THE DEVELOPMENT AND STATE OF THE ART OF ADULT LEARNING AND EDUCATION (ALE)

National Report Of Palestine

By

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General Overview

- Population: 3.8 million (via UN, 2006)

- Capital (to be) : Jerusalem

- Area: 6,335 sq km (5,970 sq km for the West Bank and 365 sq km for Gaza Strip)

- Major Language: Arabic

- Major Religion: Islam

- Life Expectancy : 71 years (men), 74 years (women) (UN)

- Adult literacy rate (% age 15 and above) 92.4 (UNDP)

- Ration of females to males 97.6%

- Enrollment rates in stages of education

Education	Females %	Males %
Basic Education	94.6	93.6
Secondary Education	66.4	58.6
Higher Education	28.1	26.1
Basic and Secondary And Higher Education	74.6	72.5

- Unemployment rate 32.6% (MOPIC,2004)

- Distribution percent rural/urban areas ?

- GNI per capita : US$ 1,120 (World Bank,2006)

- Internet domain: .ps

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1. Policy, Legislation and Financing

1.1 Legislative, policy and administrative frameworks of ALE.

Throughout their long and turbulent history, the Palestinian people have relied on the human resources, particularly the human mind and skills, to sustain their survival and development as a nation. In that context, education has been always considered by Palestinians as the one prerequisite, not only for nation building but also for achieving a genuine and sustainable peace.

Since its establishment in 1994, the Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MoEHE) has commit it self to reform the inherited education system with the aim to assist the preparation of the Palestinian citizens towards life in a democratic society, and towards the contribution of the economy of the society. The Ministry has been working very hard to build an education system responsive to social, cultural and developmental needs of Palestinian people to be an active participant within the global economy.

Since its first elected in 1996 the Palestinian Legislative council did not adapt any legislations or laws to encourage adult learning education, however the Ministry of Education and Higher Education had adapted the policy of decreasing the percentage of illiteracy in Palestine which percentage was 11.6% in 1997 (10 years old and over) and dropped to 6.1% in 2004 for the same group.

MoEHE had defined its goals and priorities for decreasing the percentage of illiteracy in Palestine focusing on rural areas and vulnerable Palestinians such as women and children. The ministry had adapted strict laws against children drop out of schools and at the same time encouraging women to join adult learning education centers.

Unfortunately there are no legislations specifies which governmental organization/s that are in charge of ALE, neither there is a national programme specific to adult education as yet, although there is a National Illiteracy Reduction programme.

However, adult education is an integral part of the Palestine Education for All National Plan. Policies concerning adult education have not been unified or centralized in one authority or body, but are part of the Ministry of Education and Higher Learning's priorities. Additionally, the adult education programme in Palestine dates its inception to the Hamburg conference. Before 1997 there were very few adult education efforts apart from literacy, which was handled by civil society and non-governmental education. The development of specific programmes and curricula for adult learners was started in 1999. After Hamburg the Ministry of Education and Higher Learning attempted to incorporate all the 10 theme areas into adult education planning and curriculum development.

Adult Education in Palestine is seen as social responsibility and the need to collaborative action is considered of utmost importance. It is currently dealt with by, in addition to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the Ministry of Labour in collaboration

with labour unions, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Women Affairs, local and international NGO's, universities and women's organizations.

Priorities in adult education in Palestine include reduction of illiteracy, dealing with school drop outs, providing skills and vocational training to workers, upgrading the skills and knowledge of university graduates and professionals in keeping with the changing labour market, empowering women through life skills and rights education.

The National Illiteracy Reduction Programme priorities include basic education, literacy, women's education, and information technology for adults and targets refugees, people with special needs, and people in rural areas. Depending on the needs of the targeted groups' issues other issues are added to the curriculum, such as environmental education, health education, life skills, and citizenship education.

Another program is the IT4Youth program, which is a four-year local pilot project aimed at enhancing the learning skills and employability of Palestinian youth, ages 11 to 24, through computer-based information technology. The program was developed as a partnership between the International Youth Foundation and the Welfare Association. The program partners with local institutions such as the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, local village councils, schools, and the Future kids Training Center.

Since September 2000 until July 2004, the program targeted an estimated 7,000 rural students and youth, 25 computer skills teachers, 50 teachers without Internet technology knowledge, and 300 parents and adult community members in a cluster of eight villages in adjoining areas of Jenin and Nablus.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and namely the two Ministries of Education & Higher Education and Labor in cooperation with stakeholders from the private sector, the NGOs and international donors, took up an ambitious task: A comprehensive reorganization of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector.

At present there is no unified system for Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Training and Education is carried out in separate types of institutions that are run by respectively the Ministry of Education & Higher Education (Vocational Secondary Schools and Technical Colleges), the Ministry of Labor (Vocational Training Centers), private institutions as well as NGOs (50% of all TVET courses and programs).

The existing institutions are largely unsystematic and much too small in their scope and capacity, the equipment is outdated and in most cases also the buildings are in a bad shape.

