

At A Glance:

- PCU is proud to announce the completion of projects implemented under Cycle one. 11 projects that started 3 years ago in 10 different institutes, out of which, 3 projects are located in Gaza, all have reached their ends and conducted their final conferences with active participation of their partners and project beneficiaries. While it is early to confirm long term partnership between TEIs and partners at some projects, signs of strategic partnership were clearly shown at others. However, it is anticipated that partnerships will continue and expand even beyond the grants life.
- On its continued efforts to prepare for the launching of additional financing of E2WTP, the PCU has officially released the completely redesigned Website www.palpcu.ps. The new site has been crafted to be easier to navigate and more user friendly. It also allows access to the newly developed online applications of QIF grants. Furthermore, to assist TEIs in understanding the nature and requirements of QIF grants, online tutorials were developed and are available in both languages on the website. The PCU team would be pleased to receive any feedback and suggestions from TEIs.
- Efforts are in full swing for the preparation for the additional financing of E2WTP. The PCU team as well as the QIF Board continued to intensify their work on putting the final details of the coming cycle. It is worth to mention that the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved on Friday, December 2nd 2016 an additional USD 5 million grant to support Education to Work Transition Project (E2WTP). For that, an official ceremonial event for announcing the additional financing and launching the new cycle is expected to take place by mid January 2017.

Practice Tip



Writing a Grant Proposal

Writing a grant proposal can be very scary task, many people lack confidence in their writing skills. It just takes time and concentration, you can develop acceptable proposals when you make a real commitment of time and energy. The following general tips will help:

DOs



- Make sure your institute and program are eligible for funding.
- Follow all instructions for page limits, font requirements, spacing, and other specifications.
- Make sure you organize the grant narrative to address explicitly any

stated selection criteria. If criteria are presented, your grant will probably be rated on how well you address these criteria.

- Make sure you address each item the grant asks for. Make it easy for the reviewer to check off each requirement without having to hunt for information.
- Ask for reasonable enough funding.
- Write clearly for the reviewers. Use headers and short sentences and paragraphs.
- Have someone else (someone not involved in the process) read/review your proposal.

Don'ts



- Try to "fit" your program to a grant if it is not a natural match.
- Exceed the page-limit recommendation for your proposal's narrative text.
- Be vague about goals, objectives and intended outcomes.
- Forget to include critical information required on forms and any other assurances.
- Ask for an exorbitant amount of funding.
- Assume that the readers know anything in advance about your program.
- Assume the readers will know what you meant to say if you make a mistake.
- Submit additional material after you have already sent in your application. It will not be considered in the review process.

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

Projects Coordination Unit (PCU), Ministry of Education and Higher Education - Curriculum Center Building - Al Masyoun, Hanna Ajlouni st. Ramallah, Palestine

00970 2 2969352/366 00970 2 2969369 www.palpcu.ps info@palpcu.ps World Bank Project Coordination Unit

Quality Improvement Fund

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Towards a Quality Fund that Achieves Development

From the Desk of the Minister

H. E. Dr. Sabri Saidam

Minister of Education and Higher Education



As a Minister of Education & Higher Education, we totally realize and appreciate the important role of the Quality Improvement Fund (QIF) since its establishment in 2005, and the role of the QIF Grants in providing TEIs with the opportunity to improve their programs to be up to the international standards. These QIF Grants included different elements, curricula development of the beneficiary programs, improvement of the students' practical training, improvement of the communication skills of the students, and capacity building of the faculty members and partners from the private sector in order to cope with the changes in the targeted programs.

The previous experience of QIF Grants opened prospects for TEIs to reconsider the traditional methods of teaching; and reached the most important achievement of partnership with the private sector, which opened new channels of dialogue. This dialogue should be sustained and institutionalized in TEIs; to help in recognizing the needs of the labor market, thus preparing qualified and skilled students who meet the needs of the local, regional and international markets in order to achieve the desired development. Since we are starting a new phase of QIF grants with an additional financing, the vision of the Ministry of

Education and Higher Education is mainly aiming at enhancing the technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Palestine - in addition to the higher education - and raising its social value to encourage more students to enroll. Within this perspective, the Ministry tried and is still trying its best to create a TVET system in Palestine, that is efficient, effective and flexible, and more linked to the labor market needs. The importance of the TVET lies in two main determinants; the first is the lack of many important technical and vocational specialties in the Palestinian market, while the second is the excess of academic specialties in the Palestinian market, thus the increase of unemployment rates in those academic specialties.

We believe, that the Palestinian private sector has the biggest role in raising the national Palestinian economics, by being the main employer, therefore the outcomes of the TVET should match the needs of the labor market and the private sector, thus objectives are integrated and goals are achieved. In this context, we need to encourage and motivate students to enroll TVET, to fulfill social and economic development, and to create entrepreneurial, competent and distinguished employees in all fields. We also need to work on improving all the components of the TVET through developing the related curricula to fit with the technological and professional updates, developing the TVET infrastructure with the needed equipment and tools and developing the human resources of those working in the TVET field, this also applies to higher education. This leads us to invite all related TEIs to take this opportunity, and to work in the coming phase on preparing for such programs through the QIF Grants. In this way, we ensure good planning leading to distinguished and great outcomes, which come in line with the Ministry's ambitious developmental plans that is obvious in the recent success stories at the regional and international levels.

