



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

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## **IMPLEMENTATION OF 36 C/RESOLUTION 81 AND 190 EX/DECISION 38 CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES**

### **SUMMARY**

This document summarizes the progress UNESCO made since the 190th session of the Executive Board in providing assistance to the Palestinian people and their educational and cultural institutions, as well as to such institutions in the occupied Syrian Golan.

There are no financial or administrative implications.

No decision is proposed in this document.

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present document reports on progress UNESCO achieved in providing assistance to the Palestinian Authority and to relevant stakeholders in the occupied Palestinian territory and the occupied Syrian Golan, from August 2012 to January 2013.

## II. UNESCO'S ASSISTANCE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

### EDUCATION

2. During the period under review, UNESCO continued its assistance to the Palestinian Ministry of Education in areas of priority agreed upon during the last meeting of the Joint UNESCO/Palestinian Authority Committee, such as teacher education and educational planning and management, and strengthened new assistance in the field of inclusive and child-friendly education and early childhood development. UNESCO also continued its support to emergency education programmes for both West Bank and Gaza (as reported in document 191 EX/35).

#### **Supporting the implementation of the National Teacher Education Strategy (TES)**

3. Within the programme on "Quality Systems for Quality Teachers" funded by the European Union, technical assistance was further provided for developing systems and operational frameworks needed for the implementation of the Teacher Education Strategy, particularly through support to the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession. Dissemination workshops have been organized at directorate levels, followed-up by dissemination among school principals and teachers (2,200 schools). A teacher guide related to the new standards was developed as a pocket book for each and every teacher in Palestine. The same process was followed for the newly developed standards for new teachers. Furthermore, standards for school principals were developed and the development of the admission policy was initiated during this reporting period. The licensing scheme is currently discussed at policy level. Regarding data collection on teachers, cooperation has been strengthened with UNRWA to ensure the full collection of data regarding UNRWA teachers and the technical support to the Ministry of Education regarding the Education Management Information System. UNESCO conducted a review on streamlining the various teacher information for better decision making, and effective and efficient implementation and monitoring of the Teacher Education Strategy. The national team has been established and currently the Ministry is conducting the data mapping and information needs survey.

4. Diverse capacity development programmes focusing on information and communication technology in education, special needs education and educational leadership have been conducted in the West Bank and Gaza as part of the development of pre-service teacher courses. Some of the participants were selected among the education personnel from the pilot schools of the United Nations/Ministry of Education package on inclusive and child-friendly education and early childhood development, coordinated by UNESCO. Understanding and commitment to "Inclusive and Child Friendly Education" in the pilot schools have been strengthened thanks to these capacity development programmes. Principals gained a better understanding of their role as leaders of change, and the training inspired participants to implement local projects based on an understanding of their role and responsibilities as leaders in the school context. With regard to information and communication technologies in education, 30 blogs have been established by participants.

#### **Promoting EFA through coordination of the United Nations/Ministry of Education package on inclusive education and early childhood development**

5. UNESCO continued the effective coordination of the United Nations Education Group, particularly by coordinating the implementation of the United Nations/Ministry of Education package on inclusive and child-friendly education and early childhood development. Such

coordination included the Ministry of Education and eight other United Nations agencies with the objective of strengthening the capacity of the Ministry to promote access to quality education for all Palestinian children. Awareness has been raised among partners and donors on education for all (EFA), inclusive education, and early childhood development. Pilot schools in the West Bank (32) and Gaza (14) have been selected and needs assessment conducted together with the Ministry of Education in order to mainstream inclusive education approaches to teaching and learning and establish pre-school grade. UNESCO continues close collaboration with universities to improve teacher education programmes and strengthen linkages between universities and schools/communities. In this regard, focus has been put also on creating linkages with the Quality Systems for Quality Teachers project. For example, capacity development programmes on special needs education, information and communication technologies in education and educational leadership were implemented with the education personnel of the pilot schools. Furthermore, capacity development workshops were organized in the West Bank and Gaza regarding design, implementation and evaluation of innovative education programmes for EFA. This package has been instrumental in strengthening United Nations coordination in the education sector and is at the heart of the upcoming UNDAF for Palestine, for which UNESCO is coordinating the education sector.

