



Ministry of Education and Higher Education



Teacher Education Strategy in Palestine

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Teacher Education Strategy in Palestine

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THE TEACHER EDUCATION STRATEGY ... DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS

It is no mere coincidence to see the efforts of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) merge with the efforts of higher education institutions and those of the partner organizations, local and worldwide, in order to come up with a national strategic plan that targets the human educational cadre, in particular teachers, so that they can advance along with their students towards excellence and distinction. The launching of this project harmonizes in-service and pre-service teacher education towards attaining good outputs that can assist the students and reinforce the role of teachers in a comprehensive development process. This can also give room to modernizing the educational systems in accordance with the accelerating scientific and technological advancements.

In their efforts to bridge the clear gap between methodologies of teacher training programs, the MOEHE along with the local and international partners embarked on setting up clear policies that can upgrade the teaching profession and develop the teacher training and qualification programs towards a well planned strategy.

Based on this premise, we need to have the best teachers and we have to bring out the best in our teachers. During the phase of preparing the second five-year plan of the MOEHE, there were discussions on several topics and approaches that aim to tackle the issue of quality of teachers and the appropriate conditions that enable the teachers to offer their maximum potentials despite the hard economic conditions and, above all, despite the conditions and measures imposed by the Israeli occupation. As the plan posed the issue of quality as its approach and slogan, several themes were discussed as they can assist towards better quality of teaching. Moreover, this strategy which has been developed in a participatory approach is considered the axis of the whole process as it highlighted the role of partnership between the MOEHE and the UNRWA schools and the higher education institutions.

We seek through this strategy to offer the teachers a matrix and pattern of knowledge, general and specialized skills, values and positive attitudes through improving work conditions; we also aim to study the possible means to improve the living conditions of teachers so that we can have a competent and efficient cadre of qualified teachers who represent the cornerstone in any process to improve the students' teaching opportunities in the Palestinian schools. We also aspire to develop the pre-service teacher training programs at higher education institutions, and develop also in-service training programs and continuing professional development and development of the teaching profession. The strategy defined its goals in providing chances for all students to benefit from education, developing the administrative and financial systems, and improving performance.

To conclude, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the MOEHE team and to our partners in the universities and national and international institutions who cooperated with us to accomplish this strategy; I would also like to thank the UNESCO and the Government of Norway and all individuals, organizations and countries that provided support to make our efforts succeed.

Peace be Upon you

*Professor Lamis Mustafa al-Alami
Minister of Education and Higher Education*



Teacher Education Strategy in Palestine: Executive Summary

The Rationale for a National Teacher Education Strategy

- The need to improve the quality of education in Palestine.
- The need for clear and explicit policies for teacher education and for the continuing development of teachers
- The large differences in the ways teachers are qualified and professionally supported by different institutions.
- The need to develop the teaching profession.
- The need to build the capacity of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) to manage the teacher education system.

Strategy Development Process

- The teacher education strategy project was developed by UNESCO who acquired the necessary funding.
- A Teacher Education Reference Group (TERG) was formed consisting of 14 members with expertise in teacher education chosen from MOEHE, UNRWA, higher education institutions and civil society. The Group met 15 times on an average of once every two weeks between April 2007 and January 2008. It made use of statistical and field studies on the current situation and reviewed international trends before submitting its recommendations.

- A Teacher Education Consultative Group (TECG) was also established consisting of 30 members, and headed by the Minister of Education and representatives from higher education institutions, directors at the Ministry, administrators at UNRWA, civil society and some teachers' unions. Reports submitted by TERG were studied, and feedback was given to TERG.
- Participation in developing this strategy was large. A semi-final draft was sent to 93 Palestinian educators and related persons for feedback.

Strategy Components:

1. A Vision for Teachers.
2. Teacher Education Programs.
3. Continuing Professional Development Programs.
4. The Teaching Profession.
5. Managing the Teacher Education System.

1. A Vision for Teachers

The Teacher Education Strategy aims at qualifying and preparing teachers who are characterized by the following qualities and values:

1. Committed to their students, and towards educating all of them, to facilitate their normal and comprehensive development in order to be able to build and live in an independent, democratic, just and diverse Palestinian society that is in harmony with Arab, Islamic and human culture.
2. Possess general knowledge, as well as subject matter knowledge, use a variety of teaching methods that respect the students and make them active learners, who are able to transfer knowledge, to improve and develop their different life-skills including problem solving and critical thinking.
3. Bear the responsibility of monitoring and guiding their students' learning.
4. Think systematically about their practices, learn from their experiences, and continue to develop professionally during their service.
5. Work with their colleagues as members of a community of learners.

2. Teacher Education Programs and the Institutions that host the Programs

It is recommended to develop and accredit five kinds of programs:

1. Pre-school Teacher: A program that grants a BA in Education with a major in pre-school education provided by Education Departments/Faculties in universities and colleges. In the interim period, two-year programs by community colleges are also acceptable.
2. Lower Basic Education Teacher (grades 1-4): a program that grants a BA in Education.
3. Upper Basic Education Teacher (grades 5-10): It is possible to enroll in one of the following two programs:
 - i. BA in Education, from the Faculty of Education, with a major in Upper Basic Level.
 - ii. A BA in a subject taught at the Upper Basic Level from the Faculty of Science or Arts + Teacher Education Diploma A (for the Upper Basic Level), from the Faculty of Education.
4. Secondary School Teacher (grades 11 and 12): BA in a subject taught at Secondary Schools from an appropriate faculty like the Faculty of Science or Arts + Teacher Education Diploma B (for the Secondary Level) from the Faculty of Education. Modifications of this requirement that are congruent with the vocational and technical education strategy are acceptable.
5. Tertiary Level Teachers and Educators: Teacher Education Diploma C, (for higher education and adult education faculty/trainers).

The Curriculum of Teacher Education Programs

It is recommended that the curriculum includes:

- General knowledge
- Knowledge of learners and the way they develop
- Knowledge of subject matter and of curriculum objectives.
- Knowledge and skills of teaching

Teaching and Learning Methods in Teacher Education Programs

It is recommended that these methods include the following characteristics:

- To help in learning, reflecting and applying knowledge.
- To confront the student-teachers' previous conceptions and attitudes.
- To help transform knowledge into practice.
- To help the student-teacher to analyze different classroom teaching and learning situations.
- To use promising modern methods of teaching, such as case-based approaches and action research.

Field experiences (practice teaching)

It is recommended that field experience:

- Is given priority in terms of its organization and evaluation.
- Consists of no less than 180 hours.
- Requires cooperation between teacher education programs and some partner schools.
- Develops mechanisms for quality assurance and improvement.

Qualifying Specialists, Principals and Supervisors

It is recommended that the following personnel

obtain academic/professional education at higher education institutions:

- Special education teachers
- Specialists in guidance and counselling
- School principals.
- Educational supervisors

Principals and supervisors can also be trained in-house by MOEHE and UNRWA in cooperation with universities.

Developing Higher Education Institutions

It is recommended to develop:

- Human and financial resources in teacher preparation programs.
- New or extended programs like the Education Diploma or Special Education Programs.
- Research, cooperation and the exchange of experience between workers in the field of teacher education.

3. Continuing Professional Development Programs

A program framework

It is recommended to develop four kinds of programs:

- Experienced teachers with insufficient teacher education should be enrolled in an appropriate Diploma in Education provided by a Faculty of Education.
- Experienced teachers with insufficient knowledge of their subjects should be enrolled in an appropriate BA/BS program at a university.
- Qualified and experienced teachers should be enrolled in programs to fulfill individual, school and national needs.
- Qualified new graduates should be offered

induction programs provided by MoEHE or UNRWA.

Other recommendations for continuing professional development programs included in the strategy

It is recommended to:

- Specify the characteristics of different programs.
- Develop programs to train principals, supervisors and the workers at the educational offices in different directorates.
- Develop research and cooperation between those working in the field of Teacher Continuing Professional Development.

4. The Teaching Profession

It is recommended to:

- Enhance the working conditions, and study the possibility of increasing teachers' salaries.
- Develop career stages: new teacher (under probation for a year or two), teacher, first teacher, and expert teacher, in addition to developing promotion regulations.
- Specify standards for teachers.
- Specify mechanisms to grant teaching certification or licenses.
- Develop the process of teacher selection and deployment.

5. Management of the System

It is recommended to:

- Enhance the Ministry's performance in organizing the teacher education process and supervising it by:
 - Developing internal mechanisms (in teacher education programs) to assure and enhance the quality of teacher education programs.

- Accrediting teacher education programs on a regular basis.
- Motivating students of high ability to enroll in teacher education programs.
- The Ministry, in cooperation with the universities, conducting studies about the quality of the graduates of different teacher education programs and their performance.
- Improving the balance between supply and demand.

- Enhance the Ministry's performance in organizing and supervising teacher continuing professional development processes by:

- Determining the parties in the Ministry responsible for the different aspects of in-service teacher education (supervision and accreditation, organizing or supplying services).
- Accreditation of the institutions providing continuing professional development programs and activities, and the regular accreditation of these institutions' programs through program reviews.
- The use of the new standards by educational supervisors and principals in defining teachers' needs for continuing professional development.