In different places one could become a carpenter in 9 months, 11 months or 24 months, each time using different curricula. The fragmentation leads to a training policy which is diffuse and uncoordinated, making it difficult also for employers to interact with the training system on a regional or national level.

The unified, new TVET system will provide the Palestinian Labor force with:

- market oriented training offers (Relevance)
- a structural ability of the TVET system to adapt quickly to changing circumstances and market needs (Flexibility)

High quality in teaching through comprehensive and continuous teachers training and curricula development (Effectiveness) a financially secured and independent TVET system (Sustainability) and with quotas that ensure participation of disadvantaged groups (Accessibility).The differentiation between Vocational Education (VE), Vocational Training (VT) and Non-Formal Education (NFE) becomes increasingly irrelevant.

Over three decades of Israeli occupation has resulted in a technical and administrative void, among other things which has created a grossly inadequate capacity level among current local, regional and national government levels, in the fields of spatial, physical, strategic, socioeconomic and environmental planning. Thus, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MOPIC) – the shepherd of planning instruments - has not only focused on the development of relevant internal and external physical planning systems, but also upon human resources and sustainable capacity building in all fields of planning. Two major objectives were addressed by MOPIC: One was to develop routines and systems including cooperation and participation models and procedures within MOPIC and with other planning related entities. The second objective was to draft a unified planning law for the two separated areas that comprise the sought-for Palestinian state.

These objectives related to organizational structuring, the design and development of a legal base, the drafting of policies, guidelines, norms, standards, institutional mechanisms and procedures for management of physical planning process - for all administrative and political levels. (MOPIC) has been mandated by the PNA as the shepherd of the various institutional arrangements in the PNA for expressing physical planning objectives and mechanisms employed for realizing them.

The Palestinian National Authority identifies two overarching goals of its Medium Term Development Plan:
• To address poverty in a sustainable way, by providing a framework to shift PNA and donor assistance from emergency relief to job creation, recovery and social and economic development, particularly focusing to engage women in this process.
• To improve the effectiveness of PNA governance by building institutional capacity and accelerating reform. The MTDP will also enhance PNA accountability by providing clear and gender sensitive development objectives which are monitored throughout the period of implementation.

In December 2004 the national poverty line was set at ILS 1,800 (USD 398) per month for a family of two adults and four children. This translates into ILS 300 (USD 66) per person or about USD 2.21 per day per person, the same figure as the previous year. However in a 2003 joint report by the World Bank and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), a subsistence poverty line was set at ILS 205 (USD 45) per person per

month or approximately USD 1.51 per day - ILS 128 (USD 28) per month for food according to minimum calorific intake and ILS 77 (USD 17) for other necessary expenses including housing, clothing, and water. The Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs currently offers assistance to special hardship cases at the rate of ILS 96 (USD 21) per month or USD 0.71 per day. In December 2003, roughly 607,000 West Bank and Gaza inhabitants, or 16% of the population, were living below the USD 1.51 subsistence poverty line, and the proportion has increased since that time.

Over 70% of households are currently in need of assistance. Unemployment increased in 2004, and at the close of the year, 32.6% of the workforce were unemployed (nearly 29% in the West Bank and over 41% in the Gaza Strip). Poverty rates are complex and varying, but statistics show that at the end of 2004 roughly half the population were living on under USD 2.10 per day, up from 22% in 2000; in the Gaza Strip, this number rises to 68%.

However, and despite that poverty and sustainable developments is now the top priorities of the PNA, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education formulated a new strategy with a new vision for the future of Palestinian education potential, challenges, and objectives. This strategy was translated into the Five-Year-Plan focusing on five key areas: access to education for all children; quality of education; formal and non-formal education; management capacity in planning, administration and finance; and human resources of the educational system.

The Five Developmental Principles are:

1. Education as a human right: All children between the ages of 6 and 16 years old have the right to receive free basic education, regardless of social or economic status, gender, or religious belief.

2. Education as the basic component of citizenship: Together with the family and the community, the school shall be a main catalyst for developing the Palestinian citizen's character, moral values and social responsibilities.

3. Education as a tool for social and economic development: Education must meet the political, social and economic challenges of Palestinian society.

4. Education as the basis for social and moral values, and democracy: Education shall be the cornerstone for building a Palestinian society with strong commitment to ethics, principles, and openness to the global culture.

5. Education as a continuous, renewable, participatory process: Education is a life-long activity, in and out of school, fuelled by classroom learning, social relations and communications, community activities, and the mass media.

The Ministry, therefore, adopted the approach of working cooperatively and collectively with official and non-official institutions in formulating and implementing the Plan.

To translate the Plan into action, procedures and standards were prepared to insure proper implementation in achieving the five elements of the Plan:

1- This program aims to provide the opportunity for all children and adults of all ages to receive proper education, from kindergarten to secondary school, by recruiting new teachers, adding new classrooms, textbooks, increasing the level of enrollment in the secondary stage, and decreasing the dropout rate.

2- The program's main objectives in developing and achieving quality education are the production, assessment, evaluation, and enrichment of school textbooks and instruction manuals for the Palestinian Curriculum as well as teacher and supervisor training.