### **Informing the education planning process**

6. UNICEF and UNESCO commissioned a study to the Norwegian Refugees Council on quality and equity of education in East Jerusalem. This study is aiming at filling the gaps in existing data on the quality of and access to education in East Jerusalem; providing detailed information based on which programming and advocacy of United Nations agencies, local and international organizations can be designed; providing evidence and recommendations for strategic discussions and the development of an action plan as part of the National Education Development Strategic Plan.

7. UNESCO, as technical advisor of the Education Sector Working Group in Palestine, initiated support to reform the structure of this platform for policy dialogue in the sector, which brings together Ministry of Education, donor community, United Nations agencies, universities and civil society organizations. In addition to improving dialogue between different stakeholders, the platform aims at ensuring convergence between Ministry of Education priorities and donor/partner commitments and contributions in accordance with aid effectiveness principles and sector-wide approach. One important achievement of this reform should be the establishment of technical thematic groups in support to the development of the new education development strategic plan of the Ministry of Education.

### **CULTURE**

8. The UNESCO Ramallah Office continues to provide technical assistance and build national capacities of relevant Palestinian institutions, and implements model projects on the ground.

9. The successful completion of the MDG-F joint programme for Culture and Development led by UNESCO and implemented in cooperation with UNDP, UN Women and FAO, with funding from the Government of Spain, represents the main achievement during the period under review. Under the leadership of UNESCO, the Programme supported the Government in implementing the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP) through culture-focused interventions while contributing to the achievement of MDGs 1, 3, 7 and 8. Among key achievements, employment and income opportunities were created in the sectors of handicrafts, traditional food and cultural tourism industries through the establishment of dedicated networks, improved market access for 68 tourism service providers, 116 artists and 11 artisans and enhanced technical capacities capacity building activities, support to cultural festivals and fairs, and financial support (more information can be found on [www.unesco.org/new/mdgf](http://www.unesco.org/new/mdgf)). The outcomes of the Programme were showcased in a closing event that took place in Ramallah on 28 November 2012. Outcomes and

outputs of the programme were fully achieved, in close cooperation with the concerned Palestinian ministries and civil society organizations.

10. Moreover, during the current period, results of particular importance were achieved in the fields of the revision and adaptation of cultural heritage norms and legislations, inventorying intangible heritage, conservation and management planning for potential sites having outstanding World Heritage sites, strengthening of management capacities in targeted line ministries, enhancement of cultural sites and support to cultural tourism, promotion of creative industries such as theatre, music, and the arts, revival of quality handicraft, education to cultural heritage.

11. The active participation of UNESCO in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the oPt (UNDAF 2014-2016), in the semester under review, resulted in the placement of culture in two out of six proposed outcomes, notably Outcome 2 Governance, and Outcome 6 Infrastructure, Urban Development and Environment. This is an important step towards cultural development in Palestine.

12. After Palestine became a State Party to the World Heritage Convention in March 2012, and following the inscription of the Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route in Bethlehem on the World Heritage List in June 2012, UNESCO continued providing technical and financial support to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in order to strengthen capacities of the Palestinian cultural institutions for the protection, conservation, and promotion of their cultural and natural heritage. Over the past three months, UNESCO provided technical assistance to strengthen the nomination dossier of “Palestine: Land of olives and vines. Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir”, initiated in the first semester of 2012.

13. With a view to enhance national synergies in cultural heritage preservation, UNESCO has pursued the overall coordination of the project “Local Development through the rehabilitation and revitalization of the historic built environment in Palestine”, funded by the Government of Sweden through the Swedish cooperation agency (Sida), involving cooperation with the four implementing partners, respectively, the Riwaq Centre for Architectural Conservation, the Centre for Cultural Heritage Preservation, the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee and the Welfare Association. The main objective of the project is to contribute to improving the quality of lives of local communities and marginalized groups in Palestine through the rehabilitation and revitalization of historic built environment. As of today, four buildings were renovated (Nisf Jubeil, Beit Ur At-tahta, Tulkarem and Salfit) generating 5,500 working days for local craftspeople. 800 people participated in community awareness-raising events in different areas in the West Bank on the value of preserving cultural heritage and its adaptive reuse. The capacities of nine architects and engineers were enhanced in cultural heritage preservation.

