

**Education Cluster Workshop
Gaza
July 16, 2009**



ننسيق
Coordination

تخطيط
Planning

نشبيك
Networking

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Attendees

British Council; Center for Free Thought Association (CFTA); Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ); Handicap International; Islamic Relief; Ma'an Center; Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE); Norwegian People Aid (NPA); Save the Children (SC); United Nations Development Program (UNDP); UNESCO; UNICEF; University College of Applied Sciences; United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA); World Food Program (WFP); Tamer Institute; Sharek

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Abbreviations

- Child Friendly Teaching Practices (CFTP)
- Kindergarten (KG)
- Minimum Standards of Emergency Education (MSEE)
- Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012 (EDSP)
- Ministry of Education Higher Education (MoEHE)
- Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET)
- Trainer of Trainers (ToT)
- United Nations Relief Work Agency (UNRWA)

Introduction

July 16, 2009

The Education Cluster Gaza workshop was conducted for Cluster members to discuss plans for the coming school year, 2009-2010. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), and the United Nations Relief Work Agency (UNRWA), two organizations that play an important role in determining what the educational needs are and what can be done to meet these needs, were asked to make opening presentations.

Discussion groups were then formed based on the six divisions found in the *Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012*. These groups were: Pre-school/Kindergarten; General Education Elementary and Secondary; Higher Education; Non-Formal Education and Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET).

Participants joined a group based on their interests and expertise. The discussion group examined the actions and activities matrices published by the *Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012* (see p. 48), discussed the MoEHE and UNRWA presentations, and most importantly, shared their own ideas about pressing educational needs. The groups then compiled a list using a (+) for needs that could be realistically met; (-) for needs that were important but were not immediately solvable; and (~) for needs that were of such a complex nature that more time for discussion and planning was needed.

Once the prioritization process was complete, the group looked at completed and on-going programs and projects that were, in part or on the whole, successfully implemented. The purpose was to isolate and define elements of success.

The groups then combined the (+) with the elements of success to plan realistic projects/programs for the coming school year.

The discussion groups joined together in a final session to share their findings with each other.

The report is divided into five sections.

Section One is a summary of the two main presentations, the first by Dr. Ziyad Thabet, Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, and the second by Mr. Alaa' Ibrahim Harb, Education Department, United Nations Relief Work Agency (UNRWA).

Section Two is an analysis of the findings of the six discussion groups: Pre-school/Kindergarten, General Education Elementary and Secondary, Higher

Education, Non-Formal Education and Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET).

Section Three is a summary analysis of the findings.

Section Four is the Education Cluster message.

Section Five lists the findings from each discussion group.

Section Six, the Appendix, includes excerpts from the *Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012*, the *Gaza Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan, 2009*, and other pertinent Education Cluster documents.

SECTION ONE

Presentation 1

Ministry of Education and Higher Education



Presentation by Assistant Deputy Minister of Education Dr. Ziyad Thabet

Dr. Thabet presented the Ministry of Education's major concerns for the coming school year, 2009-2010. He first gave an overview of the present state of education in Gaza. The number of government schools is 383. Included in this number are 259 basic or elementary schools and 124 secondary. Three hundred and three (303) of these schools are on double shift, with 80 on single shifts. These numbers underscore one of the school systems major problems, that of double shifts.

The total number of students in the government schools is 240,953 with 6,175 class sections. The average number of students per class is 39.

Dr. Thabet stated that the 2 year siege has resulted in a serious lack of educational supplies and materials. The effects of the January incursion made a bad situation even worse. Students and teachers were killed and wounded. Classrooms, educational facilities and infrastructure was destroyed and/or severely damaged. Many staff and students were deeply troubled and distressed by their experience and in need of psycho-social support.

Dr. Thabet said that the Ministry is well aware that the situation in Gaza has a negative effect on the quality of education. Double shifts, destroyed and damaged building and facilities, students and staff in need of psycho-social support, all contribute to low achievement levels.

The Ministry's aim, Dr. Thabet said, is to work with NGOs to provide a better quality education for all children, preparing students for the knowledge society. He stated that the Ministry clearly recognizes education as a basic human right.

Dr. Thabet asked how a better quality education can be achieved. He then specified three categories that the Ministry is focusing on: administration, enrollment, and the quality of education.

In administration, the goal is to design efficient systems and to employ expert staff with clear job descriptions. The Ministry is working toward decentralizing the administration encouraging more local control. A comprehensive data base needs to be developed, with better IT systems and criteria for performance assistance. Additionally, there is a need to develop more technical institutions. These goals can be reached working in cooperation with NGOs.

In the area of enrollment, the major need is to decrease the number of dropouts. This can be achieved by building new schools to reduce the overcrowding, providing new furniture and equipment, maintaining the existing buildings, providing more teachers, incorporating special needs students by adapting the premises for their needs and training teachers in this area, plus providing psycho-social support.

The goal of improving the quality of education can be accomplished by providing in-service training programs for staff, reviewing and enriching the curricula, improving co-curricular activities, applying qualitative assurance systems, providing remedial classes for the elementary level and programs for gifted students, all in cooperation with local universities. The Ministry wants to better utilize IT in teaching and learning, as presently there are no facilities in many schools. The Ministry is also working to improve the evaluation systems and exams. The goal is to have effective schools.

Dr. Thabet mentioned that there are many other needs facing the educational system. Training courses are needed as well as professional training teams and facilities for training. Equipment is needed such as computers, printers, LCDs, photocopy machines. Internet service is essential as is the construction of new classrooms, science labs, libraries. Health and nutrition programs need to be added to the curriculum as well as programs in psycho-social health.

Presentation 2

United Nations Relief Work Agency (UNRWA) Education Department



Mr. Alaa' Harb from the Education Department UNRWA addressing the workshop

The title of Mr. Harb's presentation was *Challenges, Priorities, Initiatives and Plans*. He began by explaining that achieving any goal results in a new need that requires new procedures. Mr. Harb explained that three years ago UNRWA realized this and began to examine the main needs of the Education Department through a comprehensive and systematic process.

The first step, he explained, was to prioritize the needs in order to plan how to reach the department's goals to help students achieve their best potential. He said there is a need for:

- Valid and reliable test results
- Curriculum matching students' abilities
- Better teaching/ learning environment to enhance students' participation, interaction and involvement
- Qualified staff
- Developing the students' basic skills in Arabic and math
- Special education for special needs students
- Violence free schools
- Effective administration
- New supervision system
- Psycho-social support programs

To meet these needs, Mr. Harb explained, UNRWA is implementing practical projects, programs and initiatives:

- Adopt a unified test policy in order to have real and valid results upon which reform and development projects can be built. This project was extended to include all subjects.
- Reform the curriculum to suit students' abilities, producing support materials that aim to facilitate and simplify the problematic areas in the curriculum.
- Reduce the number of students in the Prep Boys Schools to (30) to reduce violence and disorder to achieve better classroom management and, therefore, a better and more effective learning environment.
- Run a comprehensive practical training program for teachers to provide them with modern techniques in order to increase participation and involvement of students.
- Provide the elementary schools with support teachers in Arabic and math for grades 1-2-3.
- Increase the time for Arabic and math to give both teachers and students the opportunity for more practice.
- Computerize teaching programs for special case students in grade one (1).
- Adopt a violence-free school initiative.
- Adopt a policy of effective and active administration where the principal is wholly responsible for the school, both technically and managerially.
- Provide students with a meal.
- Choose the best candidates for teaching, according to merit based- criteria, no application with less than 55% in score.
- Run summer games and summer learning, afternoon and evening sessions for the low achievers.
- Reward achievements which move towards the ultimate goals.
- Develop community participation in the education process.