3- The development of a vocational and technical training program that focuses on meeting the basic needs of the local market, and providing the skilled and proficient workforce that can contribute positively to the national economy. The plan also offers extended learning within the framework of formal education through the introduction of technical training, as well as providing schools with the necessary equipment and resources.

4- Developing new programs for general education, pre-school care, informal education, adult education, and special education, that is available for the general population. By providing schooling for kindergarten-age children the program offers support for parents and improves the quality of education in the long-run.

5- Restructuring the financial and administrative systems to ensure efficient use of available resources. The program will include the school-map project, as well as reinforce concepts of strategic planning and organizational administration. It focuses on developing and reviewing policies, and rules and regulations; updating of position responsibilities and job descriptions; and developing relations between schools and the local community.

Gaining an education in Palestine, however, is not a simple thing. Every single day, students and their families have to deal with the ongoing brutal Israeli occupation. As with all aspects of Palestinian life, the occupation with its checkpoints, curfews and the apartheid wall is the main barrier to any normalcy and peace for the Palestinian people. The occupation impacts on every single aspect of Palestinian life, including the right to education.

The National Illiteracy Reduction Programme priorities include basic education, literacy, women's education, and information technology for adults and targets refugees, people with special needs, and people in rural areas. Depending on the needs of the targeted groups' issues other issues are added to the curriculum, such as environmental education, health education, life skills, and citizenship education.

And as we have an increase in the number of disabled people as a result of occupation violence as well as prisoners, education of adults with special needs and the education of prisoners is a priority. As well as, the Ministry is currently working on a strategy for the integration of deaf students into the regular classes by providing sign language translation for them.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education has adopted the Universal Education concept, in collaboration with UNESCO, and with the support of the Diaconia Institute in Sweden. This program promotes the principle of equal rights to all student categories to integrate individuals with special needs into mainstream schools. The Universal Education concept includes a series of procedures to train teachers to work with special needs students, providing them with adequate learning tools, and to adapt curricula to serve the needs of the largest number of student categories. This program has succeeded in integrating 259 schools by the end of 2003, providing mainstream education for 67 totally sight-impaired students, 1128 partially sight-impaired students, 67 totally or partially hearing-impaired students, and 563 physically disabled students.

1.2 Financing of ALE

The last seven years of conflict have had an enormous human cost and a very negative social and economic impact. The Palestinian economy went through a severe recession, leaving real income per capita in the West Bank and Gaza in 2007 more than 35 percent lower than in 1999. As the economy has been unable to create enough jobs for the rapidly growing labor force, unemployment remains very high at 26 percent, with a particularly acute situation in Gaza, where it is running at 55 percent. About half of the Palestinian population is living in poverty and social indicators have deteriorated markedly.

The deterioration in the macroeconomic and social conditions has led to a worsening of the fiscal situation, which is highly dependent on external budget support. Budgetary revenue declined sharply at the start of the conflict, in line with the drop in economic activity, while expenditure pressures have increased because of the fast growing population, rising poverty, and the destruction of essential infrastructure. At the same time, in light of pressures to reduce unemployment, public employment has increased, resulting in the wage bill crowding out other expenditures, including the delivery of basic public services.

As was the case for other service-delivery ministries, the MoEHE suffered severe cutbacks in allocations from the Ministry of Finance for non-salary operating costs. Of US$14.2 million budgeted for non-salary operating costs for 2003, the MoEHE received only US$2.7 million. The shortfall was fully covered by donors, who provided a total of US$12.3 million in budgetary support for the MoEHE in 2003.

As seen, the budget of MoEHE is so small with large expectations and fields to be spent on. Adult learning education is a small category of what MoEHE is asked to do for

Palestinian people. Local and International organization as well as local authorities, municipalities, women organization and other ministries have a role in ALE.

Of what available the following table shows what was spent on ALE by MoEHE in the years 2003-2007 compared to the total budget (including salaries):

Year	Budget Million US$	Illiteracy and Non-Formal Education Budget US$	%
2003	350	510,000	0.15
2004	375	600,000	0.16
2005	380	710,000	0.18
2006	395	755,000	0.19
2007	420	800,000	0.19

The below table shows the contribution of several International Organizations in ALE in Palestine for the years shown:

Year	UNESCO	UNICEF	ESESCO	ELECSO
2001		US$ 55,964		
2003			US$ 8984	
2004	US$ 15000			
2005	US$ 86820		US$ 5000	US$ 40000
2006	US$ 36928			
2007				

There is no information about other sectors budgets in the field of ALE, most other ministries, municipalities, refugees' cultural centers, and concerned local NGO's do not share the budgets information they have from donors with others and thus we can't determine the exact budgets spent by them. However, and as had seen above the major donors budgets were so small and consequently its obvious the overall budgets of all those institutions is smaller than amounts MoEHE had spent.