- Capacity Building of the Ministry through the further development of :

- Human resources including offering continuing professional development opportunities to principals, supervisors and administrators at the directorate level and for the administrators at the Ministry level.
- The Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC).
- The educational information management system.
- A less centralized system.

Additionally, it is recommended that a *Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession* be established.

Introduction: The Educational System in Palestine and the Need for the Strategy.



Photo credit: UNICEF-oPuSteve Sabella

The Palestinian Authority assumed responsibility for Education in Palestine in 1994 when it immediately formed The Ministry of Education and Higher Education. In 1996, a new Ministry was formed under the name of “The Ministry of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research”, and was given responsibility for higher education whereas the mother ministry kept the name of “The Ministry of Education”. In 2002, the two Ministries were merged into one Ministry under the name of “The Ministry of Education and Higher Education” (MoEHE).

The Education sector is considered to be the biggest among the services provided by the Palestinian Authority through its Ministry of Education and Higher Education, which takes responsibility for the funding and administration of the public schools, in addition to supervising schools in the private sector. According to 2006/2007 statistics, the Ministry of Education runs 76% of the total number of schools in Palestine, UNRWA runs 12.3%, whereas the private sector runs 11.7% of the total number of schools in addition to all the kindergartens.

The pre-university educational system in Palestine consists of two stages: The pre-school stage (kindergarten) which lasts for two years for children whose ages range from 4-5 years. The second stage is the stage of General Education

(school education) which lasts for 12 years starting from grade one and ending in the 12th grade. The General Education stage is divided into two levels:

- A.** Basic (Compulsory) education, which consists of grades 1-10. This stage is also divided into two levels. The Lower Basic Level (Preparatory) which includes grades 1-4 with students whose ages range from 5 to 10 years, and the Upper Basic Level (Empowerment) which includes classes from grades 5-10 with students whose ages range from 11 to 15 years.
- B.** The Secondary Stage (Take-off) includes grades 11 and 12 and is divided into "Academic Education" and "Vocational and Technical Education", with students whose ages range from 16 to 18 years.

Academic Education is divided into two streams, the Scientific Stream and the Literary Stream (Human Sciences). Students can choose one of these streams based on their ability, academic achievement in sciences and their personal preference.

As for vocational education, it consists of Commerce, Agriculture, Industry, Tourism, Home Economics, and Vocational Apprenticeship.

The number of schools and kindergartens in the Palestinian Territories in the scholastic year 2006/2007, was 3282 schools and kindergartens. The number of students studying in these schools and kindergartens was 1,164,225 students, and the number of teachers teaching in all the stages reached 54,217 teachers.

When the responsibility for education was handed down to The Ministry of Education, it faced the problem of having two different curricula; the Jordanian curriculum in the West Bank and the Egyptian curriculum in Gaza Strip. The priority of the Ministry of Education was to build a Palestinian curriculum that satisfies the needs of the Palestinian students and at the same time unites the educational system in Gaza Strip

and the West Bank. During the first five-year-plan 2000-2005 the curriculum for classes 1-11 was prepared and implemented and the syllabus for the 12th grade was completed in the middle of 2006, and was implemented in the scholastic year 2006/2007. The most important changes made by this Palestinian curriculum were introducing Civic Education, National Education, Christian Education, Technology, and Arts and Crafts into the syllabus in addition to introducing the English Language from the first grade instead of the fifth grade as was previously the case.

The Ministry of Education inherited a Palestinian educational system in ruins. Throughout the 30 years of Israeli occupation, Palestinian educational institutions were neglected both at the infrastructure and the human resource levels. The absence of political stability and security under the Israeli occupation, especially during Al-Aqsa Intifada (uprising), and what followed from destruction in the educational process, resulted in the need for emergency programs in order to re-build the whole school infrastructure and also to regain some balance in the psychological and health conditions of students and teachers who were subject to the aggression of the Israeli occupation forces.

The Ministry of Education started to prepare an emergency plan and, at the same time, started to prepare and provide the requirements needed for a national and comprehensive plan for education benefiting from the experiences of other Arab and foreign countries. Under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and with the help of the local and international community, a five-year plan was developed based on examining and analyzing the education sector in all its aspects and identifying its strengths and weaknesses.

The most significant challenges that faced the educational development process were to maintain the high enrolment rates at the Basic Education level and to raise the low rates of enrolment at the Secondary stage, as well as to improve the supervision system and the

qualitative assessment of education. In addition the improvement of the content, methods and strategies of teacher education programs was seen as critical. As for the challenges resulting from the emergency conditions, a number of alternative strategies were set up to face such challenges as the emergency plan during Al Aqsa Intifada. Also, there was the Palestinian national plan for "Education for All" which seeks to achieve the general goals and obligations that governments and international communities pledged to achieve at the International Forum for Education in Dakar, Senegal held in 2000.

Perhaps the most influential factor in the educational process is that of selecting and educating teachers, in terms of both pre- and in-service education. It is well known that there is an urgent need in Palestine to re-examine this process and to improve and develop it. A pressing need emerged to develop a national strategy for teacher education in Palestine. UNESCO responded positively to this, and led the process of preparing and applying this strategy. In its sixth meeting, the joint committee of UNESCO and the Palestinian Authority held in Paris in July 2004, approved a flagship project. An initiative for teacher education was set, and an international consultant was appointed to work with everybody concerned to develop and support a joint process (on the national level) to develop a teacher education strategy. The participation of Palestinians in this process was very important and a prerequisite for the success of this project.

After developing the project, the Norwegian Government decided in November 2006 to fund the project for developing a "Teacher Education Strategy" through the UNESCO offices in Ramallah, which took the responsibility for supervising the project and providing the necessary technical assistance. This project aimed at developing a comprehensive national strategy for educating teachers, and to improve the qualifications of those responsible for teacher education.

This strategy is described in this document. It

is worth mentioning here that the process of developing the teacher education strategy must be consistent and in harmony with other aspects of the educational process, such as the five-year-plan 2007-2011, and the national strategy for education and vocational training, and other future strategies, such as the strategy for the assessment and improvement of the new Palestinian curriculum.

Summary of the Strategy Development Methodology

The process of developing the national teacher education strategy depended on two groups, The Teacher Education Reference Group (TERG) and the Teacher Education Consultative Group (TECG). TERG was made up of 14 members from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, universities, civil society institutions and UNRWA in addition to the national coordinator of the group. This group started working on April 7th 2007. It held 15 meetings at the rate of about one meeting every fortnight. During these meetings, the components of the strategy were defined. Each component was studied and discussed separately and special recommendations for each one were set. The work mechanism in this group included the presentation of brief statistical and descriptive field reports about the status quo by the national coordinator and his team. The team also presented studies that summarized the international developments and trends for a specific subject, in order to clarify the alternatives available, for most of the meetings, in addition to providing members with questions to be discussed. The minutes of each meeting were presented for further discussion and approval. TERG presented reports of its work to the TECG for feedback and recommendations. TERG members decided to base their work on a social-constructivist orientation to learning on the one hand, and a professional orientation to teacher preparation and continuous development on the other hand.

TECG was headed by the Minister of Education and Higher Education, and consisted of 35 members from all parties concerned such as MoEHE, the higher education institutions, the institutions of the civil society, and the international community in addition to other ministries. This group started working on 23/6/2007. It held 3 meetings during which the reports presented by TERG were discussed in order to give the necessary comments and feedback. Changes in the strategy were made accordingly.

On 20th October 2007, the draft strategy was sent to 93 Palestinians concerned with this issue who worked in different fields in Palestine, to give their comments and points of view. 26 (28%) of them responded with their comments. A copy of the draft was sent to the members of both groups for final revision. Two experts also revised the draft; one from a university in Norway and the other from the International Institute for Educational Planning in Paris. The document was slightly modified according to the feedback, and this final version was produced.

The General Objective of the Strategy

This strategy aims to develop sufficient and efficient teachers in order to improve the learning opportunities for all Palestinian students in all schools.

Specific Objectives

The strategy aims at developing:

1. Teacher education programs and the higher education institutions that provide them.
2. Programs of in-service education and of continuing professional development.
3. The teaching profession.
4. The management of the teacher education system.

The Organization of the Strategy Document

The document consists of the following components:

1. A vision for teachers.
2. Teacher education programs and the institutions that provide them.
3. In-service education and continuing professional development.
4. The teaching profession.
5. Managing the teacher education system.

After presenting the vision, a situational analysis of each component is presented, followed by a section that sets the grounds for the recommendations, providing an explanation of the needs and principles that led to them. Finally the recommendations are presented.

1. A Vision for Teachers



In its five-year plan 2007-2011, the Ministry of Education defined a vision for teachers in Palestine that aims at preparing the Palestinian individual to have the following characteristics:

- To be proud of his/her Arab Islamic nationality, religion, culture, and Homeland
- To participate in the development of his/her society
- To seek knowledge and creativity.
- To interact positively with the requirements of scientific and technological development.
- To be able to compete in scientific and technological fields.