While the previous projects and programs are in process, UNRWA plans to examine other important areas that reflect on students' achievement. These areas include collaborating with others to achieve a quality teaching/ learning process:

- Implement a new supervision system based on the role of the supervisor as an expert whose main job is to specify the problems, then search and provide the target groups with recommendations built on academic evidence.
- Implement special education projects for students with special needs to provide them with basic skills that enable them to lead an ordinary life.
- Build more schools to facilitate the teaching /learning process.
- Build an educational training college to provide the staff with practical in-service training to develop competencies and to stay current with changes in education.

Mr. Harb explained that UNRWA recognizes they have taken the first step but still have a long distance to go, a task that needs the effort and sacrifice of everyone. Mr. Harb ended by saying how much he appreciated the coordination among the education institutions in the Cluster. He thanked the participants, and hoped that together we are marching towards a promising future.



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SECTION TWO

Pre-school/Early Childhood Education



Dr. Fatma Suboh (University College of Applied Sciences), Mona Zakout, group discussion leader (SC-US) and Salwa El Tibi (SC-UK) discussing preschool needs.

Analysis

In the list of needs provided by the representatives of MoEHE and UNRWA, pre-school was not mentioned. This absence attests to the fact that preschool is not a priority issue even though it is understood that 'presumably (preschool) has a positive impact on the development of children and their readiness for first grade schooling, and hence the quality of elementary education' (*Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) 2008-2012: p. 32*).

The EDSP notes that the number of kindergartens has increased, yet the number of students enrolled has decreased 'slightly', as has the number of children in first-grade who have attended kindergarten. One of the reasons for this decline, noted in the EDSP is that the quality of pre-school education is, in general, not high. While the number of teachers has increased, there has been a 'noticeable' drop in the number who have completed secondary or post-secondary education.

The workshop discussion group confirmed that one of the most pressing needs for the preschools is better qualified teachers who understand and practice participatory, child-friendly teaching-learning methods. The group also confirmed there is a need to increase community and parental involvement in the school; make facilities, inside

and out, more child-friendly and child-safe; for principals and supervisory staff to be better trained in early childhood education. Both the discussion group and the EDSP reflect that teachers are not trained to deal with children with special needs and that resources for special needs are lacking.

According to the discussion group, an increase in attendance at preschool and more commitment on the part of school staff, parents, children and the community are signs of a successful project/program. But success depends on teachers trained in active, participatory teaching-learning techniques, a curriculum that excites and interests the child, and schools where the atmosphere is welcoming. Preschools in marginalized and poor communities benefit from the added attention that comes when a respected organization offers appropriate educational resources, training, and is consistent in their follow-up.

Planning should thus incorporate these and other successful elements. The workshop discussion group suggested that the following be planned for the coming 2009-2010 school year –

1. Compile an active learning guide for teachers
2. Offer Training of trainers (ToT) for early childhood education
3. Enrich the physical environment in and outside the schools
4. Establish parent councils in the preschools
5. Develop/improve resource centers
6. Support preschools with running costs including teacher's salaries

General education elementary



The elementary group examines documents: Lana Matar (Ma'an), Adele Perry (Handicap International), Ibtisam Abu Shammala, group leader (UNICEF), Salah Tayeh (Islamic Relief), Miriam Zakout (CFTA) and Amir Yasin (WFP)

Analysis

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012 or EDSP states that enrollment in 1st grade is high (p. 33), which is a positive situation, but the challenge is to keep this number high throughout grades 2 through 10. One of the major needs then, is to reduce the number of dropouts. With crowded classrooms, double shifts, inadequately trained teachers, traditional teaching methods (lecturing and rote learning), a lack of resources or resources available but not utilized, a difficult and lengthy curriculum, it becomes clear why the dropout rate is high.

The workshop discussion group on elementary education noted the need to provide training courses for teachers and educational staff, to offer remedial, gifted and special needs programs, and to add psycho-social, health and recreational components to programs. It was agreed that school feeding programs are important as well as the availability of clean water and safe hygienic latrines.

The discussion group felt that success in meeting most of the prioritized needs was possible if the programs/projects were well-planned. 'Well-planned' includes the participation and commitment of all stakeholders, a good working relationship with partner agencies, adequate resources, and well-designed monitoring and evaluation processes.

Elements that were identified as successful in completed or on-going programs/projects included clearly defining the target group, providing adequate resources, teaching in small groups when working with remedial students, and combining recreational activities with remedial classes.

Needs which the group felt were not possible to meet included the building of new classrooms and repair of existing damaged ones, due to the on-going embargo on goods and materials entering Gaza

General education secondary



Secondary discussion group prioritizing needs: Alaa' Harb (UNRWA), Firyal Snouno, group leader (USAid) and Numan El Sharif (MoEHE)

Analysis

The discussion group for secondary education prioritized many of the same needs as the elementary discussion group. To combat the declining numbers of students in secondary education, the priority needs target programs to train teachers, improvement of the curriculum, institution of programs for special needs students. The discussion group felt that school programs in health and nutrition are important for this age group as many students cannot approach their families or peers to find answers to personal or delicate questions. The participants also noted that many special programs focus on the elementary grades such as the summer games and psycho-social activities, while such programs for secondary education are rare. The group asks why this is the situation since such programs are especially important for the youth at secondary level.

The discussion group found that successful elements in programs/projects included working with the worst affected population while offering to meet actual and priority needs, such as providing books and paper for classes and exams. It was suggested that in some instances, using local resources leads to better solutions, even though the cost is more. The participants gave the example of importing fabricated classrooms from outside Gaza which turned out to be too cold in winter and too warm in summer.

The secondary group urged close cooperation with the MoEHE in coordination and assessment of programs, especially to identify educational needs. It was agreed that

projects should be long-term, at least 2 years, to address the continued border closure and shortage of materials and equipment.

Higher Education



Higher education discussion group with Øvind Wistrom, group leader (UNESCO), Laetitia Lemaistre, Education Cluster Coordinator West Bank (UNICEF), Suheil Tarazi (British Council), Maha El Bana (Recorder) and Eyad El Balawi (Tamer Institute)

Analysis

The higher education discussion group was originally combined with the Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) group to correspond with the format in the *Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012* (EDSP) (pp. 39-41). However, the discussion groups decided that higher education should stand alone and that TVET should combine instead with non-formal education.

The higher education discussion group felt, in line with the Ministry of Education, that students who graduate from a higher education institute in Gaza should have more practical skills which prepare them for the job market, and fewer courses that are based predominately on theoretical knowledge. The focus on more practical skills also agrees with the EDSP which states that ‘The weak link of programs to the needs of the labor market is presently a central issue in all national development programs and projects (p. 40). One of four goals for higher education cited in the EDSP is ‘Relevance’ which states that ‘the incompatibility between the demand and supply

side is of paramount significance to overcome and a genuine challenge for all higher education institutions' (p. 61).

