

raise awareness on QIF. It is worth to mention that all eligible TEIs will be invited to participate upon announcing the additional cycles and releasing the call for proposal which is expected to be launched in January 2017 after which, a series of meetings and tutorials will be launched to ensure full understanding of QIF grants requirements and priorities.

- The third quarter of year 2016 has witnessed the closing phase of many projects under Cycle1. ISC, PPU, NNU-IT, NNU-FI, PAUC, and DAK all have conducted the ceremonial dissemination event where they got the chance to invite all relevant parties both from private sectors and other TEIs and share best practices and success stories with active participation of their partners. Senior students and graduates showcase their experience and shared their stories in securing jobs through the implemented job placement under the frame of QIF projects. It was clear however, in many projects the willingness from both parties; TEI and their partner to maintain the relationship and to scale it up into a higher level. It is anticipated that those TEIs will manage to sustain projects outcomes and mainstream their knowledge to inspire other departments to adopt best practices.
- Under the frame of preparation for the additional financing, the World Bank team jointly with the PCU team has been putting efforts in making the necessary reviews and modifications to all documents related to QIF as well as other project components. In this regard it is expected that a negotiation meeting will be held early in October between the World Bank and the MOEHE and MOFP to put final details on the agreement documents.

## Guest Corner

### Why Colleges Need to Apply for QIF Grants?

Dr. Amal Abu Awad

Director General of Education in Health

Ministry of Health- Former Dean of Ibn Sina College for Health Sciences

Having QIF a grant can make a transformational change in the services provided by the Tertiary Education Institutions (TEI). This was the case of Ibn Sina College for Health Sciences. The college has implemented three QIF projects since 2005 including the establishment of Anesthesia postgraduate diploma, creating a quality unit in the college, and lately the integration of Palliative and Advanced Geriatric Care within BSN curriculum. Starting with the name of Quality Improvement Fund (QIF), it has encouraged Ibn Sina College to apply for the QIF grant as they are a leading source to inspire and direct academic professional to improve the quality of education and quality of graduates. Over all, QIF has helped Ibn Sina College to build its capacity, build a long-term partnership with key service providers, and it helped the college faculty to transform the academic curricula according to national and international standards.

Aiming at improving the quality of graduates, these achievements are congruent with the QIF continuous contribution to TEI that focuses on improving the quality of the education facilities, curriculum, and faculty. Colleges with limited resources can benefit significantly from QIF grants as it can help them improve the quality of their graduates and services. From a college perspective, it was very helpful to visualize how the project can be implemented given the local context of our institution and its capabilities. Furthermore, to facilitate the implementation of QIF grants, it was very helpful to network and partner with private sector and service providers to get enlightened for project ideas and get support to improve the quality of graduates to better serve the population at a national level as well as at the global level.

For more information, please contact us at the following address:

Projects Coordination Unit (PCU), Ministry of Education and Higher Education  
Curriculum Building – Al Masyoun, Next to the Ministry of Planning  
Ramallah, Palestine

Tel: 00970 2 2969352/366

Fax: 00970 2 2969369

E-mail: info@tep.ps

[www.facebook.com/Project.Coordination.Unit.MoEHE/](https://www.facebook.com/Project.Coordination.Unit.MoEHE/)

# Quality Improvement Fund Projects

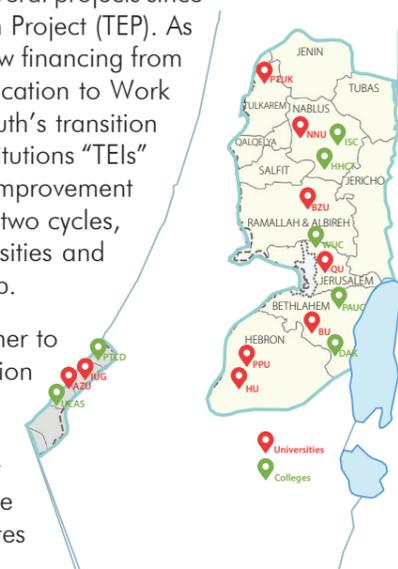
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This Newsletter is issued quarterly aiming at promoting results and outputs of the QIF projects