The five-year plan also defined the principles of the strategy with an emphasis on education that:

- Is a human right for all.
- Preserves the national identity and protects its national heritage.
- Contributes to the building of a Palestinian State.
- Supports the principles of democracy.
- Contributes to comprehensive development.

- Copes with scientific and technological development.
- Is student-centered and builds his/her integrated personality, fostering creativity and tend to the students' special abilities.
- Strengthens the teachers' professional and social status.
- Strengthens the responsibility of the community towards education. (Universities, private and official institutionsetc.)

The strategy also defined its goals in providing an opportunity for all Palestinian students to have a proper education, developing the Ministry's administrative and financial systems, improving its performance and improving the quality of education.

According to this strategy, it is recommended that the Teacher Education Strategy should be determined by the following vision:

The Teacher Education Strategy aims at qualifying and preparing teachers who are characterized by the following:

- Committed to their students, and towards educating all of them, to facilitate their normal and comprehensive development in order to be able to build and live in an independent, democratic, just and diverse Palestinian society that is in harmony with Arab, Islamic and human culture.
- Possessing general knowledge and subject matter knowledge, able to use a variety of teaching methods that respect the students and make them active learners, able to transfer knowledge, to improve and develop students' life-skills including problem solving and critical thinking.
- Bearing the responsibility of monitoring and guiding their students' learning.
- Thinking systematically about their practices, learning from their experiences, and continuing to develop professionally during their service.
- Working with their colleagues as members of a community of learners.

2. Teacher Education program, and the institutions that provide them.



First: Situation Analysis

The institutions that provide teacher education programs, the programs, and their titles.

The number of higher education institutions in Palestine in the scholastic year 2006-2007 reached 11 universities, 13 university colleges and 19 community colleges, totaling 43 educational institutions in all. The number of institutions that provide programs in education in different specialties is 10 universities, 6 university colleges, and 3 community colleges. The number of programs in education is 65, 48 of which aim at qualifying teachers, whereas the others provide training in counselling, educational computers and MA degree programs.

There are differences in the titles of similar programs in different institutions. In 2004, The Ministry of Education and Higher Education listed specific titles for the certificates granted by such programs for the different levels and the different subjects at the universities and community colleges. However, because the Ministry did not circulate these names and did not relate them to the school stage that the program qualifies for, some higher education institutions do not use them or are not fully acquainted with them.

The Role of Teacher Education in the Process of Selecting and Appointing Teachers.

There is no current consensus on the minimum qualifications needed to be able to work as a teacher at specific school levels or for teaching different subjects. At government schools the practice was to appoint one teacher only for each of grades one and two, usually a graduate of the "classroom teacher" program. In third and fourth grades one teacher of sciences whose major is in science or mathematics was appointed, and another teacher was appointed for the Arts whose major is in Arabic Language. If that was not possible then an "Elementary Education" teacher was appointed.

These days most schools prefer to appoint one teacher for Sciences and another for Arts starting from the first grade. This is because graduates of some classroom teacher programs are not capable of teaching all subjects, especially sciences. In addition, MOEHE prefers to appoint an English language teacher to teach this language for the Lower Basic Level and in some cases a PE and Arts and Crafts teachers are also appointed.

The current situation does not encourage students to enrol in teacher education programs because there is no great weight given to such programs in the process of appointing new teachers. (2% at the Ministry of Education and 4% at UNRWA schools in the West Bank). The rest of the weight goes to experience, subject matter knowledge, and knowledge of education. All these are measured by an entrance exam in addition to other considerations such as the personality, which is evaluated in a personal interview.

The situation at the UNRWA schools in Gaza strip is different. Starting from the scholastic year 2007/2008 applicants for a teaching position should have educational credentials. This qualification is a pre-requisite for appointing teachers there.

Characteristics of Teacher Education Programs

Some of the teacher education programs at the higher education institutions offer programs for different school levels in one single program

(pre-school and Lower Basic levels or Upper Basic and secondary levels). There is a shortage of Pre-School Teacher Education programs; all the existing programs grant a two-year diploma only. The only BA program, which is at Bethlehem University, was frozen because of its unpopularity due to the low salaries paid to its graduates. The Ministry of Education, though, in its second five-year plan 2007-2011 adopted a policy to improve Pre-School Education through increasing the total number of children enrolled in kindergartens by establishing public kindergartens and by encouraging the private sector to establish at least one kindergarten in every neighborhood depending on its size. This plan may help increase the popularity of Pre-School Teacher Education Programs and improve them to become university level programs.

As for the Lower Basic Level (Grades 1-4), there are many higher education institutions that provide BA programs for teachers of this level. There are some important differences in the curricula of these programs. In some, students have to study all the courses at the Faculty of Education, while in others they study courses such as Arabic Language, mathematics and sciences at other university faculties. The students in some programs study the school curriculum in depth, and in others they study it at a superficial level. There is also some variation in the total number of credit hours required for graduation. They range from 125-144 credit hours. There is still a debate on whether to qualify one classroom teacher for this level or to introduce some specialization, e.g. a teacher for sciences and a teacher for the Arts. This controversy reflects the different points of view about children's needs at this stage and about the aims of school education.

As for the Upper Basic Levels (Grades 5-10), many programs qualify teachers for this stage and in different "fields" such as "teaching Social Sciences" and "teaching Biology and Geology". There are also different titles for the certificates granted by these programs such as "Teaching Technology" or "Technology Education". This diversity reflects the theoretical difficulty in finding one definition

for the word “field”. In addition to that, other programs qualify teachers to teach classes 5-12, especially at universities in Gaza Strip.

A few programs provide an Education Diploma for the Secondary Level. These programs also differ in level. Some are at the postgraduate Diploma level and some at the undergraduate level. Some specialize in teaching one specific subject whereas others give a general Diploma. Some qualify other than secondary stage teachers. Finally some programs give in-service training and pre-service training together.

There is a huge diversity in the quality of teacher education programs for physical education, music education, arts and crafts and vocational education, in terms of content, especially in the amount of educational training included as well as the level (two-year Diploma or BA degrees).

The Curriculum of Teacher Education Programs, and Teaching and Learning Methods used

There are large differences in teacher education curricula in higher education institutions. Many of these programs need to be modified and updated according to the specific vision mentioned in this document and in order to be in harmony with international trends and practices in teacher education programs. The teaching and learning methods used in many of these programs are limited. There is also a big difference in the total number of “practice teaching” hours required, that is in field experiences at schools. The time spent at schools is very limited in some programs and in many cases, the experience taken from such practical training is not useful due to a lack of cooperation from the schools and teachers, or even because the cooperating teachers are not qualified themselves. Supervision and support given by such programs to the student-teacher are sometimes very limited. Finally, the courses given, in most cases, are not sufficiently related to the school context.

Qualifying the Education Supporting Staff

There are many MA programs in education in the Palestinian universities in different fields such as school administration, curriculum and instruction,

and counselling. Students can specialize in one of them at the MA level without having been in a pre-service Teacher Education Program.

However, there is a shortage in the number of programs that train support staff; there is no program in special education at the BA or MA levels at any of the Palestinian higher education institutions. A BA degree in counselling is granted at 3 universities in Gaza Strip and at the MA degree level in one West Bank university. There are no specified standards for the pre-service education needed to train these specialists.

Human and Financial Resources

A large percentage of education faculty at the universities and colleges do not hold a doctoral degree (50%). In some of the universities, the teachers are graduates from a limited number of countries. Some of them who hold an MA degree do not have sufficient personal teacher education, which means they do not hold a Diploma in teacher education. In some cases also, the university instructors in education do not have enough experience in the level for which s/he is training her/his students, and does not present models of modern teaching methods. There is also a shortage in some specialities in education such as teaching social sciences and languages. Finally, there is a shortage of physical resources in many education programs, especially in teaching aids and educational technology

The coordination between teacher education programs and their relevance to the needs of the schools.

Some teacher education programs, such as lower basic education, are offered by higher education institutions that are in close proximity. There is also an overproduction of graduates in some programs. Some institutions offer a great number of programs for different school levels, thereby exerting a lot of pressure on the human and financial resources in these institutions.

Interaction between workers in the teacher-education field

The interaction between workers in field of teacher education in the Palestinian territories is

severely limited. Research on teacher education is rarely conducted, and if so, it is not disseminated among Palestinian educators.

Second: Setting the Grounds for Recommendations

This situational analysis shows the need to organize and develop a process for educating teachers prior to their service, and to improve the relevance of such programs to the needs of the school.

Improving the quality of these programs requires a framework for teacher education programs for the different school levels, including pre-school education due to its importance, and for teaching different school subjects including Arts and Crafts, Music, PE and Vocational and Technical Training.

The improvement also requires specifying the characteristics of teacher education programs at higher education institutions as well as for programs for educational specialists, that is, special education teachers, supervisors and school counsellors. It is essential that these characteristics be in harmony with the new international trends in the curriculum of teacher education programs, with appropriate teaching and learning methods used in teacher education and with international experiences in how to

benefit from practical experiences at the schools within teacher education programs.