Sabri Saidam

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Quality Improvement Fund“QIF”- Background

In 2005 The Palestinian National Authority through its Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) implemented a Tertiary Education Project with the support of the World Bank and participation of the European Union (EU) between 2005 and 2009. On July 2nd 2012, the MOEHE received new financing from the World Bank in the amount of USD 6.5 million, under the project named “Education to Work Transition Project – E2WTP”. A major component of this Project was The Quality Improvement Funds (QIF). QIF is being administered by Projects Coordination Unit (PCU) branched out of the MOEHE. The PCU includes small technical staff (QIF Team) that is accountable to a centralized Board representative from eleven qualified stakeholders representing the academia and the private sector as well. 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 new allocation of USD 5 million grant was approved on December 2nd 2016 by the World Bank’s Board of Executive Directors to support ongoing efforts to increase job opportunities for Palestinian graduates. The additional financing for the Education to Work Transition Project -E2WTP will focus on improving the employability of Palestinian students graduating from tertiary education institutions, thus improving their job prospects as well.

QIF will continue 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.

TEIs Collaboration: A Successful Story

Establishing productive relationships between universities has been a major goal for many academic institutions. This was the main driver behind launching a joint capacity building program for faculty members of Agriculture programs at Al Azhar University (AZU) and the University College of Applied Sciences (UCAS). “This program presents a model for a real partnership between the two universities that is expected to enhance the culture of collaboration” said Dr. Hani Qusa, Vice Rector for Planning and External Relations Affairs – UCAS. Dr. Qusa confirmed UCAS commitment and enthusiasm to the success of this endeavor of cooperation which would have a valuable contribution to the development of the agricultural sector in Gaza Strip.

“The training topics were designed to bring new technologies and best practices in agriculture to local academic staff members. This will enable us to transfer the acquired know-how to the agriculture students and the local farmers eventually, the training program includes seven courses with total of 128 training hours” as stated by Prof. Naser Abu Foul, Instructor at the faculty of Agriculture – AZU. Based on this successful experience, the two universities have agreed to jointly organize the first international scientific conference in the field of modern agriculture in Gaza Strip next May.



TEI’s Inspiring Stories



Faculty and Employers Acquire and Develop Professional Competencies

Aimed at enhancing teaching capabilities of faculty members as well as private sector partners, the Auto-mechatronic Diploma program at HHCT under the frame of a project titled “Development of the Auto Mechatronics Diploma Program” has implemented 5-day training to 15 faculty members and project partners in the area of Electro Mobility and Hybrid Technology. The primary goal of this training was to enable the participants to develop competence in understanding recent advances in Hybrid Cars Technology. As this type of technology is – to some extent – new in Palestine, HHCT managed to contract an international expert who has delivered the training using participatory approach. Mr. Adli Omaira who works as an engineer at Mercedes maintenance center and one of the active project partners, was also one of the beneficiaries who received this advanced training and he provided his feedback on the training topics and was excited to say “I was so fortunate to receive such valuable training, my current job responsibilities include mentor interns and provide technical training to them, and with the fact that hybrid technology is new in Palestine, the training was with great value to me and added to my skills and knowledge which I can transfer to interns, I am so grateful for this opportunity”.

However, HHCT acknowledges the importance and effectiveness of ongoing faculty training programs to enhance and elevate faculty members' professional abilities in teaching. Therefore, this training is one of a capacity building program which is a continuous commitment that HHCT has to undertake.



Business Cases: Innovative Method of Teaching

As a distinctive step at the local and regional levels, faculty of commerce at the Islamic University of Gaza-IUG in cooperation with Palestinian Federation of Industries- PFI have developed business case studies in different fields from the Palestinian economy, this was a value-adding component of QIF project “Matching Business Administration Student’s skills to the labor market needs”.

Business Case Studies are considered as modern and influential teaching methods; as it is one of the most effective ways to change attitudes and convictions of researchers, because they can benefit from previous real life experience of individuals and institutions in order to use them to correct the current situation.

15 real Business cases have been successfully developed and integrated in the courses and will be available to students starting from the coming semester.

This experience, said Dr. Khalid Dahleez - the project manager - will enhance students' abilities to understand business life and risks thus, enhance their entrepreneurial and creativity skills which increase their projects' chances of success.

Advanced Laboratory for Sustainable Education

Laboratory experience is an indispensable part of the educational process and a key factor in preparing students for real engineering practical life; for this reason, PPU under the frame of Triple Helix project has equipped its energy engineering laboratory with state of the art tools and facilities that provide hands-on practice for students. This enhancement of facilities was to cope with the overall development of the program that includes upgrading the curriculum, enhancing teaching methodologies, supporting and building capacities of faculty members and bringing the latest books and references.

However, one of the recent installed equipment was the flash test unit which is a unique device in Palestine that will allow students to do researches and conduct experiments and panel testing under real condition. The project team has already started the process of licensing this unit by Palestine Standards Institution to be able to conduct tests, researches and consultancy services to companies that work in the field of solar energy, thus transforming the laboratory into an income generating lab that could support the requirement for better University-Industry relationship.