The discussion group agreed with the Ministry of Education and the ESDP that a need exists to foster university level research on curriculum development. 'It is an uncontested fact internationally that research has a direct impact on the quality of teaching (ESDP, p. 40). There was also agreement with the Ministry of Education and ESDP that active and participatory methods of teaching and learning need to replace rote learning and lecturing, especially important in teacher-training courses. The group recognized that universities need to foster stronger ties with other universities in Gaza and the West Bank, and with universities in various parts of the world. This corresponds to the EDSP which mentions that there is a need to 'improve the electronic linking and networking of local universities with Arab and international university resources and research networks...' (p. 40).

Non-Formal Education



The non-formal discussion group joins with the technical vocational education training group to analyze needs. Mohammed Arouki, group leader, standing (UNESCO). To his left Aesha Abo Shaqfa (Sharek), Najwa El Farra (CFTA), Maha Rezeq (UNICEF), Hala Othman (UNDP), Ahmad Riyadi (UNDP) and Hazem El Mashharawi (GTZ)

Analysis

As stated in the Higher Education section, non-formal education originally stood alone but it was decided by the participants that higher education should stand alone and that the Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) group should join non-formal. This new arrangement resulted in a discussion about what non-formal education actually is. The group concluded that non-formal is more than the EDSP's focus mainly on Literacy and Adult Education (pp. 37-38). Non-formal education's close relationship with TVET is understood as a link between literacy and employment, the ability to read and write and get a job, seen by many as the first step towards ending the cycle of poverty. Thus literacy (non-formal education) and TVET are intimately connected.

Programs in adult literacy are offered by the MoEHE, some university continuing education centers and several NGOs. The discussion group felt that these facilities are not sufficient and that such centers need to be increased. Realistically, however, this kind of change cannot be affected in the short-term. Instead, the group agreed that training for teachers to improve the quality of teaching, the updating of curricula, the integration of psycho-social programming, development of a comprehensive strategy, and increasing the awareness of non-formal education in the community were achievable goals.

Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET)



Hazem el Mashahrawi (GTZ) group leader Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) discussion group. To his left, Ahmad Riyadi (UNDP), Hala Othman (UNDP) and Maha Rezeq (UNICEF)

Analysis

The technical Vocational Education Training group or TVET, working in conjunction with the non-formal education group, listed priority needs, many of which correspond to the needs listed in the *Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012* (EDSP) (pp. 38-41). The most pressing need is to make TVET an acceptable educational choice for students. 'The main reason for the low percentages of enrollment in TVET at secondary and post-secondary levels is the negative regard society has for technical and vocational education. Traditionally, it is thought that those who fail in academic studies or who are not admitted to academic programs of study end up in vocational and technical specializations' (EDSP, 39).

As the TVET discussion group noted, there is a need for career guidance and counseling. 'Career counseling in schools and post-secondary institutions is still almost non-existent' (EDSP, 39). The discussion group felt that improving the image

of TVET through career counseling and a revision of the TVET strategy, linking it more firmly with the labor market, are needs that can be met. As with other discussion groups, the rehabilitation of facilities to incorporate special needs students, including the construction of special latrines, and the construction of new facilities to meet a possible increasing demand of vocational students, are goals that cannot be realized at this time due to the on-going embargo of goods and materials into Gaza. Developing a competency based and labor-market oriented curriculum was listed as a need, but one that needed further study. The group discussed the issue of female enrollment in vocational programs, but discussion centered on whether it was a priority need. The EDSP however, states that 'Special TVET institutions for females will be established and special programs for females in co-educational TVET institutions will be introduced...' (62)

SECTION THREE



Joining together to present discussion group findings

Summary analysis

It is recognized and understood by all discussion groups that the fundamental need in Gaza is to lift the embargo on goods and reconstruction materials. Without this occurrence, students, teachers, educational staff, families and the larger community will continue to suffer damaging and in certain cases, irreversible effects.

With this in mind, the goal of the Education Cluster workshop was to determine which of many pressing needs could be met for the school year 2009-2010, and to highlight successful elements in completed and on-going projects and programs in order to better understand what has and is working.

The results do not surprise. Rather they reaffirm that the educational community in Gaza is comprised of hard-working, well-educated, intelligent, resourceful and creative people who, in spite of the horrendous situation they live in, have designed and implemented innovative and successful educational projects and programs.

Successful elements include:

- ✓ Focus on marginalized or ignored populations. Many seem to flourish in the spotlight.
- ✓ Be realistic. Don't raise expectations beyond what can be fulfilled.

- ✓ Follow up – ensure that the field team returns again and again to show continued interest and care for the project and beneficiaries
- ✓ Follow through – do what you say you are going to do
- ✓ Build capacity – offer training programs on how to be better teachers, students, administrators, and parents:
 - Child friendly teaching practices
 - Ways to deal positively with difficult children
 - Ways to deal with children when bad things happen (the after effects of the January incursion)
 - What adults can do when they need help to heal from negative events
 - How to beautify the school, inside and out, using local resources
- ✓ Support curriculum research and development.
- ✓ Support training programs for teachers and parents in participatory teaching
- ✓ Work to create useful and practical partnerships with other organizations
- ✓ Evaluate and monitor programs/projects to learn from best practices and from mistakes
- ✓ Share successes and mistakes with others so that everyone can learn
- ✓ Ensure access to education for all students by supporting teacher training and programs for parents for remedial, special needs, female and gifted students
- ✓ Combine recreational activities with programs for special needs
- ✓ Use local talent and experts. Artists can teach art classes and help children beautify their schools. University professionals need to be supported to share their expertise locally.
- ✓ Support programs that teach about the local environment and how to care for Gaza
- ✓ Support programs that teach children health and safety regulations
- ✓ Develop a psycho-social program that is specific to Gaza
- ✓ Educate funders on the need for long-term funding for educational projects, noting the often chaotic effect of short-term funding

SECTION FOUR

Advocacy Message

Working together to prioritize needs facing the educational community for the school year 2009-2010 is also an opportunity for the Education Cluster to target areas of concern which, it is hoped, will be heard by the larger community. These concerns are of an organic nature, are not comprehensive, can be added to or subtracted from at any time.

Computers and computer literacy are essential components of any modern education system. Elementary through university level institutions in Gaza lack access to new computers as well as parts to maintain existing ones. Additionally, internet service is not stable in many parts of Gaza due to a lack of available parts to maintain the service. This combination means that rich sources of learning/teaching are not available to many schools, educational staff and students.

The ability to stay current in the field of education depends on access to expert personnel from many fields from various parts of the world. Easier entry and exit into and out of Gaza for these experts allows for the professional growth of educators, and the chance for students to acquire up-to-date knowledge and skills.

Resources and materials that support remedial, special needs and gifted children and youth are essential for quality education for all. Such materials and resources cannot be easily purchased in Gaza, and when they are purchased locally, are often of poor quality and expensive.

Libraries are essential sources of learning/teaching which allow educators and students to remain current with the latest research in all fields, gives children an opportunity to acquire a love of reading, and provides a safe and meaningful way to spend free time. The ability to build and maintain libraries is undermined by the restriction on the import of books, computers and construction materials.