Improvement also requires developing the higher education institutions that provide teacher education programs. Each institution should develop its own "identity" by focusing on specific specializations or specific school levels. Developing the human and financial resources at these institutions is also needed as well as developing research on teacher education within and between the institutions.

Third: Recommendations

2.1 Developing a framework for Teacher Education

It is recommended to specify four types of teacher education programs for the different school levels and for the teaching of different school subjects, and a fifth type for university teachers, trainers and those who work in adult education:

1. Kindergarten teachers (pre-school).
2. Lower Basic Education teachers (grades 1-4)
3. Upper Basic Education Teachers (grades 5-10)
4. Secondary School Teachers (grades 11 and 12)
5. Educators and Trainers at the post-secondary & tertiary level.

2.2 General Characteristics of the Programs

Program Title	Level and title of certificate/degree	Faculty or department that grants this degree	Program objectives To qualify teachers to	Other classes the graduate can teach with permission from the school principal and the education supervisor ^{**}
1- Pre-School Education Program (ages 4-6)	BA degree in Education with a major in Pre-School Education In the interim: Two-year diploma	Faculty or Department of Education Community college	To teach in Pre-Schools and Kindergartens	Grade one (for graduates of bachelor degree programs only)
2- Lower Basic Education Program	BA in Education with a major in teaching Lower Basic Level	Faculty or Department of Education	To teach all subjects at this stage. (Grades 1-4)	Not possible ^{***}

3- Upper Basic Education program: Program A	a) BA in education with a major in teaching upper basic level - Teaching X*	Faculty or Department of Education	To teach one specific subject or field (a small group of subjects) for Grades 5-10.	Not possible ***
Program B	b) 1- BA degree in sciences or Arts or other (such as engineering for TVE schools), in a subject taught at schools. + 2- Diploma in education for Upper Basic Level: teaching a specific subject or field X* (or an MA that aims at qualifying teachers for this stage).	1-Faculty of Science or Arts or any other, but not the Faculty of Education. 2- The Faculty or Department of Education.	To teach a specific subject for Grades 5-10	Not possible
4- The Secondary Education Program	1- BA degree in Science or Arts specializing in a subject taught at schools. + 2- A Diploma in education for the Secondary Level specializing in teaching a specific subject or (MA degree in education).	Faculty of Science or Arts or other but not the Faculty of Education. Faculty or Department of Education	To teach a specific subject for Grades 11 and 12.	Grades 8-10
5- Program for training educators and trainers for the tertiary level	Diploma in teacher education specializing in higher or adult education	Faculty or Department of Education	To qualify university teachers and adult educators	Tertiary level students

*x = Arabic, English or French language (or any other language taught at schools), Mathematics, Christian or Islamic education, Technology, science (not physics or Chemistry ...etc), social sciences (not History or Geography ...etc) or any other subject approved by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC) in coordination with the Commission for the Development of the Teaching Profession (CDTP). See recommendation 5:35 below.

** It is possible for the teachers to teach other subjects or other classes only if necessary to complete their loads and as recommended by the school principal and the approval of the director of the related education directorate.

*** It is possible to get in-service education to teach other classes. See recommendation 3.1- changing the nature of the teacher's work.

2:21 Additional Clarifying Recommendations:

- Teacher education programs that do not comply with this framework cannot be accredited.
- All teacher education programs should at least be at the BA level, except for preschool education programs in the short term.
- A minor in Education at a BA level is not considered as a teacher education program.
- The existing MA degrees in education are also not considered as teacher education programs because the student can enrol in such programs without having a previous Diploma in Education, and these programs do not aim at initial qualification for teachers. For example, they do not include any courses in practical education. This does not prevent the development of MA programs specifically for qualifying teachers if they were accredited from AQAC as such; that is if they have all the conditions mentioned in recommendation 2.3 below.
- Existing teacher education programs that qualify for teaching at the Upper Basic Level and the Secondary Level together (in the same program), are not accepted as official teacher education programs. The same applies to the programs that qualify to teach a field not specified in the above framework, such as programs for the Upper Basic Level specializing in teaching Biology and Geology.
- A Professional Diploma is not considered as a teacher education program nor as a program for education specialists.
- In all cases, obtaining a suitable professional education that is accredited by MoEHE is a necessary, but not a sufficient, prerequisite for teaching. This profession requires additional conditions in order to get a permit to practice (see recommendation 4.4 below).
- These recommendations apply to all school teachers including Arts, Music, and PE teachers

and the Vocational and Technical trainers at Vocational Schools as well. It is recommended to improve the Music, Arts and Crafts and PE Teacher Education Programs that comply with the recommendations on the characteristics of teacher education programs (recommendation 2.3 below). It is also possible for those with a BA in Music or Engineering (for the Vocational Secondary School teachers) to obtain a suitable specialized teacher education Diploma.

- These recommendations complement and do not replace the recommendations of the Technical and Vocational Education Strategy.
- The Diploma in Education that is accompanied by a BA in a subject taught at schools is accepted only if 1) it aims at qualifying teachers for a specific level (Secondary or Upper Basic Levels) and also 2) focuses on qualifying teachers to teach a specific subject like Mathematics, or a specific field like Science. The Diploma for teaching at the Secondary Level should focus on teaching one specific subject like Physics for example. The Diploma for teaching at the Upper Basic Level should focus on teaching a subject or a field according to the Palestinian curriculum and according to the teachers' loads at this level, and therefore focuses on teaching the Arabic language or English Language or Science or Social Studies in general but not specifically Physics or History. The principles defined below should apply to the Diploma in order to be accredited.

2.3: Accrediting Programs and the Principles used in Accreditation

2.31 Accrediting programs

Teacher education programs are accredited according to standards set by the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession and Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission in harmony with the vision for knowledgeable teachers mentioned above. (See recommendation

5.35 on establishing such a Commission in the recommendation section related to administering the Teacher Education system). These standards leave freedom for adapting such programs to the local circumstances. It is important to stress that these standards set the minimum requirements needed. The different institutions can develop programs with requirements beyond those specified by the standards.

2.32 The Curriculum of Teacher Education Programs

The standards that constrain the curriculum for teacher education programs for the different school levels are set to include the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which could be classified into four groups as follows:

1. General knowledge and basic knowledge in the Arabic language, and Mathematics. An understanding of the Arab, Islamic and Palestinian culture and identity, and the importance of maintaining and improving it, in addition to exposure to other cultures of the world.
2. Understanding of the learners and the way they develop:
 - Learning, for example, how students learn including the constructivist nature of learning, cognitive processes, meta-cognition and motivation.
 - The nature of human development including the general cognitive, social, emotional, physical and linguistic developmental patterns, in addition to individual differences in development, and the relationships between development and the teaching and learning processes.
 - Language acquisition and development.
3. Curriculum and subject matter knowledge: This includes a deep understanding of basic concepts and skills in their field, not only knowledge of the school curriculum, even though the latter is very important, in addition to knowledge of the general social objectives

of education in Palestine and the world. It also includes knowledge of the long and short-term objectives of the subject taught so that the teacher would know why and where he/she is leading his/her students and how to accomplish that.

4. Knowledge of teaching:

- Knowledge of teaching his/her subject and pedagogical content knowledge, including the objectives, how to teach and evaluate his/her students focusing on student-centered methods.
- Teaching in heterogeneous classes in terms of social and economic backgrounds, individual differences in ability and motivation, and some ideas on special education (the Palestinian education systems believes in inclusive education).
- Evaluation of student learning including formative evaluation, making use of evaluation in planning and modifying plans, evaluating the accomplishment of objectives, dealing with the results of formal, national and international evaluations.
- Efficient classroom management.
- The ethics of the teaching profession.

The curriculum should help the student-teacher to relate the components of the curriculum together, which is relating general knowledge with subject matter knowledge and relating the learners' knowledge to teaching knowledge.

2.33 Methods of Teaching and Learning at Teacher Education Programs

Even though the standards for the methods of teaching and learning are to be specified later by the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession, the following should be taken into consideration:

- The teaching and learning methods used should:

1. Help the student-teacher to learn, reflect and apply.
 2. Challenge the student-teacher's prior concepts and orientations towards teaching and learning.
 3. Help the student-teacher transform knowledge into practice.
 4. Help the student-teacher analyze his/her classroom practices in order to prepare them later to deal with the complicated nature of teaching.
- Use modern and promising methods in teacher education (including the case-based approach, video recording of different teaching practices, using technology, and e-learning in particular, using interactive cases in teaching, analyzing teaching and learning situations, and conducting research, mainly action research.
 - Evaluate performance and not only theoretical knowledge.
 - The education courses and the other courses in their field of specialty should be taught in harmony with the vision for teaching mentioned in 1 above.