## Quality Improvement Fund “QIF” – Background

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) has been implementing several projects since 2005 to help finance scaling-up activities of the well-performing Tertiary Education Project (TEP). As a result of the success of these projects, on July 2nd, 2012, the MoEHE received new financing from the World Bank in the amount of 6.5 million USD, under the project named “Education to Work Transition Project – E2WTP”. The project mainly aims at enhancing Palestinian youth’s transition from education to work through fostering the linkage between Tertiary Education Institutions “TEIs” and private sector employers. A major component of the E2WTP is the Quality Improvement Fund Grants (QIF), by which a total of 20 grants were awarded to 16 TEIs through two cycles, where a total amount of \$4,580,749.21 has been committed among nine universities and seven colleges, of which, two universities and two colleges are located in Gaza Strip.

QIF continues to manage the grants in a similar transparent and competitive manner to provide incentives to TEIs to develop and implement employment-oriented education programs in partnership with the private sector. TEIs have fostered their partnership with private sector employers through collaboratively designing curricula, updating teaching practices and providing practical training to students. It is expected that QIF will (i) increase the productive linkages between TEIs and businesses; (ii) promote social responsibility among the business community; and (iii) better prepare graduates to find and keep gainful employment.



### Inside This Issue

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## At A Glance

- A one-day orientation workshop was carried out in August in the presence of a variety of representatives from technical and university colleges. The main objectives of the workshop were to: (a) introduce QIF theme to a wider audience of TEIs and share success stories with them, and (b) encourage the TEIs to approach QIF and compete in the coming cycles. The focus on colleges’ participation came as a result of data analysis found that only 57% of the eligible colleges have benefited from QIF grants over the last ten years. However, the workshop was conducted in separate event in West Bank and Gaza, and it underlined the main characteristics and requirements of QIF grants, there was also a participation from current grantees “Ibn Sina College for health Sciences in West Bank and University College for Applied Sciences in Gaza” who shared their experience as colleges and pointed out the benefits of being part of QIF. The received feedback from the participants was positive as they appreciated the initiative of the PCU team to



## A Pioneer Hotel Management Diploma Getting Underway!

Under the “Employability Through Competency - Based Learning” in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector in Palestine offered by The Institute of Hotel Management and Tourism, Bethlehem University and the Mövenpick Hotel in Ramallah have celebrated signing MOU for the new strategic partnership to provide a 2-year professional certificate that aims at offering students an opportunity to gain real industry experience and to practice the skills they have learned during their studies, and to provide the industry with qualified employees.

The professional certificate which came as a result of the “hospitality skills and gaps study” that was conducted lately under the current QIF project, is considered the first program in Palestine to offer a unique model of professional education which combines the extensive experience of the Educational Institution and the high standards of the hotels industry.

This pioneer Hotel Management program will be recognized as delivering ‘Real World Learning’. The on-site five stars Mövenpick Hotel Ramallah, with its restaurants, bars and conference rooms will provide the students with the chance to put theory into practice during the two years of their study. Moreover, Problem Based Learning (PBL) is a key element of the methodology adopted in the design, development and delivery of the program through engaging students to work on real industry problems, constantly linking theory to practice, that will help them develop an open attitude towards challenges.



## When Passion and Quality Meet!

*A Story told by a beneficiary*

My name is Aziza Musbeh, a former French teacher, my professional life has been so unsettled, I worked for many institutes- governmental and private, local and international in different titles and positions all as temporary jobs. I used to call these jobs a series of incomplete paths. For me, that was a motivation to dig deep into myself and search for my own comfort zone. Just then my story began, when I was young I used to like colors, painting and fashion design so I took my decision and enrolled in the fashion design and dress making diploma offered by Palestine Technical College in Deir Al Balah, at that time the program has just been transformed to be in line with regional and international standards as a part of the whole program development funded by the Quality Improvement Fund. Some courses were deleted from the study plan and replaced by other important ones, and most importantly computer software were introduced in the specialty, and the workshop was improved with the latest sewing tools and equipment. My teachers who have been equipped with the latest knowledge and skills encouraged me to explore more and more by doing researches, reading books and subscribing the latest international magazines to keep up-to-date in my knowledge and skills. My passion kept driving me until that moment when I participated in a fashion design competition in Gaza Strip sponsored by Muslim Care where I won the first prize. When I was asked where did you get this passion? I proudly answered “I studied at PTCD”. The good news now is that I created a turning point in my career and currently lecturing at both PTCD and UCAS in the field that I love.