A healthy economy, supported by a normalization of the import and export of goods, provides university and vocational education graduates the chance to build local businesses, and be employed in fields that match their qualifications.

SECTION FIVE

Findings

Pre-school

General Education

Primary

Secondary

Higher Education

Non-formal

Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET)



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Findings Preschool

Needs

- (+) Increase enrollment rate for preschoolers
- (+) Focus more on integrating special needs (disabilities)
 - Training for special education teachers
 - Awareness raising for parents and teachers – how to deal with disabled children; what types of disabilities affect school performance
 - Early detection of learning disabilities or disabilities affecting school performance, i.e. malnutrition
 - Early intervention – fine motor skills; gross motor skills – communication skills
 - Screening of children in cooperation with MoE
- (+) Community mobilization and parental involvement in Early Childhood programs
- (+) Improve physical and learning environment inside/outside kindergartens (KGs); save play areas
- (+) Capacity building for all of personnel (principals, educators, administration staff) including long-term training and academic degrees
- (+) Strengthen the network between external stakeholders (INGO – NGO – Community leaders – Ministries – Universities)
- (+) Activate active learning as a methodology (teacher guide)
- (-) Establish resource center
- (+) Focus more on psycho-social support programs/activities

Elements of successful projects

- Increase commitments of beneficiaries (parents, teachers, principals and children)
- Increase the number of children in the preschools
- Improve the teaching methodologies from traditional to active learning
- Increase and improve the accessibility of education resources
- Improve the health status of children by providing them with healthy food and safe drinking water
- Enhance parental participation by having parents join activities at KG, in particular join in activities or help teachers
- Provide parents, teachers and principals with unique training such as: Minimum Standards of Emergency Education (MSEE); Child Friendly Teaching Practices (CFTP); First Aid Education; How to Organize Recreational Activities; How to deal with Children in Difficult Situations, etc.

Also mentioned as elements of success:

- Supporting the family is important. When children get enough attention, they achieve more.
- Targeting marginalized groups who have been previously ignored can result in successful programs

Achievable Projects and Plans

- Active learning guide with training
- Training of Trainers (ToT) in early childhood development
- Develop/improve the resource center
- Enrich physical learning environment inside and outside KG
- Establish parents council in the preschools
- Support preschools with running costs including teachers' salaries.



Dr. Fatma Suboh (University College of Applied Sciences) and Salwa El Tibi (SC-UK) prepare the Preschool/Early Childhood presentation to the larger group.

Findings Elementary

Prioritized Needs

- (+) Training courses for teaching staff
- (~) Training rooms with all training facilities
- (+) Develop Trainer of Trainers (ToT) skills for professional Training team
- (+) Provide remedial materials and programs
- (~) Lack of new schools, additional classrooms
- (+) Provide programs, materials for gifted students.
- (+/-) Produce teachers guide to enhance teaching skills
 - (+) Particular topic for particular grade
 - (~) reviewing MoE curriculum
- (+) Psycho-social support programs

Health and nutrition support

- (+) personal hygiene
- (+) safe drinking water
- (~) latrines
- (+) health and safe learning environment
- (+) school feeding program, grades 1-6

Needs for children with special needs

- (+) accessibility for schools
- (~) teacher's support in the classroom
- (+) assisting devices (hearing aids, etc.) and technology
- (+) remedial classes/support

- (+) Lack of textbooks
- (+) Lack of students/teachers stationary
- (+) Lack of recreational activities/sports/equipment

Lack of qualified teachers for physical education

Lack of professional teachers for special education (capacity building)

- (+) Teacher Training (text books available)
- (+) Remedial classes

Teaching and learning resources

- (++) School feeding (nutrition)

Health and safe environment (personal hygiene)

- (++) Recreational activities

Considering the needs of children with special needs

Elements of success

In a remedial program:

- Define the target group – low achievers
- Provide adequate resources/food
- Teach remedial for basic skills, math, Arabic in small groups
- Combine recreational activities with the remedial classes

Enabling factors for success in other projects:

- Well-planned projects

Commitments of all stakeholders which are built upon participatory approach
Assuring partnership with pertinent working agencies
Availability of adequate resources (stationary, equipment)
Parents and community participation
Monitoring and evaluation

Project incorporating successful elements:

School feeding Program (SFP) = partnering with MoEHE

Objective – maintain or increase the educational achievement of basic education

Outcome – increase the capacity of girls and boys to concentrate and learn in the assisted schools

Targeting

M/E system

Lessons Learned

Next year Program – 92, 000 children in grades 1-6

Support the ministry in developing their SFP strategy

NGOs

Training of gifted students on skills – writing, drawing, poetry

Produce guide for remedial education and training of pertinent staff

Raise awareness and sensitize the families, parents and children



Amir Yasin (WFP), Lana Matar (Ma'an) and Mahmoud Abu Nemeh (Ma'an)
Elementary discussion group

Findings Secondary



Numan El Sharif (MoEHE), Mahmoud El Hendy (British Council), Najwa Abu Haiba (UNRWA), Alaa' Harb (UNRWA) and Firyal Snouno (USAid) examine on-going projects

Prioritized Needs

(+) Training of teachers - improving the quality of teaching and learning; short term to meet the immediate needs of new teachers, and long term for all; long term development of assessment and evaluation system for students

(+) Remedial education - should be concerned with the outcomes and quality. Should build on review and evaluation of previous programs

(+) Psych-social support:

- Previous and current programs did not target secondary schools but only basic education and the quality was very low. Need programs targeting all with well-designed programs including capacity building of all concerned educators. Not randomly implemented.
- Summer games only for basic education. Need for secondary education students as well.

(+) Nutrition and Health support (not available in secondary education)

(+) Integration of students with special needs (physical adaptation, teacher training and awareness for students and community and linkages with others (BR)

(~)Needs but difficult to be addressed:

- New schools, rooms, labs and libraries
- Equipment and furniture (equipment is old and maintenance is difficult to do)
- Subjects that are taught theoretically but miss the practical application. Should these subjects be cancelled from the curriculum?

- Improved internet connection for the schools

Elements of success

1. Reach the most affected students immediately and provide for real needs, such as educational supplies and stationary for students.
2. Use local resources, even though sometimes they are more expensive, but the quality and functionality may be better. For example, to help create more classrooms, fabricated schools were requisitioned from outside. However, they were too cold in winter and too hot in summer. It would have been better to build locally.
3. Close cooperation and coordination and joint assessment is needed with MoEHE to identify schools with priority needs for rehabilitation.
4. Extend the project duration to 2 years to address border closure and shortage of materials and equipment
5. Working with NGOs proved successful in obtaining needed materials.

Challenge the beneficiaries to complete a task, such as British Council did in their summer reading program.

Findings Higher Education

The group mentioned many of the same needs presented by the MoEHE and UNRWA in their presentations. However, the group decided to focus on several long-term challenges.

Relevance of education:

As mentioned in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012, there is a gap between the skills of university graduate and the needs of the job market. Part of the problem is that the courses are theoretical and academic versus practical. In order to change this situation, the group discussed the possibility of:

- a) Conducting a survey of market needs and comparing the results to the output of the universities
- b) Providing job/career counseling

With appropriate funding, the group considered both projects important and possible to implement.