2.34 The Quality and Quantity of Field Experiences

The following should be taken into consideration:

- Field experiences are considered a fundamental component of teacher education programs, and should be given great importance in terms of their organization and in evaluating their effects on the student-teacher.
- No less than 180 hours of practical experience in schools should be assigned in both the BA in education or in the teacher education Diploma distributed over 30 weeks. In the BA in education programs, these hours should be distributed across several years.
- The different teacher education programs should cooperate with specific schools in coordination with the Ministry of Education or any other party that runs schools so as to provide suitable

school environments that help the student-teacher to go through educative experiences and to benefit from them. This requires developing special schools for professional development that are connected with specific higher education institutions. These schools may be changed after some time to increase the number of schools benefiting from this approach.

- Practical education is to be used to improve the connection between theory and practice in the different education courses.
- To find the mechanism for monitoring, maintaining and improving the quality of practical education in teacher education programs, or to activate the use of existing ones. Quality control mechanisms should stress the following in particular:
 1. Clear practical education objectives and the use of standards for measuring appropriate performance.
 2. The existence of expert teachers in the cooperating school who present good models of practice.
 3. The existence of qualified education supervisors.
 4. Student-teachers trained to teach and provided with quick and appropriate feedback.
 5. Student-teachers bearing the full but gradual responsibility of a teacher, starting from observation up to all that a teacher is required to do including teaching a complete unit.
 6. Provision of the opportunity for systematic reflection to improve student-teacher teaching practices.

2.4: Qualifying Educational Experts

Qualifying a special education teacher and a school counsellor requires an MA or a postgraduate Diploma in special education or counselling according to standards set by the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession. Some of the existing programs for qualifying supervisors

through vocational diplomas should be upgraded into accredited academic/professional programs. This requires consultation between Ministry of Education and Higher Education, UNRWA and Higher Education institutions in the preparation of these programmes.

2.5: Qualifying School Principals and Education Supervisors

Qualifying school principals and education supervisors requires an MA or a postgraduate diploma in school administration and supervision according to the standards set by the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession. MOEHE and UNRWA can train candidates to become principals or supervisors in cooperation with institutions of higher education. Existing programs should be upgraded to accredited professional/academic programs. In all programs, a minimum of five years teaching experience is a pre-requisite to enter these programs.

2.6: Developing Teacher Education Programs at Higher Education Institutions.

2.61: Improving Human and Financial Resources at Teacher Education Programs

Higher education institutions are encouraged to develop the human and financial resources of the teacher education programs in order to have adequate numbers of qualified and experienced teachers in all needed fields. In order to develop an institutional identity for each faculty, it is recommended that each institution should focus on developing a definite number of programs based on the points of strength in its teacher education program. They should try to focus on a small number of the above-mentioned programs in the above framework and should focus on teaching a definite number of subjects or fields. In addition to that, they should take into consideration, if possible, other similar programs at other nearby educational institutions to

avoid repetition as much as possible. That is, it is recommended that each institution develops its own identity based on the standards on one hand, and, on the other hand, allow for adapting its programs to local needs and points of distinction in order for teacher education centers of excellence to develop in Palestine.

2.62: Developing New Programs or programs in insufficient numbers

Higher education institutions are encouraged to develop the following programs due to current non-availability or insufficient capacity:

- Early childhood BA degree in education.
- Teacher Education Diploma (Teaching a specific subject or field) for the Upper Basic Level, and another one for the Secondary Level. There is a great need for developing special Diplomas for Music, Arts and Craft teachers, and trainers for vocational and technical education at the Vocational High Schools, and at the different Vocational Institutions. (The latest should be in harmony with the recommendations of the Strategy for Vocational and Technical Education).
- Postgraduate Diploma, BA or MA degrees in special education.
- Postgraduate Diploma, BA or MA degrees in school counselling and supervision.
- A Diploma in Teacher Education for the tertiary level. (University teachers and trainers).

2.63: Developing research about teacher preparation within and between higher education institutions, and developing collaboration and exchanging knowledge and experience

It is important to find mechanisms and incentives to develop interaction, encourage research,

exchange experiences, and also to disseminate knowledge about teacher preparation among workers in this field in Palestine, within and among institutions. Some possible mechanisms are conferences on a regular basis, collaborative research, networks for researchers and an

educational research journal. In particular, HEI's should conduct research on the quality of the graduates of their teacher education programs, the percentage those joining the teaching profession, their performance, and how long they stay in the teaching profession.

2.7 Recommended Timetable for Implementing the above Recommendations

Timetable for carrying out the recommendations	
Five-year plan 2008-2012	
2008-2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher education institutions start planning for Teacher Education Programs according to the new principles and to develop their own identity. Encourage some institutions to develop early childhood education programs, and Teacher Education Programs for the Secondary and Upper Basic Levels. Develop specific standards for each type of Teacher Education Programs.
2009-2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start accrediting the programs according to the new standards. Start developing standards for the educational specialists programs (special education and guidance and counseling). The Ministry announces it will not hire unqualified teachers starting from the scholastic year 2014/2015.
2010-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start accepting students in the modified Teacher Education Programs. Stop accepting students at all programs that do not comply with the new framework. Start accrediting educational specialists programs according to the new standards.
2011-2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start accrediting students at the modified educational specialists programs.
2008-2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve human and financial resources at higher education institutions. Higher education institutions develop research and increase interaction. Higher education institutions improve teachers and specialists' education programs on a regular basis. Certify and review programs periodically.
Long term plan 2013-2017	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Starting from the scholastic year 2014/2015, only qualified teachers are hired to teach in all Palestinian schools. Regular evaluation and modification of programs. Reconsider the standards when needed. Periodical accreditation of the programs

3. In-Service Teacher Education and Continuing Professional Development



First: Situation Analysis

The working parties in the field of in-service teacher education and professional development, and a description of their programs and activities.

Many actors work on the area of in-service teacher education, including the Ministry of Education and Higher Education -MoEHE- (Directorate General for Supervision and Training- including all central educational supervisors and those of the different directorates, some principals and teachers-, the National Institute for Educational Training, and others), in addition to the higher education institutions (including the different colleges and the continuing education departments), UNRWA, some private schools, educational and non-educational civil society organizations and some private or commercial training centers.

Developing human resources was one of the major tasks that MoEHE set as a priority since its establishment in 1994 including teachers, headmasters, educational supervisors and administrative personnel. The cascade model was used in the training programs, the "school as a training unit" was adopted as a training pattern within the school, and this offered the opportunity to train

vast numbers of teachers. Around 500 principals and 400 supervisors were given thirty-hours of training each year, and great numbers of teachers were also trained on different topics. For example, in 1999 to 2006, around 25,000 teachers were trained in a thirty-hour training course under the heading of "Content and Methods". In spite of the enormous efforts made by MoEHE to provide in-service training, there is still a need to develop this kind of training through giving the principals a bigger role and by providing them with the skills that will make them capable of planning based on their school's training needs, developing their educational team, improving the relationship between the training courses and the individual needs of the teachers and by offering teachers the opportunity to choose. In addition, it is desirable to trace the effects of the training the teachers had on their classroom practice, and to develop the trainers' skills.

In its second five-year plan 2007-2011, MoEHE adopted a unified development and training strategy for the teaching and administrative staff at all levels. The plan includes connecting training programs with needs and job descriptions, identifying one department in the Ministry as the sole training department, specification of the skills of the trainers, connecting training to a financial and administrative incentive system, accrediting a comprehensive evaluation system for training, obliging trainees to exchange their experience with their colleagues, and enforcing a decentralized approach.

In 1963, UNRWA, in cooperation with UNESCO, established the Education Institute with the purpose of enhancing the quality of education and training for those working in the field of education. The Education Institute executes its training programs in five regions (the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria). The Educational Development Centre was established in Gaza in 1974 and in the West Bank in 1980. The Educational Development Centre works to develop the educational process at UNRWA schools and for a better qualification for the people working in the education field, teachers, principals,

observers and supervisors through providing the opportunity for in-service education.

Through their continuing education centers and departments, higher education institutions play some role in the in-service and professional development of teachers. Although the certificates granted to trainees are accredited by MoEHE they add no financial or promotion privileges to teachers, unlike other ministries where employees are given certain incentives after completing in-service education.

Many NGOs are working in the field of teachers' professional development such as A. M. Qattan Foundation in Ramallah and Gaza, Teachers' Creativity Center and Al-Mawrid Teacher Development Center. These NGOs provide different activities and courses that aim at the professional development of teachers. A great number of teachers has already benefited from these activities. In general, the training does not result in privileges for teachers such as a salary raise or a stipend. Early Childhood Resource Centers is another NGO that works in the training of preschool teachers; it provides in-service education only.

Type and nature of programs and activities

There is considerable diversity in the quality of training and programs provided by the different institutions mentioned. Different training models are used which also vary in quality. In spite of the existence of valuable and creative experiences in the field of in-service education at each organization, the interaction between them is weak.

On the other hand, activities and courses used in in-service teacher education do not distinguish, sometimes, between qualified and unqualified, experienced and inexperienced teachers, or between the different teachers' specialties or school levels they teach. The most common types of in-service teacher education programs are workshops, or some general university programs that might not be tailored to the specific



Photo credit: UNICEF-oPr/yad El Baba

teacher characteristics. In a study conducted by the British Council to evaluate the training at MoEHE, teachers valued more highly professional development activities connected to “the school as a training unit” in comparison to other professional development activities. Finally, the support and training provided for new teachers are not enough or might not be available at all.