2. Quality of Adult Learning and Education: Provision, Participation and Achievement

2.1 Provision of ALE and institutional frameworks

Since it was established in 1994, MoEHE is main body that is responsible full responsibility on planning, implementing, coordinating and following up the literacy program in Palestine. The General Directorate of General Education through the Division of Non-Formal education determines the curricula for the program, the educational plans and the different activities should be done. Through different Education Directorates all over the country the ministry provide all needed facilities, class rooms, text books, facilitators, stationary etc.. And also through the Educational Directorates it supervise technically and managerially on those centers. At the end of each program the participants have a general exam and the ministry gives the certificates.

General Directorate of General Education

Directorate of General Education

Division of Non-Formal Education

Division of General Education in Education Directorates
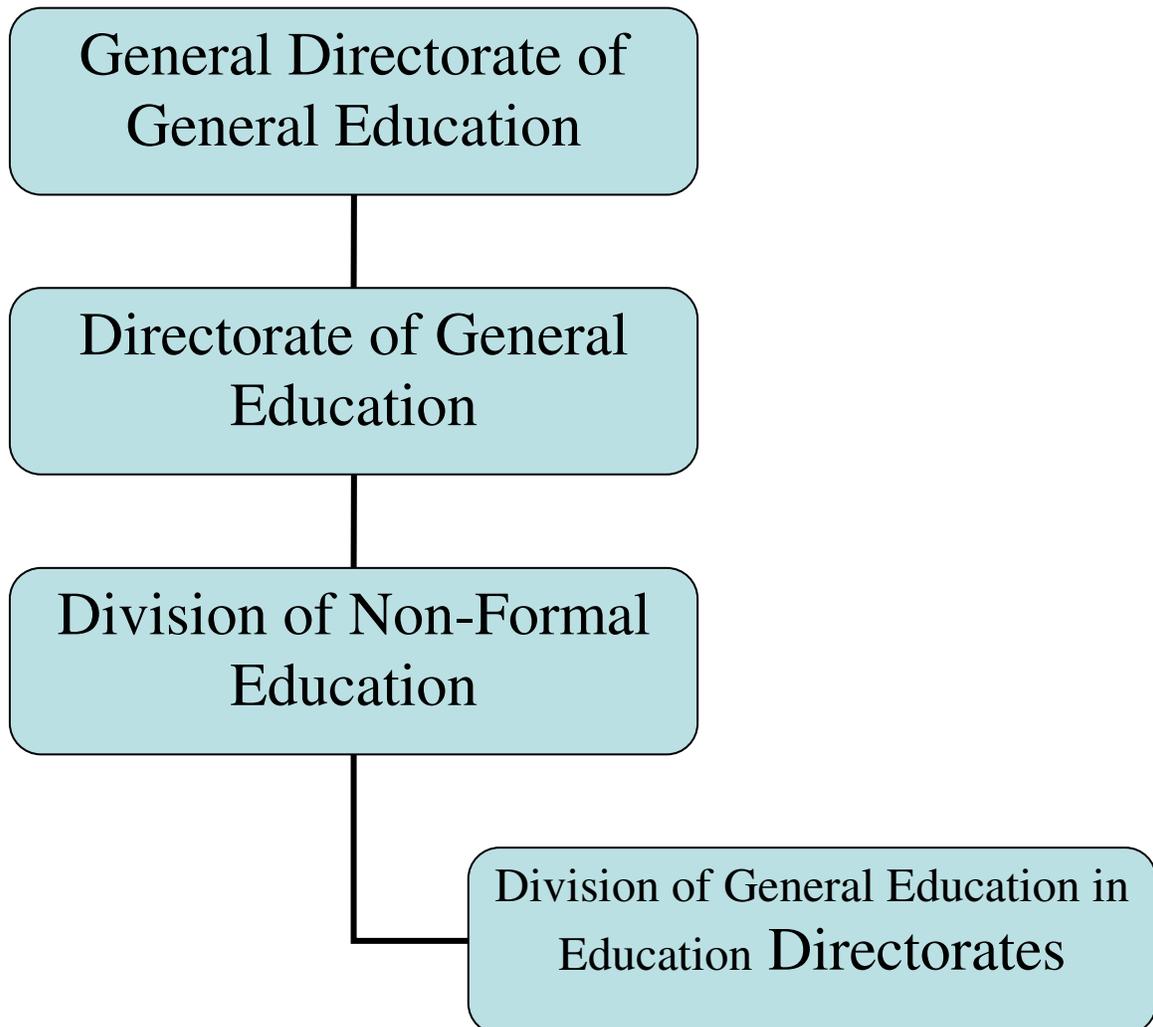
MoEHE and the Ministry of Labour are the responsible bodies on vocational education and training institutes in Palestine. Through the General Directorate for technical and vocational education MoEHE organizes and directs those sections all over the country.