Modern pedagogical methods in teaching and learning

The group discussed modern pedagogical methods, a need mentioned by the Ministry, UNRWA and the participants. Concrete activities to implement these methods were mentioned on all levels, elementary, secondary and university. The scope, subject, and skills required were different depending on the institution.

Curriculum development

UNRWA is undergoing changes in their educational system and is currently involved in updating their curricula. MoEHE has just finished updating their elementary curriculum. They are also working on a strategic plan for teacher education. However, the need now is to implement these programs and plans.

The establishment of a 'curricula and education centre' is an idea the group discussed. This centre could enhance teachers' awareness and understanding of the basic curriculum, with the goal of improving the quality of teaching and learning. The centre could also unify the various teacher training curricula in order to strengthen the teacher-training programs. Additionally, the center could conduct research on curriculum development, and provide a needed resource of teaching materials.

Although the centre is a long-term project, the immediate effect would be to unify the curricula, both in general education and in teacher-training, both of which would improve the quality of teaching.

Blockade

Gaza is suffering from isolation due to the blockade. The situation negatively affects the academic, economical and other areas of life in Gaza. Thus, gaining knowledge by exposure to current ideas and up-to-date information is imperative, a reality acknowledged by both the MoHEH and the other higher education institutions.

The discussion group, therefore, discussed various ways to facilitate international cooperation, including subscribing to web-based research and academic databases, networking, and membership in international university organizations. Various immediate projects were discussed as well as long-term plans. Each participant had ideas on how to follow up on these projects.

Other issues were discussed, such as education for microfinance and economical development – which, according to the MoEHE is a crucial need. Sharek is conducting job counseling and inviting companies to provide their employment needs. The cost of education for students is expensive. The relationship between the Universities and NGOs is weak. The infrastructure in the universities is poor. Curriculum research can be difficult as it means looking at a society's values, defining why and how something is taught. Teaching critical thinking and presentation skills are needed.

Results of Higher Education study group

Survey of relevant educations for Gaza + Job guidance

Modern education methods,

Curriculum research and development

Coordination and implementation

National and international relations



The Higher Education discussion group listens to Suheil Tarazi (British Council), Eyad El Balawi (Tamer Institute), Øvind Wistrom (UNESCO) and Laetitia Lemaistre, Education Cluster Coordinator West Bank (UNICEF)

Findings Non-Formal

Needs and priority list

- (-) Increasing accessibility through increasing physical facilities, (buildings, rehabilitation, equipment, centers)
 - (+) Develop a more comprehensive strategy within a reasonable time frame and policy
 - (-) Increase opportunities for complementary non-formal education
 - (+) Capacity development of teachers to improve quality
 - (-) Improving teaching methods and systems and adopt unified curriculum, enhance administration and financial systems.
 - (+) Integrate psycho-social programming into the non-formal education system.
 - (+) Develop a more sustainable remedial program with adaptation to more efficient processes.
- MoE and NGOs focus on literacy for adults
Increase awareness in community
Increase use of technology

Others

- (+) Develop a unified definition for non-formal education
- (-) Incorporate parallel and continuing education and e-learning in the strategic plan.
- (+) Awareness raising on the importance of vocational training to avoid social stigma.



The non-formal and Technical Vocational Education Training group prepare lists of needs.
Aesha Abo Shaqfa (Sharek) and Reem El Wehidi (NPA)

Findings Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET)

(-) Rehabilitate buildings to facilitate easy movement of disabled children, equip with special facilities, and include provisions of special latrines.

(+) Develop a career guidance and counseling for students for their enrollment options.

(~) Develop a competency based and labor market oriented curriculum. Encourage enrollment of the private sector.

(+) Revise TVET strategy and link to labor market strategy

Increase the facilities such as Centers, colleges, Industrial Secondary Schools (ISS).

Raise public awareness about vocational training

Develop competency - based and labor market oriented curricula

Establish and support resource center

Build capacities of stakeholders into objectives



The Technical Vocational Education Training and non-formal education groups decide are the priority needs. Reem El Wehidi (NPA), Najwa El Farra (CFTA), Maha Rezeq (UNICEF), Hala Othman (UNDP) and Ahmad Riyadi (UNDP)

SECTION SIX

APPENDIX

Following are excerpts from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine: Education Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012.

http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Palestinian%20Autonomous%20Territories/Palestine_Education_development_plan_2008_2012.pdf

The excerpts cover the six division of education discussed in the workshop: Preschool, General Education (Elementary and Secondary), Higher Education, Non-Formal and Technical Vocational Education Training. Document page numbers are included for further reference.

Goals (p. 52)

Based on the sector review (referred to in Chapter One), the national development context (Chapter Two), and the education strategic framework (Chapter Three), the following goals were set for: pre-school, general and non-formal education.

Goal 1: To increase access of school-aged children and students of all education levels and improve the ability of the education system to retain them (**Access**)

Goal 2: To improve the quality of teaching and learning (**Quality**)

Goal 3: To develop the capacity for planning and management and to improve the financial and management systems used (**Management**)

Pre-school education (P. 31-32)

Regulating and developing the quality of this sub-sector of education at the national level started with the establishment of the MoEHE in 1994. At that time, as is still the case at present, pre-school education was provided by the private sector, by private non-profit schools and by charitable societies. The Ministry currently supervises this sector through setting specifications regarding kindergarten physical facilities and the criteria for their personnel and their programs on the basis of which the MoEHE issues permits and licenses to kindergartens to operate. The MoEHE has specified the age of children joining kindergartens between a minimum of three years and eight months and a maximum of five years and eight months. After this age, children join elementary education at first grade. Children who are below this age join nurseries. Although desirable and encouraged, attendance of preschool education is, however, not considered as a criterion or a pre-requisite for enrolment in the elementary cycle.

Enrollment and percentage of first grade pupils who have attended pre-school:

The decline in the number of kindergartens during the first three years of the second intifada (2001-2003) was quite noticeable. This was due to insecurity, economic recession, and decline in investment by the private sector. After this period, the number was on the rise again. A positive development is the percentage of increase in the total number of kindergartens during the period in question (1999/2000-2005/2006) which stands at 10.9%. The total number of children in pre-schools for the same period has, however, slightly decreased. The percentage of pupils in the first grade of basic schooling who had enrolled in pre-school programs has also decreased: from 73.3% in 1999/2000 to 53.3% in 2005/2006. Rising poverty, the Separation Wall built by Israel and the quality of pre-school programs seem to be three of the 32 causes for these decreasing percentages. This is a challenge for the next five years: to increase enrollment in kindergartens which presumably have a positive impact on development of children and their readiness for first grade schooling, and hence the quality of elementary education. Increasing the enrollment of children with special needs is, also, a specific challenge which includes adapting kindergartens in terms of physical and material facilities and human skills for their inclusion. Another specific challenge is increasing enrollment of children from poor families. The difference between enrollment of males and females is slight but still needs attention.

Quality

Teachers: Although the number of kindergarten teachers during the diagnosis period increased – thus reducing the child/teacher ratio – both the percentages of teachers carrying secondary school certificates and post-secondary diplomas dropped noticeably. MoEHE works to raise the skills of staff working in kindergartens through organizing annual training courses at central level for kindergarten supervisors from the districts who in their turn hold training courses for kindergarten principals and teachers at district level. In addition to organizing training, the supervisors also conduct field visits to kindergartens to assist them in maintaining the quality of preschool education.