Teachers’ Needs and Characteristics and how they are defined and taken into consideration

Most practicing teachers have not gone through teacher preparation programs. There are no statistics available at MoEHE to show the percentage of unqualified teachers, but some educators estimate it to be around 80%. Some qualified teachers teach school subjects or levels for which they are not trained or qualified in order to have a full teaching load. Changing the teachers’ school, load, subject or levels they teach after they have participated in certain in-service education projects reduces the effects of the training.

The educational and administrative support provided to teachers, either by principals or supervisors in terms of time and quality, needs ongoing development in order to empower teachers and help their continuing professional development. There are no incentives to encourage teachers to enrol in the different professional development activities. There is also a need to adapt continuing professional development and in-service education to meet the needs and characteristics of the teachers. There is also a need to link this training to the teachers’ and schools’ needs.

Teachers’ Standards

There are no clear and explicit standards for new teachers, teachers, supervisors, and principals, but the National Institute for Educational Training is working to identify these standards; there is a need to coordinate these efforts along with developing the current strategy concurrently.

Second: Setting the Ground for Recommendations

Situational analysis shows that there is a need to regulate the process of providing support and guidance to new or novice teachers. It also shows a need to provide a variety of programs and activities for continuing professional development, so that teachers can choose, in order to find the best fit between professional development activities and their characteristics and needs. There is, however, a need to link the professional development activities of the teachers to the improvement of their schools. This requires the development of the capacities of principals and giving them the responsibility to develop their schools and to support the development of their teachers. There is also a need to provide further training for teachers when new unforeseen circumstances emerge, or when radical changes in the nature of the teacher’s work occur. Finally, it is clear that there is a need to train the large number of educationally unqualified or under-qualified teachers.

It is very important to identify and certify institutions that provide the professional with continuing teacher education, training, activities and programs, and to develop the programs and activities in harmony with the new evolution of knowledge and modern practices in in-service teacher education and professional development. There is a need to develop the resources in such institutions and to develop research on in-service education within and between these institutions, in addition to the exchange of knowledge and experience.

Third: Recommendations

3.1 A Framework for In-Service Teacher Education Programs, and the General Characteristics of the Programs.

The following framework is recommended for in-service teacher education programs:

The target group of teachers	Objectives of the program	Type of program	Provider	How needs are determined
1) Experienced teachers without educational qualifications* or without sufficient educational qualifications.	To qualify the teacher while in-service, so that s/ he gets a Diploma in education.	Diploma in Education (modified to meet the needs and characteristics of experienced teachers).	Education faculties in universities	As recommended in teaching profession section.
2) Experienced teachers without sufficient education (holder of a two-year Diploma)	In-service education for the teacher to receive a B.A.	Bachelor degree in the subject or the teaching of the subject	Relevant department or faculty in the university	As recommended in teaching profession section.
3) Qualified experienced teachers	<p>Continuous professional development:</p> <p>1) continuous individual development (at the individual level)</p> <p>+</p> <p>2) development that is linked to school's improvement (at the school level)</p>	<p>1) choice from many alternatives in terms of goals, content, time and place so as to suit teachers' goals and individual needs</p> <p>+</p> <p>2) a program linked to school improvement (school as a training unit), where the teacher cooperates with his/her colleagues to make specific changes in teaching</p>	<p>1) any accredited body that offers accredited programs or activities (see recommendation 3.21 below), including bodies within MoEHE</p> <p>2) Any accredited body</p>	<p>1) Self-evaluation, the principal's or the educational supervisor's evaluation of the teacher's performance.</p> <p>2) self evaluation at the school level, or the school's response to the needs that are defined by the school's system, or defined at a national level, or as a response to projects originating from outside the school that coincide with the school's needs or plans.</p>

	Responding to new circumstances (Change in curriculum, e-learning, etc...) (at the national level)	A specific program to respond to new circumstances, and this requires the teachers to develop knowledge or new skills	Any accredited body	Needs assessment at the national level
	A change in the nature of the teacher's work (at the individual level)**	Re-qualifying the teacher due to changes in the nature of the her/his work (in relating to the subjects, or the school level that she/he teaches)	MoEHE or UNRWA or private schools system, in cooperation with the appropriate education faculties at the universities	Needs that arise because of the teacher's wish to change the nature of his work, (as recommended in the section about the teaching profession).
4) The new qualified graduate	Meeting inexperienced teachers > needs	Teacher induction program	MOEHE or UNRWA or private schools' system, in cooperation with education faculties at universities	As recommended for the teaching profession.

* Note: The experienced teacher is the teacher who has worked as a teacher for a period not less than three years. Consequently, the teacher, who was appointed without sufficient experience and also without appropriate academic or educational qualification (This is possible until the beginning of the academic year 2013/2014 as recommended at 4.7 below), this teacher has to attend an educational Diploma program to be professionally qualified, or a Bachelor program to be academically qualified, and he/she has to finish this program in a three-year period, in which she/he will be assigned with a special contract, as shown in Section 4.7. This teacher will also attend the induction program as clarified in item No. 4 in the above mentioned table.

** This requires keeping teachers in their locations and not allowing their transition from school level to another without going through an in-service education.

The two programs that are provided to train the experienced teacher without teacher education, or without a B. A. are short term, while the other two are long-period programs.

3.2 Accreditation of Programs and Principles Used in the Process

3.21 Accreditation of programs

MoEHE identifies the accredited institutions that supply in-service teacher education programs and activities, including those identified within MoEHE's departments, and accredits these institutions' programs and activities, according to specified standards determined by the Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession in coordination with the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission, as long as the programs are congruent with the vision of teachers identified above.

3.22 Characteristics of programs for experienced teachers without appropriate educational qualifications (#1 in the framework above)

Higher Education Institutions design an Education Diploma at the appropriate level (Upper Elementary or Secondary Level), and in the teaching of a specific subject. The Diploma is based on the existing Education Diploma, but modified to meet the needs and characteristics of experienced teachers. The programs are designed so that part of them use e-learning and distance learning (blended approach) styles, to allow the training of large numbers of teachers. An agreement is reached between MoEHE and the universities on the bases for exemption of teachers from some of the requirements of the Diploma depending on the amount of experience and the amount, and nature, of in-service education they have received.

3.23 Characteristics of the academic development programs for experienced but not academically/scientifically qualified teachers (# 2 in the framework above)

The characteristics of these programs are the same as any B.A. accredited program at any accredited university.

3.24 Characteristics of the professional development programs for educationally qualified and experienced teachers (#3 in the framework above)

Accredited institutions can offer any accredited programs or activities, whether they are courses, short term workshops, university courses, or long term cooperative projects, action research or other provision as long as they are consistent with the objectives of in-service teacher education clarified in the framework above.

In programs aiming at improving the school or facing new developments, and with the goal of having a better influence on practice, it is preferable to reduce the number of workshops or short-term courses not related to practice, and that are not followed by the teacher experimenting in his/her classroom. It is recommended to provide support for teachers in their schools. Programs should be designed taking the largest possible number of the following characteristics in mind:

- Focus on a specific content or subject that the teacher teaches.
- Use active learning methods for teachers, and involve them in planning and executing the in-service teacher education activities, and support them to use active learning for their students in classes.
- Build on other professional development activities, and ensure a good fit with them.
- Allow sufficient time for the teacher to understand what he/she is learning, and to apply it in his/her classroom.

- The teachers' classes are used as laboratories for professional development.
- Make teaching a public activity that allows teachers to learn from each other.
- Target a group of teachers from the same school or from adjacent schools so that they can work on a shared case or project, and give proper feedback to each other.
- Focus on the long-term and the short-term objectives of teaching at the same time.
- Use research conducted by the teachers themselves, and especially action research, as a means of teacher education.
- Aim at understanding the students' thinking, and analyzing their work.
- Allow two hours weekly at each school for teachers for joint and cooperative planning of professional development activities.

3.25 Characteristics of induction programs for qualified new graduates (teachers)(#4 in the framework above)

Schools should offer new teachers a well-organized induction program that has specific goals, content and methods for a period of one year. The programs, which are offered by the schools but designed in cooperation with the universities, should have the following characteristics:

- Aim to assist the new teacher to improve his/her instruction, and to help his/her personal professional development.
- A mentor is appointed for each new teacher, so that he/she can help, guide and counsel him/her.
- The characteristics of the mentor are specified, and mentors are trained to assume these roles.
- The basic method is to make teaching a general activity that requires cooperation with colleagues.

- The new teacher is given the chance to observe the mentor's and the other teachers' teaching.
- The new teacher is observed in the classroom, and is given the chance to deliberate over what was observed. He/she is given feedback, and is allowed to plan, in cooperation with others, to solve the problems that he/she faces.
- The new teacher is given the opportunity to plan cooperatively with his mentor teacher and others for his/her lessons.

In the interim period this program can be replaced by a two-weeks orientation program in the schools.