The main ALE programs in Palestine are as below:

Programme	Provider	Area of Learning	Target group/s	Program Cost	Funding Source
Literacy Program	MoEHE	General Competencies	16-60 years old illiterate	US$ 800,000	Government
Literacy Program	Red Crescent Society	General Competencies	16-60 years old illiterate	N/A	Donors
Non-Formal Education	MoEHE	GC & Technical Skills	13-35	US$ 30,000	Government
Vocational & Training Education	Ministry of Labour	Technical Skills	16-24	N/A	Government
Night Education	MoEHE	GC	Over 19	US$ 100/Student	Target Student
Vocational & Training Education	TVET /NGO's	Technical Skills	16-24	N/A	Donors & Students
Information Technology	Private Sector	Knowledge generation Innovation	15-45	N/A	Students
Rehabilitation of Schools Drop Out Students	Ministry of Social Affairs	GC	10-18	N/A	Government
Education for Prisoners	MoEHE	GC	12-60	N/A	Government
Rehabilitation of released prisoners	Ministry of Prisoners Affairs	Technical Skills	18-40	N/A	Government/Donors
Education for Groups with Special needs	MoEHE Ministry of Social Affairs NGO's	GC & Technical Skills	Disabled groups	N/A	Government/Donors

2.2 Participation in ALE

Bellow is MoEHE statistics on governmental Literacy and Adult learning Centers:

Year	Centers	Classes			Trainers/Facilitators			Learners		
		Males	Females	Sum	Males	Females	Sum	Males	Females	Sum
97/98	15	17	15	32	18	13	31	346	333	679
98/99	27	27	31	58	30	22	52	573	730	1267
99/00	43	34	48	82	44	37	81	349	699	1048
00/01	52	29	54	83	35	46	81	323	802	1125
01/02	58	31	60	91	33	59	92	590	1094	1684
02/03	60	41	52	93	41	50	91	711	992	1703
03/04	56	50	56	106	51	55	106	890	1113	2003
04/05	82	58	83	141	55	86	141	1068	1505	2573
05/06	127	85	133	218	98	120	618	1645	2000	3645
06/07	113	69	68	137	93	114	207	1283	1968	3251
Total	633	289	401	690	309	370	679	7598	11052	18650

NGO's and other sectors Literacy and Adult Learning centers statistics are:

Year	Centers	Classes			Trainers/Facilitators			Learners		
		Males	Females	Sum	Males	Females	Sum	Males	Females	Sum
99/00	33	16	52	68	14	53	67	302	959	1261
00/01	51	17	34	51	15	29	44	266	514	780
01/02	40	22	77	99	24	82	106	352	586	938
02/03	22	12	55	67	12	55	67	201	410	611
03/04	40	21	62	83	21	62	83	306	697	1003
04/05	18	7	30	37	4	23	27	105	277	382
Total	204	95	310	405	90	304	394	1532	3443	4975

The table below show Palestinian students receiving Vocational training as per Ministry of Labour data 2004/2005

Division	Number of Students
Agriculture	331
Commerce	655
Industry	1634

Different measures were taken to motivate participants to learn, economic, religious and motivation to improve were the best. MoEHE was concerned not to mobilize participants far from their neibourhoods to keep their motivation to learn. Women, Released prisoners and most poor people were especially encouraged to participate through different actions depending on their location and economical situations.

2.3 Monitoring & evaluation programs and assessing learning outcomes

Generally speaking, monitoring and evaluations takes place through visits to the centers, the monthly reports sent by center administrators to the Ministry, regular phone contact between the Ministry and centers to keep abreast of the developments and needs. Additionally, both teachers and learners are given questionnaires to evaluate the teaching and learning process and make suggestions for improvements.

However, there remains one major hurdle to improving and developing adult education and education as a whole in the Palestinian territories, and that is the unstable political and often explosive military situation, which has resulted in school and road closures, curfews and the threat of danger.

One major evaluation measure for participants in ALE is the general exam they take after finishing their education or training. The exam is set from MoEHE and is submitted on national level. In most years 99% of participants had pass this exam.

2.4 Adult educators/facilitators' status and training

Teacher training for adult education and literacy includes topics such as the psychology of adult learners, communications skills, using information technology and measuring and evaluating of learners' achievements the curriculum, teaching methods. All of adult teachers are teachers in MoEHE schools. Teachers receive a stipend or honorarium but no salary.

The table below shows the number of participants of training courses held by MoEHE to the facilitators for adult education/illiteracy and the total number of training hours:

Year	Participants	Hours
1997	74	136
1999	40	18
2000	300	54
2005	210	60
2006	60	60

3. Research, Innovation and Good Practices.

3.1 Research studies in the field of adult learning.

A presentation was made on the results of the analysis for continuing education according to the supervisory authority: Ministry of Labor, Detainees and Prisoner Friends Association (DPFA), and cultural centers. The educational content for each level of education was also presented, including indicators and statistics about numbers of students enrolled in continuing education, graduates, and employees, and challenges facing continuing education.

Another research was made by the national team and the follow-up committee discussed problems of non-formal education and decided to hold a series of meetings and workshops to get informed about the role of NGOs in teaching life skills for the targeted categories of the Education for All program.

They reached the following summary:

Problems

1. Lack of coordination and the double work undertaken by Governmental and Non-governmental organizations.
2. Lack of follow-up, monitoring, assessment, and evaluation.
3. Training and capacity building programs are not sufficient in terms of number, frequency, and contents.
4. Financial aids are not enough especially to the civil sector.
5. Lack of buildings and the inadequacy of some of them.
6. Crowdedness.
7. Centers graduates do not meet the needs of the society, whether quantitatively or qualitatively.
8. Absence of regulations and the weakness of executive mechanisms.