Supervisors: The MoEHE officers directly in charge of quality control in pre-schools are the kindergarten supervisors in each Directorate of Education at the district level. The number of these supervisors is insufficient for the desired quality control and support, as each is responsible for supervising 50-90 kindergartens.

Curriculum and learning resources: The MoEHE has always maintained the position that textbooks for pre-school should not be used, favoring worksheets and practical activities instead. A curriculum is still needed, however, and guides for teachers are lacking especially in the light of the fact that it is the teachers who produce the learning materials for the children.

Services: (i) Kindergartens are not licensed by the MoEHE unless they have signed contracts with medical doctors who conduct periodic medical checkups and keep a file for each child. (ii) Upon encouragement of MoEHE, children with disabilities have been included in kindergartens, yet most of their needs have not been met due to lack of appropriate resources. (iii) The MoEHE has not developed a system for educational and psychological counseling, although it has organized a number of activities related to ways of dealing with children in situations of emergency and conflict.

Management

The diagnosis revealed the need for developing national criteria and indicators agreed upon and adopted by all concerned to comprehensively monitor the situation of children in Palestine. Supervisors and managers of kindergartens are still in need of further training related to proper management and the raising of standards of pre-school education.

General Education (p. 33-34)

Enrollment

Enrollment of students in this sub-sector has been defined as providing the opportunity for education to the population at school education age. This includes receiving the new students in schools, boys and girls equally; being able to keep them in the system; moving them to higher grades and transferring them from one cycle to another; schools enrolling students with special needs; the education system recruiting the required teachers and other workers; MoEHE providing school textbooks, educational aids, classrooms and other facilities. Both the total net and gross enrollment rates of children in the 1st Basic Grade during the period of diagnosis were high. This means that almost all children at the age of six years had joined school. The gross enrollment rates of students in the whole basic cycle (grades 1-10) were also high. Less than 10% of children in the age group are not enrolled. In the secondary cycle, it is being estimated that about 80% of the children in the age group are being enrolled. So the challenge is to keep the ratio for the 1st Grade students high and to increase the percentages in the basic and secondary cycle, thus decreasing dropout rates and increasing the rate of transfer from the basic cycle to the secondary cycle. For this purpose and in order to overcome crowding and double-shifting in school, additional schools and classrooms have to be built and equipped; additional teachers have to be recruited; and the availability of teaching-learning resources has to be improved. Special attention has to be given to the enrollment of girls, especially in the secondary cycle. Some geographic disparities exist and have to be addressed. Further work needs to be done to include students with special needs - awareness-raising among students, teachers and parents; better equipping schools for the disabled; and further training of teachers to deal with special needs.

Quality

The MoEHE has defined improvement in quality of education as improvement in student achievement, especially in Arabic, math, science and technology; and acquisition of life skills, through improvement in the curriculum and the teaching learning process; in addition to improvement in student services and extra-curricular activities. Student achievement is affected by the performance of teachers, the relevance of curriculum to individual and societal needs, the availability and quality of textbooks and the availability and use of teaching-learning resources.

Curriculum: Developing a Palestinian curriculum and textbooks for all grades (1-12) during the period 1995-2006 was one of the most pressing priorities. Its accomplishment was a major national achievement and a source of pride. However, surveys conducted as part of the diagnosis indicated that there is a strong opinion among students, parents, teachers and principals that many topics are difficult and that the curriculum is long. There is need to review the curriculum. This was originally envisioned by the MoEHE when the curriculum development plan was formulated.

Teachers: Studies conducted during the diagnosis concluded that many teachers are not adequately trained or supported to teach the curriculum. Practical activities specified in the textbooks and in teacher guides are not applied. Science labs and other teaching and learning resources are not sufficiently utilized. Frontal teaching and lecturing are the predominant methods of teaching. Although numerous in-service training courses have been organized during the period 2001-2005, they were not sufficient. Universities have pre-service teacher training programs but they are not designed to equip teachers for the implementation of the Palestinian curriculum. The need for a comprehensive national strategy for teacher education arose in which the universities would play a leading role in teacher education and in the follow up and support system which are relevant to the needs of the education sector. A national strategy was in fact recently finalized and approved after extensive consultation. The challenge now is to implement it and verify that it is leading to the outcomes related to the quality of school education.

Tests and measurement: Results of students' achievement in national and international tests (TIMSS 2003) are still low. Studies are needed to identify the factors which have the highest impact on student achievement. National tests, their reliability and validity have to be further improved and conducted.

Teaching and learning resources: Although the percentages of schools possessing science labs, laboratories, libraries, specialized resource rooms and educational and information technology have increased significantly, there are still many schools which need to be properly equipped. Furthermore, although available, these resources are still not sufficiently or adequately utilized, and lecturing and rote learning are still the predominant teaching and learning methods.

Student services and activities: The MoEHE has introduced many student services and activities in schools since its establishment. These were virtually non-existent in schools prior to 1994. This is a major achievement. Still, a high percentage of schools and students (almost half) do not get sufficient support in these services – the most important of which are school health, educational guidance and career counseling. In addition, although student activities have flourished, many schools still lack proper physical, material, financial and human resources to further disseminate and improve the quality of these activities.

Higher Education (including TVET) (P. 61)

Goal 1 – To increase access of school-aged children and students of all education levels and improve the ability of the education system to retain them (**Access**)

Goal 2 – To improve the quality of teaching and learning (**Quality**)

Goal 3 – To develop the capacity for planning and management and to improve the financial and management systems used (**Management**)

Goal 4 – To realize a gradual conversion of the HE Sector from a supply-oriented to a demand-oriented sector, which will gradually guarantee more compatibility between HE outputs and labor market(s) need from qualitatively and quantitatively (**Relevance**)

Overview (p. 39-40)

Enrollment in secondary vocational education is still low, only 5.06% of the total number of students in the secondary cycle in 2007/2008, up from 4% in 1999/2000. Although the percentage of female students of the total number of students in secondary vocational education increased, it still remained at (33.5%). Increasing these enrollment percentages remains the major challenge, in addition to improving the availability of well equipped schools. The main reason for the low percentages of enrollment in TVET at secondary and postsecondary levels is the negative regard society has for technical and vocational education. Traditionally, it is thought that those who fail in academic studies or who are not admitted to academic programs of study end up in vocational and technical specializations. Career counseling in schools and post-secondary institutions is still almost non-existent which exacerbates this problem. Special effort is needed to attract females to TVET in general and to non-tradition programs of study which necessitates awareness-raising to make these socially acceptable. A major challenge is to better link TVET and its outputs, quantitatively and qualitatively, to the widely diversified needs of the labor market. Since the latter are quick to change within the present globalized world economy, programs of study should be flexible and easy to be continuously updated and modernized, which is not the case at present. This might also be difficult to realize since such continuous change will require ongoing adaptation of the physical facilities and the educational resources whose cost might be beyond the financial means of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Access

A major challenge continuously facing post-secondary institutions is insufficient funding. The scene of higher education has always been characterized by competition between these institutions to attract more students in order to increase their income. New programs were added for this purpose without due attention to the needs of Palestinian society. Supply and, as indicated above, rates of enrollment are already high. The negative consequences on quality are evident. While rates of enrollment in general are high, access of students with special needs and from poorer segments of society is still in need of further attention, especially through the improvement of the student loan program.