3.3 Capacity Building of the System Supporting the Professional Development of Teachers

3.31 Training of trainers and developing the institutions which work in professional development

All trainers in the field of in-service teacher education should receive relevant training. It is also recommended to build the capacity of all the accredited institutions working in continuing teacher professional development, and specifically the development of physical and material resources at Education Directorates in order to facilitate teachers' professional development at the governmental schools.



3.32 Training of principals, educational supervisors, and other related staff at MoEHE.

The Target Group	Objective of Program	Type of Program	Supplier
Principals and educational supervisors in all the Public, UNRWA and Private schools	Introduce the teacher education strategy, and ensure that they follow up its management and supervision.	Workshops to introduce them to the management and supervision of the schools according to the Strategy	Any certified supplier, in cooperation with education faculties.
1. Educational managers at the Ministry's, directorates levels, and at UNRWA 2. New employees	Introduce the teacher education strategy, and ensure that they will follow it up in their management.	Workshops to introduce them to the school management, supervision according to the Strategy	Any certified supplier

3.33 Developing research about teacher professional development within and between the institutions, developing cooperation, exchange and dissemination of experiences and knowledge

Establish mechanisms and give incentives to develop interaction, research activities, dissemination and exchange of knowledge about

in-service teacher education and continuing professional development between workers in this domain in Palestine, within and among institutions.

Providers of these programs should conduct research about the effects of their programs on changing classroom practices and the quality of education in the long term.

3.4 Recommendations on the Timetable of the above Recommendations

Timetable for carrying out the recommendations	
Five-year plan 2008-2012	
2008/2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify the standards for accrediting the providers of in-service teacher education activities.
2009/2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation of providers of in-service teacher education activities starts. Higher education institutions design an educational qualification Diploma for experienced teachers without sufficient educational qualifications. Principals', managers and educational supervisors' qualification programs are designed.
2010/2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-service programs for principals, educational supervisors and administrative are offered. Experienced teachers without educational qualifications are accepted in educational qualification Diploma programs. Higher education institutions in coordination with MoEHE, UNRWA and private schools design induction programs for the qualified new graduates. Mechanisms and methods for evaluating the needs of qualified experienced teachers for continuous professional development are designed. Standards for choosing mentors in schools are set, mentors are chosen and trained.
2011/2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Induction programs start to be offered (the first class of graduates from the modified educational Diploma graduates) Continuous professional development programs are designed for qualified experienced teachers.
2008/2012	-Providers develop interaction and research within the institutions and between them.
Long term plan 2013-2017	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting on 2013, the continuous professional development programs are offered to qualified experienced teachers. Continuous evaluation and regular accreditation of providers and programs. The development of interaction and researches continues. In-service programs continue to be offered for new employees (principals, supervisors, and administrative).



4. The Teaching Profession

First: Situational analysis

The Teaching Profession in Palestine

Despite the recent increase in their salaries, teachers' salaries, in comparison with other professions, are relatively low. According to a recently published study, teachers, especially males, are not satisfied with their financial situation, or their relatively low social status. This dissuades parents from encouraging their children to choose teaching as a profession, and keeps the secondary school students away from choosing teaching as a future profession; most of those who choose the teaching profession are females who think that this profession is accepted by society, especially for females after marriage. In addition, teachers' salaries do not differ according to the school level in which they teach, or for the subject that they teach.

In many cases, good teachers quit teaching and move to work in other positions in the educational system, as administrators or supervisors, or principals. This is mainly due to limitations in the career development of teachers, since there is no career ladder for the profession.

Accrediting Teacher Education Programs, Teacher Standards, and Working Licenses

The Commission for Quality Assurance (AQAC) at MoEHE has not assessed any pre-service teacher education program so far. There is a shortage of human resources working in the Commission. Consequently, there are currently no adequate mechanisms for the assurance

and improvement of the quality of teacher education programs. Further, there are no standards set to guide the development and assessment of teacher education programs for the different levels or school subjects. There is no licensing system for those wishing to practice the teaching profession in Palestine.

Choosing and Employing Teachers

When applying for a teaching position, the applicants pass a central selection process, whether at MoEHE or UNRWA. Several criteria with different weighting are used for the teacher selection process. To be precise, the educational qualification is given only five percent of the total grade at UNRWA, and only two percent at MoEHE. This allows most of the applicants to practice teaching without adequate pre-service qualifications. Starting from 2007/2008, UNRWA set educational qualifications as a prerequisite, thus it is not possible to apply for the teaching profession if the person is not qualified. Some educators criticize the examinations used in employing teachers; there is not enough information about the reliability and validity of such exams.

Other unannounced criteria are used, such as employing teachers in the Lower Elementary School with scientific high school certificate to literary high school certificate in the ratio of 2:1. At MoEHE, there is an unannounced tendency to appoint female candidates to teach in the lower elementary school. In general, the selection process at the public or UNRWA schools is highly centralized, and there is no role for the school in selecting the teacher, or for the teacher in choosing the school.

Second: Setting the Ground for Recommendations

The current situational analysis reveals that there is a need to improve the teaching profession as a profession. That is, there is a need to increase the profession's appeal to students, in comparison with

other professions, whether in salary, or working conditions, or the possibility of progression along a career ladder.

Analysis of the status quo shows the need to improve the status of the teaching profession. There is a need to increase the attractiveness of the profession, in comparison with other professions, both in terms of salaries and working conditions or the possibility of progression in the hierarchy or career ladder. There is also a need to monitor and assure the quality of teacher education programs, organizing and specifying the conditions for joining the profession, and improving the selection and the deployment process for teachers in government schools.

Third: Recommendations

4.1 Improving the Working Conditions and Considering Increasing Teachers' Salaries

A study for improving the working conditions and the possibility of increasing teachers' salaries should be conducted. Allowances for teachers holding educational qualifications (Education Diploma or Bachelor of Education) should be given.

4.2 Developing a Career Scale for Teaching Profession

4.21 Teachers should be classified in ranks, and criteria for the different ranks should be specified, that is, the requirements for promotion from one rank to another. The allowances, rights and obligations of teachers in each rank, and the salary allowances must also be specified.

4.22 The ranks are:

- Novice teacher (non-regular status or under probation) for a year, or two if the performance of the teacher during the first year was unsatisfactory.

- Teacher
- First teacher
- Expert teacher

4.23 The Commission for the Improvement of the Teaching Profession specifies the criteria for promotion from one rank to another, which should include the following:

- Identification of the minimum years of experience in a particular rank before requesting a promotion.
- The minimum qualifications for the rank of first teacher and expert teacher are a Bachelors' degree and an educational qualification.
- Evaluation of the teacher's performance and the teaching activities is performed by documenting that performance by the teacher himself/herself and through direct observations by the principal and supervisor.
- Training, continuing professional development, and higher degrees that the teacher receives while in a certain rank are to be taken into consideration in the promotion process.
- Student learning outcomes, such as student achievement or other artifacts (the activities and the projects that the students conducted in the teacher's class) are also given further consideration.
- The teacher's involvement in educational initiatives, and creativity, and other professional activities.
- Activities relating to the local society.
- The teacher's performance is evaluated according to new standards determined by this strategy.

4.24 Applications for promotions are reviewed by decentralized promotion committees that work according to clear and explicit guidelines or principles, and, in turn, report to the relevant authorities. The possibility of engaging teachers in evaluating their colleagues' requests for promotion is to be considered.

4.3 Teachers' Standards

The Commission for the Development of the Teaching Profession specifies the standards for teachers in each rank, and according to the school level and specialization. The Commission takes into account the need to reach a reasonable distribution of teachers at the different ranks.

4.4 Licensing teachers

- The Commission for the Development of the Teaching Profession will identify the mechanism for evaluating teachers in order to be granted the license to practice the profession of teaching at the end of the period of probation.
- The current working teachers are automatically given the license (without evaluation) if they are educationally qualified, and after obtaining the educational qualifications if they were not qualified, or after achieving a BA degree if they have an associate degree. These teachers are given a temporary license until they fulfill the conditions required to receive a permanent one.
- The Commission will inspect the nature of the educational qualification of graduates from non-Palestinian universities, and will recommend their certification or determine any complementary education needed to be pursued by them to receive certification.

4.5 Improving the Process of Selecting and Employing Teachers

The process for selecting and deploying teachers in public and UNRWA schools should be improved, so that it:

- Focuses on evaluating the applicant's skills, knowledge, values and orientation, as specified in the vision for teachers in the introduction to this Strategy.

- Is reliable and valid.
- Is transparent, and the applicant knows, in advance, all the evaluation criteria.
- Gives the applicant some choice in selecting the school, and to the principal some choice in selecting the teacher.

4.6 Improving the Role of Teachers' Unions

Teachers' unions in government, UNRWA and private schools are encouraged, with the cooperation of higher education institutions and those of relevance from civil society, to give the professional aspect the needed attention for improving their participation in decision making in relation to the education profession, such as training teachers, supervising their continuing professional development, building networks between teachers, improving experience exchange and interaction and carrying joint action research.