14. Aiming at reviving the use earthen architecture in Jordan Valley, two buildings (the community centre in Aqbat Jaber refugee camp and ‘Ein Ad Duyuk al Fauqa Women’s Centre) have been completed to date within the Joint Programme “Livelihood Protection and Sustainable Empowerment of Vulnerable Rural and Refugee Communities in the Jordan Valley”, funded mainly by the Government of Japan through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security. The construction of the third building, the Bardalah Women Centre has started. The cooperation with the leading firm in design of sustainable environments “Building Green Futures” has begun and the first mission was organized in February 2013 to design a fully sustainable building in Aqrabaniyah, near Nablus. Funded by the Dutch Government, construction work for the construction of the visitors’ centre of the Archaeological Park of Tell Balata in Nablus is ongoing and will be completed by the end of March and inaugurated by the end of June 2013.

## COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

15. UNESCO continues the implementation of activities of the two ongoing projects which were financed through the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), respectively on:

- “Building the capacity of the WATTAN News Department”; Eleven Wattan News Department staff members (five women and six men) completed more than 100 hours of training over 20 days of training sessions. Eight training modules were implemented, including writing news and articles, new media, news filming, conducting interviews, analytical news programmes, news gathering from the Internet, radio, television and print sources, editorial policies, and investigative reporting.
- “Building capacity of the Palestinian media in conflict-sensitive reporting” – Several capacity-building workshops and training courses were held both in West Bank and Gaza, benefitting 53 Palestinian journalists in the field of safety, reporting in conflict sensitive situations and areas, filming and professional news gathering, writing and editing. A part of this activity was covered through funding from Canal France International.

16. The United Nations Democracy Fund-financed project “Strengthening Palestinian Participatory Democracy and Dialogue”, implemented in cooperation with AMIN, was successfully concluded and the project was completed by the end of October 2012.

17. Two additional project proposals were submitted to the International Programme for the Development of Communication for potential funding to promote freedom of expression among media students, with MADA, and to promote Palestinian women’s views in the news, with Radio Nisaa FM.

18. The activities implemented to date had a significant impact on the journalism community and professionals, which requires sustainability in providing such services, as well as the necessary equipment. Moreover, it is to be noted that the UNESCO Ramallah Office succeeded in positioning the planned activities and projects within the UNDAF matrix produced in cooperation with other United Nations agencies.

## GENDER EQUALITY

19. Within the framework of the MDG focusing on Achieving Gender Equality and under the technical leadership of UNESCO and UN Women, the capacity of gender advocates to influence policy-makers and legislators increased through two specific activities:

- Building capacities of gender advocates at the central level (Ministry of Women Affairs, Ministry of Health, Central Elections Commission, Palestinian Legislative Council, NGOs) by training women in research and data analysis on gender-based violence and to link it with the development of policies through the development of related action plans;
- Building networking capacities of women organizations in Gaza and the West Bank. UNESCO has been focusing on a top-down approach to increase capacities of policy-makers on gender-based violence, sex-disaggregated indicators, and integration of gender-sensitive indicators into national laws. UNESCO also delivered training sessions to the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council on gender equality.

20. The activities carried out by the Palestinian Women’s Research and Documentation Centre contributed to three main outcomes:

- Research on gender equality in the occupied Palestinian territory was further developed with a view to inform advocacy on the policy level, and developing appropriate laws that protect women rights;
- Capacities of governmental and non-governmental organizations were strengthened to better address gender and human rights issues, focusing on behavioural changes;
- Coordination and partnerships were strengthened at the local, regional and international levels with a view to facilitate knowledge sharing and advocacy on gender equality.

### **III. UNESCO'S ASSISTANCE IN THE OCCUPIED SYRIAN GOLAN**

21. The Scholarship programme for Syrian students in the occupied Syrian Golan (\$113,000 from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust), launched in July 2009 to grant 24 scholarships for four academic years to the students from the occupied Syrian Golan, is expected to end in 2013.



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**Add.**

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**ADDENDUM**

The Executive Board,

1. Having considered document 191EX/34,
2. Acknowledges the Director-General good offices mission to lead to an understanding between all concerned parties and to the implementation of resolution 34COM7A20 (Brasilia consensus resolution) as reflected by the Israeli representative's letter of 23 April 2013 to the Director-General and thanks her for these efforts;
3. Decides to include this item on the agenda of the 192nd session of the Executive Board and invites the Director-General to submit to it a follow-up report thereon.