Teaching and Training Staff

Low salaries have led staff members to take up extra work, which has its negative impact on the quality of teaching and on the amount and quality of research, especially at university level. The professional growth of staff members is restricted due to the absence of regular fellowship and scholarship programs to upgrade their qualifications and their teaching skills.

Quality and Relevance

This is the central challenge facing tertiary education. The weak link of programs to the needs of the labor market is presently a central issue in all national development programs and projects, notably PRDP. The high percentage of students studying social sciences (75%) is a major contributor to unemployment among graduates. The high student/teacher ratio is a factor leading to the lowering of standards of teaching and learning. How it is to be addressed will prove to be a challenge under the present financial constraints. As will the issue of the limited physical, material and educational resources which could enhance quality and relevance. In this regard, the need to improve the electronic linking and networking of local universities with Arab and international university resources and research networks is an issue which frequently came up during the SWOT analysis. Research is still not considered a priority by the national and the international funders of higher education. Funding, as is the case, is therefore, limited and irregular. It is an uncontested fact internationally that research has a direct impact on the quality of teaching. Programs are needed to encourage research and to provide information about what research is being conducted and where. A national policy for science, technology and research is also required. There is an evident need to better link the two sub-sectors of general education and tertiary education, as the outputs from one provide input to the other. It is hoped that the National Strategy for Teacher Education, if implemented properly, will make a significant contribution in this regard since most of its implementation is supposed to be executed by post-secondary institutions.

Funding Tertiary Education

As mentioned above, insufficient funding is an ongoing major concern and it is having a seriously negative impact on the quality and relevance of higher education. Between 60-70% of operating budgets of universities are covered by tuition fees. Since there is no regularity and consistency in payment of tuition fees, budgets of universities suffer yearly deficits. An amount of US\$ 20 million has been the constant figure allocated to higher education in the PNA yearly budgets since 2002. However, in most cases, only around 60% has been disbursed per year in the course of the mentioned period. Revolving funds for student loans, although of significant importance, have suffered from total no repayment by students and from lack of grants from international sources and important contributions from the national budget.

Non-formal Education (p. 60-63)

Access

The major program in non-formal education executed by the MoEHE is the Literacy and Adult Education Program. In addition there are limited activities in Parallel Education and Continuing Education programs. During the period of the diagnosis (1999/2000-2005/2006), the number of learners in Literacy and Adult Education Centers run by the MoEHE increased from 1,503 in 1999/2000 to 292 in 2005/2006. The number of centers increased from 150 to 266, and teachers from 140 to 256. Other Palestinian organizations and institutions also run centers for the same purpose, notably Birzeit University's Continuing Education Department, Red Crescent Society, Ministry of Social Affairs and a number of charitable societies. The relationship of these centers with the MoEHE is weak and not clearly defined. The number of learners in these centers fluctuates and are not in total as big as those in centers run by the MoEHE. Surveys indicate that the illiteracy rate in Palestine, in the 10 year and above age group, is on the decline: from 11.6% in 1997 to 6.1% in 2004. However, if Palestine is to achieve EFA goals by 2015, non-formal education should be further enhanced in order to eradicate the remaining pockets of illiteracy. The private sector, and civil society at large, should be encouraged to invest in non-formal education to widen the scope of its reach and to guarantee its sustainability and independence of donor support.

Quality

As the National Poverty Report 2004 concluded, education in general and non-formal education in particular are inversely linked to poverty. The more people are educated, the better is their likelihood to overcome poverty and contribute to economic development. The contents and the teaching methods of the programs should not only be aimed at acquiring reading and writing skills. They should also be closely linked to the various needs of the individuals and to the needs of the labor market, as well as to the needs of socio-economic development at large. This linking would require that programs include components of "functional literacy" and other activities and readings aimed at skills development and cultural awareness. This is a major challenge related to quality in non-formal education. A unified curriculum for these programs is still lacking. Hand in hand with curriculum development, teachers of adult learners should be further trained.

Management

Complementarity and harmonization between Literacy and Adult Education Programs run by MoEHE and those run by other partners are still lacking. Means have to be conceived in order to realize them. A database for non-formal education is needed in order to facilitate tracking of adult learners and encourage them to further their studies to higher levels. The database is also needed for the facilitation of record keeping for awarding certificates and diplomas. Keeping a good record of training courses taken by teachers of non-formal education is a necessity to raise their skills and qualifications to certain agreed standards. Other challenges in the management of non-formal education and needs for its development have been addressed under section above.

MATRIX (EXAMPLE)

						Cost		
	Action Programs		Activities	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
PS2070100	Developing quality health, psychological and recreational programs for pre-schools children.	PS2070101	Conducting TV meetings that focus on social, hygienic, cultural and psychological development aspects.	x	x	x	x	x
		PS2070102	Conducting educational workshops for parents to increase awareness on (ECCD)		x	x	x	x
		PS2070103	Conducting recreational programs for children (trips, festivals, and exhibitions) at provincial levels and throughout the country.		x	x	x	x
PS0000000	Sub-Sector: Pre-school education							
PS2000000	Goal 2: Quality of the teaching-learning process improved							
PS2080000	Teaching staff competencies enhanced and strengthened.							
						Cost		
	Action Programs		Activities	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
PS2080100	Raising the performance level of Pre-school cadres (ECCD).	PS2080101	Training the educators, supervisors and principals focusing on quality supervision, instruction & evaluation (ECCD).	x	x	x	x	x
		PS2080102	Training nursery-maids especially newly recruited ones in different pre-school subjects (ECCD).	x	x	x	x	x

The Palestine National Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan for Gaza 2009-2010

[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/PSLG-7QHJQZ-full_report.pdf/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWFiles2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/PSLG-7QHJQZ-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)

Extracts pages 22-23-24

SECTION B: IMPACT OF THE CRISIS

1. Social Sector

The Israeli bombardment and invasion have resulted in the severe deterioration of the already precarious living conditions of the people in Gaza. 1,314 Palestinians were killed, of whom 417 were children and 108 women. Over 5,380 were physically injured, including 1,872 children and 800 women.

This section describes how the widespread Israeli destruction to all aspects of existence in Gaza has created a highly-stressed social environment, severely compromising the physical, psychological, social and emotional wellbeing and development of children, young people and adults.¹ The findings presented here give a focused account of those aspects of the damage which can be accurately calculated and suggest measures that can be taken immediately to stabilize the social structure, an essential basis for all other investments in Gaza's early recovery. However, because of the complexity of factors that need to be considered in determining collective wellbeing, the overall social impacts of the Israeli assault and the extent to which its effects can be overcome are still being determined. To date, many of the impacts are still un-quantified, and to some extent the lasting damage to individuals and communities is immeasurable.