4.7 The Range of the Recommendations

These recommendations form the basis for MoEHE decisions, and the decisions apply to all teachers in Public, UNRWA, and Private Schools in Palestine.

4.8 Time Framework for Implementing the Recommendations

- The above mentioned recommendations regarding the teaching profession should be implemented during the coming five years, that is, until the end of the scholastic year 2012/2013.
- Starting from the scholastic year 2008/2009, the priority in employment will be given to those educationally qualified. Those employed without educational qualification are offered a special contract and that will be renewed on a yearly basis, until they obtain the proper educational qualifying Diploma (specific to the stage and subject) in a maximum of a three-year period.
- Teachers with associate degrees will not be employed starting from the scholastic year 2014/2015.
- Teachers with an associate (two-year) Diploma will be assigned only in the fields where there are no B.A programs, such as music, arts or sports.

Unqualified teachers currently employed are given until the year 2019/2020 to get the proper educational Diploma. (Giving teachers the free choice whether to obtain an educational qualification or not, especially the older ones).

5. Managing the System



First: Situational Analysis

Supply, Demand, and Meeting the Needs of the Schools

Although huge numbers of students were accepted in education programs recently, not the best academic students were attracted; in addition to that most of them do not specialize in the necessary educational specializations. The percentage of graduates from higher education institutions in educational specializations and specializations potentially leading to the teaching profession (physics, chemistry, Arabic language, history, etc.) is fixed, and represents nearly half the number of graduates at the local universities. Alquds Open University graduates followed by Alaqsa University and Islamic University graduates form the biggest portion of education graduates, and most of these graduates specialize in Elementary Education or literary specializations in which there is already a big supply. The numbers of students in these universities is increasing rapidly as well. On the other hand, and because of the few numbers of students, some scientific specializations in some educational faculties at



Photo credit: UNICEF-oP/Steve Sabella

some higher education institutions have been closed recently, in addition to the closure of the pre-school BA program in one of the universities. The number of the students in Secondary School Educational Diploma programs is very small, and the number of the universities that offer this Diploma is also small, whereas it is expected that in the coming five years there will be a considerable increase in the number of students in the Secondary Schools. It is worth mentioning that the number of students at these educational programs is small because no teacher preparation is needed at the present to become a teacher.

As for the applicants for teaching positions, their numbers greatly exceed double the numbers of employed ones in any particular year. In general, the supply is more than the demand for teachers. There is a need for 3000 teachers annually in all teaching sectors, at Public, UNRWA, and private schools. Only 2000 teachers out of 38,000 applicants were employed last year at the Ministry of Education. This leads to a huge accumulation over the years of great numbers of applicants, whether they were qualified for teaching or not. Some positions, such as educational counselling, teaching Arabic language, teaching Islamic education, and Elementary education have more applicants than other positions, while teaching science in all its specializations, maths, computing and Information Technology have fewer applicants. MoEHE, in its second five-year plan 2007-2011, is working on guiding students to follow higher education according to the specializations in demand and society's needs. MoEHE is also working on finding a special system that guarantees directing and organizing the distribution of students according to the specializations in higher education institutions.

The Role of MoEHE in the Management of the Teacher Education System

Since there is no explicit policy for teacher education in Palestine, the management of the teacher education system at MoEHE is considered insufficiently developed. MoEHE also assumes its role, as set by law, to supervise and organize pre-service teacher education programs. MoEHE also appoints teachers, whether they are educationally qualified or not, and it offers in-service teacher education instead of focusing on continuing professional development.

The process of maintaining and improving quality in teacher education, whether on AQAC level, which is interested in university programs in general, or in the internal mechanisms to maintain and improve the quality of in-service and pre-service teacher education that is provided by the different parties (the Ministry, universities, UNRWA, relevant NGO's) needs development. It will be especially important that the Ministry adopts, in its second five-year plan 2007-2011, a focus on monitoring and improving the quality of education in the higher education institutions, as well as in auditing and controlling open education.

There is a need to develop the supporting human resources for teachers in the field of education; those resources are principals, supervisors, trainers and university educators. There is also a shortage of research about teacher education in Palestine, and about sharing and disseminating knowledge and experiences concerning teacher education.

Second: Setting the Ground for Recommendations

It is clear from the present situational analysis, that there is a need for organizing the quantitative side related to supply and demand for the teaching profession. The need to assure and improve the quality of teacher education and to facilitate teachers' continuing professional development is also obvious. Finally, the need to support MoEHE and develop its capacity to manage pre-service and in-service teacher education system is also recognized.

Third: The Recommendations

It is recommended to develop the roles of the Ministry of Education in managing, organizing and supervising the teacher education system. This requires:

5.1 Improving the Ministry's performance in organizing and supervising teacher education in order to ensure the graduation of efficient teachers in numbers appropriate to the needs of Palestinian schools.

5.11 Focus on developing internal mechanisms at higher education institutions to assure and enhance the quality of teacher education programs when accredited by AQAC.

5.12 Accredite teacher education programs regularly, in accordance with the regulations of AQAC.

5.13 Motivate students with high competencies to enroll in teacher education programs, and also encourage male student-teachers, especially in the specializations needed in schools (through decreasing the tuition fees, provision of scholarships, or providing early contracts for these students as teachers).

5.14 MoEHE, in cooperation with universities, conducts studies about the quality of the graduates

in different teacher education programs and their performance.

5.15 Improve the balance between supply and demand through:

- Conduct of planning studies which take into consideration the graduates from Palestinian universities as well as other universities, and the expected need for teachers according to school level and specialization, and the characteristics of applicants to teaching at MoEHE and UNRWA.
- Limit the numbers of students accepted into the different teacher education programs at each institution, and also specify the lowest average in the General Secondary Exam needed for admission into teacher preparation programs, in accordance with the privileges given to MoEHE in the 1998 Higher Education Law.
- Disseminate the results of studies about supply and demand regularly, so that prospective students can know their chances of employment after graduation from specific programs of teacher education.
- Require teacher education programs to provide MoEHE with statistics about the percentages of their graduates who are employed as teachers, so that MoEHE gathers, analyses and publishes the information.

5.2 Improving the performance of the Ministry in organizing and supervising programs for the continuing professional development of teachers.

5.21 Specify bodies within MoEHE that are responsible for specific functions (supervision, accreditation, organizing or offering services) in in-service teacher education that conform with the previous recommendation (3.2) related to this subject. (For example, who accredits in-service teacher education programs and the institutions that offer them? Or, which body/bodies, in the Ministry, is/are responsible for continuing

professional development of teachers and other workers in education such as principals, educational supervisors or educational counsellors?)

5.22 Accredite institutions that offer continuing professional development programs and activities, and regularly review and accredit their programs through periodic evaluations or reviews. This also applies to bodies at MoEHE that offer continuing professional development programs.

5.23 Educational supervisors and principals to evaluate teachers' needs for professional development according to the new criteria (as specified in recommendation 4.23)

5.3 Improving the Ministry's abilities to perform their previous tasks and supporting the personnel.

5.31 Develop the human resources at MoEHE. This includes providing continuing professional development for principals and administrators in different directorates and at the Ministry's central system (as in recommendation 3.32)

5.32 Build the capacity of AQAC, and enhance it to regularly accredit teacher education programs.

5.33 Develop the Educational Management Information System (EMIS), which is under construction, especially for its importance in identification of the needs for continuing professional development, and in improving the balance between supply and demand.

5.34 Establish a less centralized system at MoEHE to better meet the needs of schools and teachers and to empower them. This is especially important for the employment of teachers according to the needs of the particular schools and the desires of specific teachers. It is also important to better identify the needs for continuing professional development and to connect them with school improvement. Finally, this gives teachers and schools more important roles in planning school improvement activities and teacher professional development activities.

5.35 MOEHE to establish, in collaboration with concerned parties, the **Commission for Developing the Teaching Profession (CDTP)** to support MoEHE and AQAC in managing the teacher education system. The Commission should be an independent entity, composed from representatives from teachers and their unions, and from bodies working in teacher preparation and continuous professional development. The Commission submits its recommendations to MoEHE and AQAC in the following areas:

- Developing standards for Teacher Education Programs.
- Developing standards for programs that prepare special education teachers and school counselors.
- Developing standards for programs of Continuing Professional Development for teachers.
- Specifying the conditions for the promotion of teachers from one rank to another.
- Specifying the teacher standards in every rank, according to the school level and subject(s) taught.
- Specifying a mechanism to evaluate teachers in order to grant them a licence to teach.
- Specifying standards for the preparation of principals and educational supervisors

5.4 Making decisions about implementing and executing the strategy

5.41 MoEHE will specify a time schedule to announce the different recommendations and to start implementing the decisions that will result from these recommendations

5.42 MoEHE will manage the changes needed to implement these recommendations, for example, through holding workshops and circulating information to those in charge of pre-service and in-service teacher education programs, and through introducing the strategy to principals and teachers in different schools.

List of the names of members in the Teacher Education Reference and Consultative Groups

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Shahinaz Al-Far	MoEHE
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