Recommendations

1. To increase coordination and remove duality between governmental and non-governmental organizations.
2. To enhance follow-up process and monitoring and to use assessment and evaluation means.
3. To extend training in order to build human resources capacities so they could assume their tasks in a better way.
4. To increase financial support for both governmental and non-governmental sectors.
5. To program the efforts in order to get rid of buildings that are inappropriate to educational needs, to build centers that meet the functions of various institutions, in order to improve educational performance and to get rid of crowdedness.

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6. To conduct field and prospective studies to define the social needs and to review the performance according to the studies outcome.
7. Enact laws and legislation, which guarantee the effectiveness of non-formal education.
8. Eliminate drop-out.
9. To adapt the environment of the various centers so as to make them accessible to persons with special needs and to optimize their use.
10. To develop an educational philosophy which is adapted to Palestinian values and which corresponds to the needs of the Palestinian Society.
11. To make the society participate in non-formal education and linking the latter to performance within families.

A study commissioned by UNESCO and undertaken by Dr. Fawzi Ayoub to evaluate existing literacy materials used in the Arab World was presented at the Regional Preparatory Meeting in Hammamat, Tunis. The study, in two parts, presented a descriptive and diagnostic content analysis of literacy books, materials, teachers' guides, and curricula. Part two concentrated on the theory and practice of the creation and development of literacy materials. The study also presented a qualitative and quantitative diagnosis of existing books and materials, as well as a comparative exploration of books used in different countries, and offered suggestions and recommendations on best practices. Two best practice examples were presented and analyzed, one for teaching Arabic language and the other for the teaching of mathematics.

The study used five major qualitative indicators to measure the appropriateness and effectiveness of 277 literacy books used in 16 countries as follows:
- Relevance
- Coherence & Progression
- Balance
- Functionality
- Flexibility

The study ended with 16 recommendations some are shown below. Copies of the published study can be obtained from the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States in Arabic.

Qualitative Comparative Study of the Content of Literacy Books Used the Arab Region

G = Good S = Satisfactory P= Poor

Indicator		Relevance			Coherence & Progression			Balance			Functionality			Flexibility		
Country		G	S	P	G	S	P	G	S	P	G	S	P	G	S	P
Algeria		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--
Egypt		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	X	--	--	--	X	--
Iraq		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	--	X	--	--	--	X
Jordan		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	X	--	--	--	X	--
Lebanon		--	X	--	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	X	--	--	--	X
Mauritania		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	X	--	--	--	X	--
Morocco		--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Oman		--	--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	X	--	--	--	X
Palestine		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	X	--	--
Qatar		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	X	--	--	X	--	--
Saudi Arabia		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	X	--	--	--	X	--
Sudan		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X
Syria		X	--	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	X	--	--	--	X	--
Tunisia		X	--	--	X	--	--	--	--	X	X	--	--	X	--	--
UAE		X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	--	X	--	--
Yemen		--	X	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	--	X	--	--	X	--

Table 8, Page 39, Volume I, *Evaluation of Content of Literacy Books in the Arab Region*

Relevance refers to
- how relevant the material, themes and ideas expressed in the books to the lives and realities of learners;
- how relevant the questions and exercises are to the interests of the learners
- the degree of difficulty of the material, the questions and exercises to the level of the learners
- the degree of appeal the material would have to the learners

Coherence & Progression refers to
- he coherence between the content, subject matter and presentation of the material and the objectives of the lessons
- the coherence and logical progression between one lesson, the one before it and the one after it, as well as between the different parts of the book
- the progression in degree of difficulty from one lesson to the one after it

Balance refers to
- the degree of balance within the content between the intellectual, the emotional, the psychological and the practical aspects of learning
- the degree of balance between the length of each lesson, the level of difficulty and the time allotted for its mastery
- the degree of balance between the theoretical and the practical in each lesson

Functionality refers to
- the functionality and practicality of the skills learners are expected to gain from each lesson and whether the lessons meet the goals of functionality

Flexibility refers to
- the degree of adaptability of the content to different classroom situations, and the degree of flexibility the material allows in eliciting interest and discussion

3.2 Innovations and examples of good practice.

Palestinian community and official institutions have endeavored, over the last years, to reduce the rate of illiteracy in Palestinian society, considering education one of the most important access routes to development and empowerment. There are many illiteracy eradication programs sponsored by various institutions. These programs often use the media because of its vital role in the developmental process, and in view of its capacity to create social trends. Programs presented by the media largely contribute to developmental and social issues, by spreading progressive developmental and cultural concepts and sponsoring public debates on subjects such as education, health, and unemployment.

Ya..noon is a television series for adult learning and civic education targeting both young and adult men and women, and deals with such issues as early marriage, endogamy, inheritance, pregnancy, children, gender, nutrition, education, rights, refugees, immigration, environment, water, agriculture, democracy, participation, Jerusalem, imposed siege, and land. This program encourages female and male viewers to help build a contented Arab household that is more just and coherent. It also encourages participation in the development of an Arab society based on human principles, empowerment and equality for all.

