



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Executive Board

Hundred and eighty-fifth session

185 EX/36

PARIS, 30 August 2010
Original: English

Item 36 of the provisional agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF 35 C/RESOLUTION 75 AND 184 EX/DECISION 30 CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

SUMMARY

This document is presented in compliance with 35 C/Resolution 75 and 184 EX/Decision 30. It summarizes the progress made by UNESCO since the 184th 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.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present document reports on progress achieved in the implementation of UNESCO assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA) and to relevant stakeholders in the Palestinian Territories and the occupied Syrian Golan, since February 2010.

2. The first part of the present document reports on progress achieved in providing assistance, in the Organization's fields of competence, to the Palestinian people and its institutions. Part II provides information on UNESCO's assistance in the occupied Syrian Golan. Information regarding UNESCO's response to the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip is reported in document 185 EX/37.

I. UNESCO'S ASSISTANCE TO THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

EDUCATION

3. During the period under review, and in parallel to its education response to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, UNESCO consolidated its assistance to the PA Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE). This is in accordance with the four major priority areas agreed upon during the 8th Joint UNESCO/PA Committee Meeting (March 2008), namely: teacher education, educational planning, technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and science education.

4. The focus of UNESCO's technical assistance to the MoEHE in the area of **teacher education** remained on the implementation of the National Teacher Education Strategy (TES). Within the programme on "**Quality Systems for Quality Teachers**", funded by the European Union (€3.6 million), technical assistance continued to be provided for developing systems and operational frameworks needed for the successful implementation of the TES, particularly through support to the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession (CDTP). As part of this programme, major CDTP's achievements include: National Professional Standards for Teachers; a licensing scheme; a code of conduct for teachers and a teachers' database. A comprehensive Communication Strategy was also developed for the CDTP, whose implementation is under way. Finally, a stakeholders' workshop was organized in Ramallah in May 2010 in partnership with ILO, UNRWA and the MoEHE, focusing on awareness-raising regarding the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers (1966), and on addressing some of the major challenges of the national teacher education reform.

5. In the area of **educational planning and management**, UNESCO continued to support the development of MoEHE's capacities in planning, administrative and managerial skills, both at the central and decentralized levels, through promoting the implementation of the Education Development Strategic Plan (2008-2012) in a System Wide Approach (SWAP) context and developing the capacities of the National Institute for Educational Training (NIET). In this context, three educational planners from the MoEHE participated in two advanced courses at IIEP on strengthening the capacities of the MoEHE to plan, implement, review and manage its national Education Development Strategic Plan.

6. In the field of **Non-Formal Education** UNESCO supported the establishment of a Non-Formal Education Supportive Centre in the old city of Nablus, together with French cooperation. Respective financial contributions were US \$23,400 and €10,000. The aim of this Centre is to provide better learning opportunities for children and youth, enhance their educational abilities and prevent them from dropping out of school. The centre is currently providing catch-up courses to assist 134 Palestinian pupils, from 2nd to 6th grades in different subjects and free-of-charge tutoring for students preparing for their final end-of-school Tawjihee exam. The centre will also provide an outreach facility for educational, cultural and social activities in two area C communities, identified by the United Nations HCT, as being of priority concern.

CULTURE

7. During the reporting period, UNESCO broadened its strategic cooperation with PA line ministries and local authorities, as well as with civil society for the safeguarding of Palestinian cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

8. In February 2010, UNESCO, in cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) and major Palestinian Universities, organized three seminars on “Urban Conservation Planning” in Hebron, Ramallah and Nablus, targeting civil society, in particular university students, to address one of the priority sectors for the safeguarding of Palestinian cultural heritage.

9. The *MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) Joint Programme for “Culture and Development in the oPt”*, led by UNESCO, in cooperation with FAO, UNIFEM and UNDP and funded by the Government of Spain (\$3 million, of which \$1,514,437 is implemented by UNESCO) entered its second year of implementation. Main achievements included: (i) the endorsement of the MoC “Sector Strategy for Culture and Heritage” by PA relevant bodies; (ii) the delivering of the first training course on “Culture and gender mainstreaming”, while other six topics were jointly identified for the inter-ministerial capacity-building programme for PA civil servants; (iii) a partnership between the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music and two community-based organizations to initiate a two-year music-teaching programme in Hebron’s governorate.

Bethlehem and its Governorate

10. Within the project **Riwaya Museum – Bethlehem**, funded by the Government of Norway (\$1,323,631), substantive progress was made regarding refurbishing the premises of the basement of the Bethlehem Peace Center which will host the museum.

11. Within the framework of the **Bethlehem Area Conservation and Management Plan**, funded by the Government of Italy (\$500,000), the “Guidelines for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of the Historic Towns of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour” were endorsed by all key stakeholders in March 2010, thus marking a milestone towards the protection of historical urban fabrics in the Palestinian Territories. The publication of the project results and the final evaluation will conclude the current phase of the project, which shall enable UNESCO to submit a proposal for the second and last phase addressing the preparation of the set of plans identified during the first phase.