In this ongoing crisis, characterized by extreme social, economic and physical insecurity, individual and shared resilience have been systematically undermined. Yet, as this document describes, the impacts are felt in diverse ways. For example, men and women do not face exactly the same challenges; they have different capacities and access to support systems through which to manage their distress. The elderly, people with disabilities and people with chronic illnesses face additional obstacles to full recovery. Children and adolescents, who represent the majority of the population, are particularly affected because the protective environment usually provided by caregivers has been overwhelmed by the scale of the destruction. Children tend to be the most vulnerable group since they do not have access to, or control over, the limited resources within their communities. However, they bear the full brunt of disruption to services and schooling, and continued military attacks on their homes and neighborhoods. In addition, the deterioration of the health and environmental conditions in Gaza may result in chronic illness and malnutrition, which are often irreversible.

b) Education

The quality of education in terms of teaching processes, planning and management, educational resources and the provision of services to students needed significant improvement even before the Israeli assault, and the 22-day offensive took a heavy toll on the system. One hundred and sixty four students and 12 teachers were killed, and 454 students and 5 teachers were injured. Of the 407 public and private schools in Gaza prior to the military incursion, a total of 180 were affected. Eight public and two private schools were destroyed, and a further 156 public and 12 private schools were damaged. Five kindergartens were destroyed and 60 were partially damaged, while seven universities and colleges were also affected, with six buildings totally destroyed and 16 partially damaged.

At this juncture, rubble removal is a top priority. Additionally, all structures at the heavier end of the damage scale will require a full educational infrastructure support package to include school furniture, computers, blackboards, learning materials, books, etc. Damage to schools is exacerbating an already profound delivery problem: 56% of the Gaza population is under the age of 18, and even before the conflict most schools were operating on a double or triple shift basis to meet the needs of students. Urgent measures are needed to address increased overcrowding, as many schools which were not totally destroyed are accommodating displaced pupils and the overflow from the ones that were.

All schools in Gaza were closed from December 27 until January 24, causing students to miss almost one month of classes. Most children, young people and teachers have now returned to school, although in North Gaza, which was one of the areas worst affected by the Israeli assault, attendance is still only around 80%. In all areas, the movement of students and teachers to and from schools remains dangerous due to unexploded ordnance, piles of rubble, inaccessible roads and other environmental hazards. Many children have lost school materials, including textbooks, notebooks and other learning materials, which will need to be replaced. The Israeli offensive resulted in a large number of children suffering injuries, some of which will result in life-long impairments and require special measures to ensure educational inclusion. Likewise, the mental health and psychosocial conditions of children and educational personnel have deteriorated and need to be addressed through psychosocial support.

Education Cluster Workshop

Thursday, July 16

Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children

☕ Coffee / tea (9:30 – 10:00)

🚦 Session One (10:00 – 10:30)

Dr. Ziyad Thabet – Assistant Deputy Ministry of Education (MoEHE)
Mr. Alaa' Ibrahim Harb - UNRWA Education Department

🚦 Session Two (10:30 – 13:00 - with breaks as needed)

Based on reports by the Ministry of Education, UNRWA, and the report *Ministry of Education and Higher Education Palestine Education Strategic Plan 2008-2010* and other assessments, prioritize the needs facing the educational community for the school year 2009-2010 in early childhood, general, tertiary, vocational and non-formal education. Categorize as:

- Achievable (+);
- Not achievable at this time (-)
- Needs further discussion (~)

Examine the elements of successful projects / programmers in Gaza and combine these winning strategies with the prioritized needs to plan for the coming school year.

☕ Tea Break (13:00 – 13:15)

🚦 Session Three (13:15 – 14:15)

Presentation of findings to workshop participants

🍽 Lunch (14:30)

Group Leader Guide

Session One (10:00-10:30)

- During the presentations take notes on the needs mentioned by the Ministry of Education and UNRWA which pertain to your particular group. You may be the only person in the group who remembers what was said!

Session Two (10:30 – 12:45)

- Once your group is settled, ask the participants to briefly introduce themselves, explain their interest in this group and their expertise.
- Explain that they are welcome to move to other groups during this session if they so choose and to take tea/coffee and personal breaks at any time.
- Explain that Natalie may sit in for awhile to take notes.

Work Session Goals

- Explain the final outcome will be four categories each written on chart paper and hung on the wall for the larger group to see. The four categories are:
 - Identified needs: those mentioned by presenters, displayed on wall sheets and those contributed by group participants
 - Prioritized needs identified as follows:
 - (+) can do something about it
 - (-) can't do much or anything about it
 - (~) complex - needs further study



نسيق
Coordination

تخطيط
Planning

تشبيك
Networking

بناء قدرات
Capacity Building

مدافعة
Advocacy

- Explain that a final report will be distributed with the information produced from the workshop.
- Explain that at approximately 12:45, participants will have a chance to view the work of the other groups.
- Have fun and laugh often.

*Examples of elements of successful projects/programmes

- Paying attention to a group that was ignored and marginalized before;
- Expecting beneficiaries commitment and involvement to project;
- Increasing confidence and pride in the beneficiaries' school, their community, their ability to learn and become better parents, teachers, and principals;
- Offering trainings by a respected organization to a particular group fosters pride and status in the family and community;
- Follow-through by organization creates confidence and trust and increases participation throughout entire project;
- Using local talent increases pride in community and is source for role-models.



نسيق
Coordination

تخطيط
Planning

تشبيك
Networking

بناء قدرات
Capacity Building

مدافعة
Advocacy

Education Cluster Gaza Terms of Reference (TOR)

The Education Cluster in Gaza supports members and agencies to coordinate the best possible educational response to an emergency while facilitating the transition to early recover. Members collaborate on needs assessments, program planning, implementation and evaluation. They identify problems in implementation and gaps in programming and share best practices. Members strive to build capacity among themselves, their beneficiaries and other stakeholders. They maintain a flow of information and communication with other clusters and agencies and advocate for appropriate change.

The education cluster in Gaza has the following specific roles and functions:

- 1) Ensure adequate and relevant program planning and implementation by jointly identifying gaps, sharing lessons learned and action plans.
- 2) Ensure good quality assessments by collaborating on the planning and conducting of needs, using standardized measurement tools and methodologies, and providing adequate training for assessors.
- 3) Ensure a relevant and adequate educational response by building on local capacities through initiation and formation of strategic partnerships with local NGOs and local institutions.
- 4) Ensure integration of cross-cutting issues in assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring by maintaining effective communication and links with other clusters and relevant organizations in the areas of psycho-social health, disabilities, diversity, environment, gender, HIV/AIDS, human rights, among others.
- 5) Build capacity among members, beneficiaries and other stakeholders by promoting the use of and providing technical support on internationally recognized standards of good practice in emergency education, such as the Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction (INEE Minimum Standards), the Gaza Early Recovery and Reconstruction Plan (GERRP), and the Framework for the Provision of Minimum Humanitarian Assistance in Gaza.
- 6) Promote issues on education in emergency and transition to recovery by identifying problems and solutions so as to contribute core messages to advocacy facilitators and to broader initiatives of the Humanitarian Coordinator.
- 7) Ensure coordination of activities and sharing of information by maintaining good communication between the West Bank and Gaza education clusters, and between other clusters and networks (Early Recovery, Health, Protection, Mental Health and Psycho-social Support, WASH).
- 8) Ensure effective coordination and monitoring by providing up-to-date reports to relevant agencies.
- 9) Document processes of collaboration, joint planning, implementation, key tools and best practices.
- 10) Promote the needs of the education cluster among donors.