The programme consists of seventeen episodes, which is being aired on local, national, and Arab television channels.

Ya..noon was designed to:
   Provide men and women with the opportunity to learn according to their own schedules, and in their own environment within the household and with friends, despite the increasing family burdens they have to shoulder.
   Provide educational material based on principles of developed learning to complement the tutorial curricula taught in literacy centers, and for the use of the organizations working in the field of civic education.

The underlying idea for this project was to produce a drama series for television viewers that offers training in language skills while dealing with life issues and challenges from a development and gender perspectives. The viewer wishing to learn by watching the series can be helped by a member of the family, without resorting to conventional methods, followed by literacy courses. The series are based on linguistic applications, presented in the "My First Reading" textbook produced by the Literacy and Adult Education Unit at Birzeit University.

The series was produced in seventeen parts, after reviewing its contents by the MoEHE and by specialists in literacy work and adult education. The series was pilot-tested and evaluated in seven Palestinian villages, through the work of

fourteen male and female instructors experienced in the field of adult education and literacy. These instructors have also received 38 hours of training to enhance their understanding of developmental education and to reinforce developmental methods in education and distance learning. The instructors will follow-up and provide orientation to those adults wishing to learn in the seven villages.

Ya..Noon had opened the opportunity for men and women, under the increasing family obligations, to education whether they are among their family or friends and according to their schedule, granted the chance for men and women who cannot reach illiteracy centers to learn via television and had provided an educational material based on active education and initiation derived from students.

In 2007 Minister of Transportation had agreed on a policy in his ministry forcing all public to have at least a finishing preparatory certificate if they want to have a driving license. This decision had forced many illiterate people to joint literacy centers and non-formal education centers to have this certificate. Since then this had encouraged adults to learn and increased the participants in the adults' education centers. This law was a very good innovation for adults to educate as most people now needs to have a driving license.

The current conditions have resulted in delay or halt to the implementation of educational developmental programs, training and certification workshops, and the procurement of educational technology, such as science labs, libraries, computer facilities, sports and cultural facilities. Implementation and oversight of programs in the areas of inclusive education, integrated education, special education, parallel education, self-administered schools, literacy and adult education programs have also suffered.

4. <u>Adult Literacy</u>

Illiteracy in Palestine as MoEHE had defined it is every adult (18 years and above) who do not know to read, write and calculate, and did not get the ability or information to achieve positive results to effect his life or his surrounding society.

At the national level, MoEHE advocates to include literacy within commitments such as the Dakar Goals (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD).

Work on the plan of EFA started during the early months of 2002, by establishing the national forum for EFA. The forum included representatives of Palestinian ministries and institutions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to ensure that the developed plan is credible and applicable, and represents the views of the education sector, as well as all other relevant sectors in the Palestinian society.

The EFA works towards achieving the general goals and commitments set forth in the International Educational Framework in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000. While working towards the goals, strategies, and operational programs, and including them in the national action plan that would identify the features of quality education by the year 2015, a number of challenges were identified through studying the four sub-sectors in formal and non-formal education such as early childhood, basic education, literacy, and continuing education. These challenges will be the compass to form the general goals and identify priorities within the framework of the six goals of EFA 2000.

Two national forums were formed in the West Bank and Gaza. The two teams worked in parallel and complementary manner, and included representatives from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, the National Central Bureau of Statistics, NGOs, in addition to private and international institutions interested in the issues of childhood, basic education, literacy, and continuing education.

This work targeted four main groups that were identified in three stages: Stage one, or the diagnosis stage; stage two, the main challenges were identified; stage three, these challenges were compiled in four major fields: Early childhood, basic education, literacy, and continuing education.

1. Early Childhood: This includes children less than 5 years of age, especially those who can attend nurseries and kindergartens.
2. Basic/Formal Education: This includes children 5 to 17 years old; age 5 to 15 years old enroll in primary education, and 16 to 17 years enroll in secondary education, with focus on children in primary education. Special attention was given to drop-outs, while focusing on the reasons that lead them to leave their schools.
3. Literacy and Adult Learning: This includes the population above 18 years of age that are enrolled in literacy programs and adult learning.

4. Continuing Education: This includes the general population in different age groups who are currently enrolled in out-of-school education training programs, drop-outs enrolled in vocational training, or those who do not participate in vocational training programs.

According to 2003 data, the illiteracy rate among individuals aged 15 and older is 3.7 percent for males and 12.6 percent for females. These data indicate a decrease from the rates recorded in 1997, when they amounted to 7.8 percent for men and 21.3 percent for women, thus reflecting a clear progression in the push for eradicating illiteracy over the last six years. In addition, it should be noted that illiteracy rates among women are 3.4 times higher than among men. By comparing results from the West Bank with those collected in Gaza, illiteracy rates among men in Gaza are 7 percent higher than in the West Bank, while illiteracy among woman in the Gaza Strip is 1 percent less than in the West Bank. Illiteracy rates according to residence clearly indicate the quality of educational and cultural services provided within various demographic areas, with cities recording the lowest rates, followed by camps, then villages. This clearly shows that camp residents (refugees) give great importance to education when compared to village residents. Furthermore, it is generally noted that the percentage of individuals who read and write is on an upward trend, despite the persistence of the gap between men and women in this regard.