## Jawwal Utilizes Augmented Reality Technology in their Ads Built by Students

from Al Quds University

Fedaa Ankeh and Raneem Baaba’ are two engineering students at al Quds University who launched an Augmented Reality-Supported Mobile Application, “Jawwal Guide Application” as their Software graduation project, which was supervised by Dr. Labib Arafah. This project is a considerable outcome of one of the promoting tourism project’s programs, the project’s genuine idea is to build an android application that connects the user with the available locations of JAWWAL branches and displays latest offers and advertisements using the emerging technologies including the Augmented Reality techniques and 3-D designs and models.

The application is made to showcase the customer an info video of JAWWAL’s latest offers whenever the phone’s camera passes across a code or an image of their ads. In that way the company guarantees a fast, easy, and more feasible way to show its products and reach everyone.



## Meet the QIF Board

The QIF Board is composed of 11 volunteer members who are appointed by MOEHE and is independent of the government and other related bodies. The QIF Board is responsible to determine the merit of each application, also realigning the priorities of the Fund, reviewing progress on the implementation of the awarded grants, and finally reviewing the QIF strategy and process at the end of each cycle.

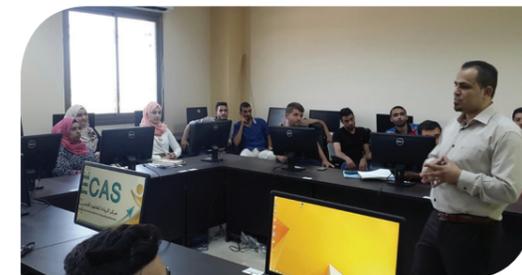
The QIF Board members are selected to represent the following sectors:

Mr. Mohammed Abu Ajameieh (Chair) Engineering sector				
Mr. Hisham Kuhail Council for Higher Education	Dr. Mohammed Al Subu Head of Accreditation & Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC)	Dr. Mohammed Ziara AQAC Board	Mr. Ayman Sultan Higher Education Sector / Universities	Dr. Ghassan Abu Orf Higher Education Sector / Colleges
Ms. Dina Nasser Health Sector	Dr. Odeh Shehadeh Palestinian Federation for Industries	Mr. Musa Shamieh Banking Sector	Dr. Iyad Masrouji Business Sector	Mr. Ala' Alaeddin Information Technology Sector

## A Step toward In - Depth Learning

For the first time since its establishment, the Accounting Information System program under the frame of QIF project at Palestine Technical University - Kadoori has applied the simulation model “Practice Enterprise” which is a methodology that brings theory to practice, knowledge to skill, abstract formulas and definitions to real life. The AIS department has setup two companies in two classrooms by which the AIS students will make decisions in a risk-free environment, allowing them to experience their knowledge and execute best practices. The two companies are working in the commercial sector in which each company is directed by an executive manager and each has 15 employees. The students who are divided into several departments; Reception, Human Resources, Accounting..etc, will be responsible for all company’s operations such as designing products, preparing marketing material, selling products and preparing accounting and administrative reports. They also will buy and sell their products from other similar companies (similar practice enterprises) and pay and receive their money through virtual bank.

It is worth to mention that such new teaching methodology could contribute to eliminate skills gap, and provide students with skills that can be applied in any business environment, to help new entrepreneurs avoid common mistakes and be more effective at business development.



## Practice Tip

**Why Worry about Quality of Higher Education:**

- Competition and Customer Satisfaction: in order to survive in such environment where education is seized by competition, and students and their parents are highly conscious of their rights of getting good quality teaching and employable skill sets, TEIs needs to worry about their quality.
- Maintaining Standards: TEIs should constantly make efforts to improve quality of the educational transactions, provisions and facilities. If they are willing to maintain high standards,
- Accountability of Funds: Quality can be considered as a monitoring mechanism that ensures the accountability of the utilized funds.
- Improve Employee Morale and Motivation: if a quality system is in place, the internal processes would be systematic and will lead to internal customer satisfaction thus high morale and motivation.
- Image, visibility and Prestige: quality institutions have the capacity to attract better stakeholder support and higher employer interests for easy placement of graduates.