institutes.
- Loans amount: US$ 124,998,310 JD, (equivalent US$176,054,045)
- Repayment until 2016: 16,324,688 JD, (equivalent US$229,925,29)
Governance: 3) Research Activities

- The scientific research activities were initiated after 1995 as a result of grants received from international fundraisers.
- The scientific research council was founded in 2002.
- Four main bodies perform the research activities: Higher Education Institutions (precisely the Palestinian universities), governmental research institutions, NGOs and the private sector.
Inefficient management structure negatively affects meeting the needs of the HE sector.

Universities have not been able to increase staff resources or upgrade facilities sufficiently to accommodate the doubling of enrollments.

Number of students enrolled in universities has more than tripled, compared to community college enrollments.

Students from poorer families do not have access to the full range of opportunities.

About 3/4 of Palestinian students are enrolled in social sciences, humanities, and education.
International cooperation/Fund
World Bank – Tertiary Education Project &
Education to Work Transition Project

Quality Improvement Fund (QIF) – since 2005

1. A change of culture in the financing of tertiary education in WB&G, the setting of national priorities in the sub-sector, and a new

2. framework for the relationship among tertiary institutions, and between those institutions and both the private and the public sectors.
3. Provision of support to improve the quality of Palestinian tertiary institutions and programs so they are:

   (i) relevant to the job market and economic development;

   (ii) competitive with international standards;

   and

   (iii) capable of developing income generating programs.
Support to the establishment of a Tertiary Education Management and Information System (TEMIS) – a planning tool about statistic in higher education institutes enrolment, graduates, staff, …etc

Support to the establishment of Graduate Tracking System (GTS) a planning tool to draw policies that better match higher education programs with the market needs

Supporting institutional self-assessment and quality improvement to enable the development of institutional improvement plans.
1. **Tempus:**
   - since 2002.
   - Number of projects 35 (as coordinator, contractor or partner).

**Impact of the TEMPUS Programme**
- Strengthened Euro–Med university consortia
- Enhanced an inter–university network
- Integrated newly needed MA program especially in sectors of water, development, energy, tourism, etc.
- Created new opportunities for students
1. The academic and administrative cooperation with the French government

2. Erasmus Mundus:
   - *Erasmus Mundus is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education with a strong international focus*
Establishing Principles of Development

- Meeting national and regional HRD needs.
- Enhancing the ability of students to pay for HE.
- Increasing community college enrollments.
- Preserving the autonomy of public/non-profit Palestinian universities.
- Incentives rather than regulation of institutions.
- Use of competitive funds to promote quality, innovation, and simulate institutional partnership.
Lessons Learned

- Traditional formulas for public funding does not contribute to enhancing the quality and relevance of TE.
- Use of funding to simulate competitiveness across institutions enhances the quality of HE.
- Funding is an essential tool to meet national goals—priority sectors.
- Competitive funding changes the institutional culture of dependence on public funding.
- Change takes time but it pays off.
Thank You!