Literacy rates are improving significantly for women. Among adolescents 15 -19 years of age, the literacy rates for girls and boys are 97.5% and 96.6%, respectively, whereas they are 87.4% and 96.3% for adult females and adult males, respectively. According to the PCBS Annual Report of 2005, literacy rates for women increased from 83.9% in 2000 to 88.9% in 2005.

The table below is the statistics done by MoEHE and the Palestinian Center Bureau of Statistics PCBS showing the rate of literacy among Palestinians (males & females) for the years 2001-2004:

Year	Group	Population	Literacy %	Illiteracy %	Females Population	Female Literacy %
2001	15-19	343574	98.8	1.2	167532	98.8
	20-24	289729	98.5	1.5	141812	98.4
	25-34	450543	97.7	2.3	221076	97
	35-44	302879	95.2	4.8	146312	92.3
	15-45	1386725	90.2	9.8	676732	86.5
2002	15-19	363072	98.8	1.2	177402	98.8
	20-24	304672	98.3	1.7	149178	97.9
	25-34	473549	97.9	2.1	232537	97.3
	35-44	322698	95.9	4.1	155984	93.5
	15-45	1463991	90.9	9.1	715101	87.5
2003	15-19	384160	98.9	1.1	188133	99
	20-24	320077	98.4	1.6	156816	98.2
	25-34	497428	98.2	1.8	244315	97.6
	35-44	342051	96.3	3.7	165581	94.1
	15-45	1543716	91.8	8.2	754845	88.9
2004	15-19	406647	99.1	0.9	199617	99.2
	20-24	335944	98.8	1.2	164764	98.5
	25-34	522237	98.4	1.6	256457	97.7
	35-44	361041	96.9	3.1	175129	95.1
	15-45	1625869	93.2	6.8	795967	90.7

Education Indicators

		2003
Adult literacy	(%)	91.9
Adult literacy (15-24)	(%)	98.7
Combined first-, second- and third level gross enrolment ratio 2002/2003	(%)	73.6
Enrollment in secondary technical education from total secondary education	(%)	4.5
Enrollment in basic education	(%)	91.9
Enrollment in secondary education	(%)	64.0
Enrollment in higher education	(%)	27.1
Enrollment in natural and applied sciences from total enrollment in higher education 2002/2003 (%)		5.3
Annual increase in numbers of student (basic and secondary education)		3.4
Illiteracy rate		8.1
Number of students per teacher in schools *[5]		27.3
Average number of students per class in basic education *		36.1
Average number of students per class in secondary education *		30.4
Average number of students per social consultant (counselors) *		16.93
Number of students per computer in schools *		71
Proportion of the Educational status over the age of 15		
Illiterate		8.1
Can read or write		8.0
Elementary		19.3
Preparatory		33.6
Secondary		19.5
Associate Diploma		4.4
Bachelor +		7.1
Share of education from international assistance	(%)	11.0

*Based on the Palestinian Human Development Report, 2004.Birzeit University

5. Expectations of CONFINTEA VI and Future Perspectives of ALE

It is quite clear that the planning process in Palestine with reference to Adult education as well as all the other aspects faces many challenges to produce and especially to implement plans on local, regional and national levels. Nevertheless, the Palestinians, have tried to plan for their scattered communities in spite of the diverse technical and logistical difficulties facing such an endeavor. Plans produced have reflected longstanding aims to achieve prosperity and improve political and socio-economic welfare in a well planned and prioritized manner. Unfortunately, the plans were confronted with numerous and diverse obstacles most of which are attributed to practices of the consecutive Governments of Israel, especially those related to colonization and confiscation of more Palestinian lands. Notwithstanding, tackling planning within such hard political and conflicting environment is a national priority to the PNA as it is considered an integral part of the peace process.

Physical Planning under such diverse and volatile political conditions in the Palestinian territories were a fundamentally difficult task due to the many variables, uncertainties and complex issues.

The geographic separation between GS and WB has made it difficult to create the kind of continuity and streamlining needed for plans to be realized and implemented on the ground with ease.

The Palestinian National Authority is doing its best to enhance its physical planning process thereby setting the stage for ease of implementation and success, with attention to national strategy, policy and priority.

Further, almost all of the West Bank and Gaza Strip towns are currently locked down and Gaza Strip is now under siege, which entail the sick being unable to receive medical treatment, ambulances being prevented from reaching their destinations and the deceased cannot be buried.

In other words, the entire PNA territories are currently at a complete standstill in contravention of human rights treaties and basic humanitarian norms.

Therefore urgent assistance is needed to realize the goals of our plans, which are directed towards raising the living conditions of the Palestinian people and improving the economic self-sufficiency of the Palestinian territories.

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