12. The project **Safeguarding Historical and Environmental Resources Towards Sustainable Development in the Bethlehem Governorate**, funded by the Government of Norway (\$115,000), is concluded: the “Battir Landscape Plan”, a first-of-its-kind tool for the safeguarding of cultural landscape, has been submitted for approval to the Local Village Council. The first direct achievement of the plan is the approval in June 2010 of a €625,000 project to establish the Battir Landscape Ecomuseum, funded through the Palestinian Municipality Support Programme by the Italian Decentralized Cooperation. In May 2010, UNESCO signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Battir Village Council to provide the new project with technical assistance for its implementation, while progressing with the formulation of another United Nations Joint Programme: “Safeguarding Bethlehem Western Villages”.

Nablus

13. In the context of the project **Old City of Nablus Renovation – Restoration and Adaptive Re-use of Khan al-Wakala**, funded by the European Union (\$2,387,822), the Yard School for the Conservation of the Khan using traditional building techniques was reactivated for the implementation of the conservation works, as well as the reconstruction of the main entrance of the building. In July 2010, a new contract with Towers Nablus for Investment and Construction for the finishing works was awarded for \$773,213.

14. Further to the signature of the Plan of Operations of the project **Tell Balata Archaeological Park – Scientific Research, Conservation and Site Management** funded by the Government of the Netherlands (\$431,655) in July 2010, the University of Leiden started the field work jointly with MoTA, bringing archaeology students from the Netherlands to work together with their Palestinian colleagues to clean the archaeological site and prepare it for excavations.

Jericho

15. The project **Protection of the mosaics at Qasr Hisham Archaeological Park – Archaeological excavations and executive design for the protective shelters of the Great Bath Hall and visitors' facilities at the site**, funded by the Czech Republic (\$56,540), was completed. In May 2010, a two-week workshop to develop the concept design for the entire site of Qasr Hisham was organized. On this occasion, Professor Peter Zumthor launched the proposal of translating his idea of an “emotional reconstruction” of the Great Bath Hall, named “House of the Mosaics”, into an actual design that is currently being considered for funding from interested donors for the realization of the structure.

Jordan Valley

16. Within the framework of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security Joint Programme **Livelihood Protection and Sustainable Empowerment of Vulnerable, Rural and Refugee Communities in the Jordan Valley** funded by the Government of Japan (\$4,629,085, of which \$1,033,620 is earmarked for UNESCO), UNESCO started consultation with the community-based organization Jordan Valley Solidarity Campaign, in order to establish a partnership in the targeted communities. Field visits focusing on the revival of earthen architecture will be undertaken during the mission of the Director of the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security in July 2010.

SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES

17. UNESCO's assistance continued to focus on reinforcing the institutional and human capacities of the **Palestinian Women's Research and Documentation Centre (PWRDC)**. In the field of research, the Centre has developed a new strategy for the selection of research topics and studies to be commissioned in order to enhance its quality. Since January 2010, fact sheets and policy papers on different topics related to gender were produced, while the Centre's library is being enriched with new books for public and research use as well as an academic database. In addition, two conferences on the situation of women in the Palestinian territories were conducted, with around 70 participants from line ministries and civil society. Additional outreach and training activities were also conducted for staff of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (along with other ministries), women's civil society organizations and research institutes to train and sensitize a new generation of researchers on gender issues in their research and work.

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

18. On the occasion of the **World Press Freedom Day (WPF)** on 3 May, UNESCO supported the participation of a MAAN News Agency's staff at the WPF Conference, which was held in Australia. UNESCO also supported the Birzeit University Media Development Center to design and produce a one minute animated TV spot for the WPF, broadcasted in five local television stations from 29 April to 3 May 2010. Birzeit University also provided editing, layout, design and illustration for a handbook on good practices in journalism to be published soon.

19. A work plan, time schedule and project proposal for the **promotion and safeguarding of the Palestinian audiovisual heritage** are under preparation.

20. A local consultant was engaged to conduct a 20-hour training programme for 12 Palestinian participants (journalists and media students) under the project **Developing Humanitarian news**

reporting in Wafa (\$20,000 funded from IPDC). The training took place at the end of June and provided basic skills to cover humanitarian news and the production of humanitarian news items.

21. Also during the reporting period, the second phase of a two-year project **Strengthening Palestinian Participatory Democracy and Public Dialogue** (\$240,000 funded by UNDEF) began in January 2010. Activities are focused on promoting participatory democracy through public debates, workshops and talk show programmes on local radio and television. Radio training for media professionals has already been completed in Ramallah and TV-training will take place over the coming months. As part of this project, a blog site of Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, housed on AMIN's website, is to be launched imminently.

22. Finally, with the aim of **Capacity-building on the reporting on climate change and humanitarian information in media**, UNESCO is working with WATAN TV to train 20 media professionals in reporting on sustainable development and climate change. Twelve monthly television magazine programmes will be produced and broadcasted on the same subject with public campaign events to be organized through schools, municipalities, communities, institutions and supermarkets.

II. UNESCO'S ASSISTANCE IN THE OCCUPIED SYRIAN GOLAN

23. In spite of some delays, implementation of the project **Scholarship Programme for Syrian students in the occupied Syrian Golan** (\$113,000 from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, JFIT) has effectively been launched in cooperation with the Syrian authorities. This has allowed for selecting seven students from the occupied Syrian Golan, currently studying at Syrian universities, to benefit from scholarships for the current 2009-2010 academic year. UNESCO will work out the criteria for selecting 24 students for the next academic year (starting in Sept. 2010). In addition, emergency assistance of \$50,000 was granted to 51 students from the occupied Syrian Golan.