



Lessons Learnt from Three Decades Supporting Education in the West Bank and Gaza

Key observations and takeaways from a recent EdData II
DEP-AME Case Study

October 2016

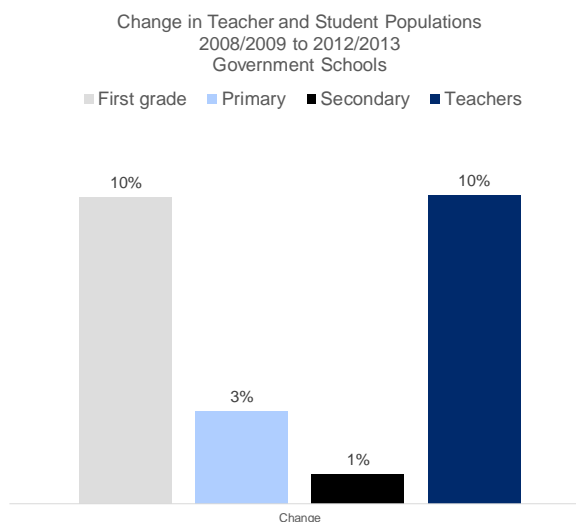
The Case Study was made possible by the USAID/EdData II Data for Education Planning, Asia Middle East Bureau Task Order

Purpose of this Presentation

- To provide an overview of the current status of the Palestinian education system
- To situate the USAID's programs within the historical context of the Palestinian education system and USAID's strategic support in the sector
- To highlight the lessons learnt, best practices and challenges of USAID's education and youth development work in the West Bank
- To share insights with colleagues who are implementing their own activities to improve access to quality education in very political and complicated contexts

The Palestinian Education System in Context

Population	2008/2009	2012/2013	Change
First grade	100,268	110,087	10%
Primary	963,991	992,470	3%
Secondary	145,135	146,495	1%
Teachers	33,468	36,763	10%



Source: 2014-2019 Education Development Sector Plan, Ministry of Education and Higher Education

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MOEHE Key Performance Indicators (2014-2019 EDSP)

Goal Level Indicators	SY 2012/2013 Baseline	SY 2018/2019 Target
Pre-School GER (KG 1 & 2)	47.3%	60%
Basic Education GER (1-10)	94.3%	96.1%
Transition Rate to Secondary	73.0%	74.8%
% Qualified Teachers (Pre-School)	65.2%	70.0%
% Qualified Teachers (Basic)	40.5%	88.5%
% Qualified Teachers (Secondary)	40.5%	88.5%

Source: 2014-2019 Education Development Sector Plan, Ministry of Education and Higher Education

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2013/2014 Grade 2 Early Grade Reading Assessment Findings

Subtask	Percentage of students with zero scores	Grade 2 average score	Proposed benchmark	Percentage of students performing at or above benchmark
Oral Reading Fluency – 60 seconds with diacritics (cwpm)	22.1%	16.7	22	32%
Oral Reading Fluency – 90 seconds without diacritics (cwpm)	10.9%	24.9	31	33%
Reading Comprehension – after 60 seconds with diacritics (max. 6)	35.7%	1.6	4.0	13%
Reading Comprehension – after 90 seconds without diacritics (max. 6)	25.9%	2.2	4.0	27%

Source: 2014 Grade 2 Early Grade Reading Assessment Report

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West Bank EGRA Findings – Comparison of Zero Scores

In comparison, the West Bank compares favorably to Jordan (2012) and outperforms other countries in the region

Place	All	Boys	Girls	Data Year
West Bank (Grade 2)	22%	27%	17%	2014
Egypt (Grade 3)	22%	25%	18%	2013
Iraq (Grade 2)	34%	37%	31%	2012
Jordan (2012) (Grade 2)	21%	25%	17%	2012
Jordan (2014) (Grade 2)	11%	16%	7%	2014
Yemen (Grade 2)	42%	45%	38%	2011

Source: www.earlygradereadingbarometer.org

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Performance on 8th Grade Math and Science TIMSS 2007 and 2011

Country	2007 Math	2007 Science	2011 Math	2011 Science	Math Delta	Science Delta
Palestinian National Authority	367	404	404	420	10%	4%
Egypt	391	408	NA	NA	---	---
Jordan	427	482	406	449	-5%	-7%
Oman	372	423	366	420	-2%	-1%
Qatar	307	319	410	419	34%	31%
Saudi Arabia	329	403	394	436	20%	8%
Syria	395	452	380	426	-4%	-6%
Regional Average	366	414	393	428	7%	4%
Center Point (Median)	500	500	500	500		

Source: 2007 and 2011 Trends in International Math and Science Study, International Reports

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Education System Characteristics

System Strengths

- Strong culture of education
- Emphasis on gender equality and opportunity
- Relatively small, manageable population
- Tightly linked planning and budgeting
- Joint Financing Arrangement

System Challenges

- Highly centralized, bureaucratic
- Department silos
- Financially constrained
- Administrative control (Area C)
- Many different school types

First group/level of schools	Number of schools	Percentage
(4-1)	137	8.35%
(9-1)	74	4.51%
(10-1)	122	7.44%
(9-5)	16	0.97%
(10-5)	14	0.85%
(12-5)	85	5.18%
(12-10)	72	4.39%
(12-11)	40	2.44%
Second group/level of schools	Number of schools	Percentage
1-2, 1-3, 4-7, and other		65.83%

Source: 2014-2019 EDSP, MOEHE

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Purpose of the Case Study

- To detail the historical context of USAID's support in the West Bank and Gaza
- To understand why programs in the West Bank are performing well in a highly difficult environment
- Share insights on best practices and lessons learnt that could be models for programs in other similar contexts

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Programs Examined (Development Partner in parentheses)

- Palestinian Faculty Development Program – 2005 to 2015 (AMIDEAST)
- Model School Network and Leadership and Teacher Development (2008 to present) (AMIDEAST)
- School Support Program (2013 to present) (AMIDEAST)
- Youth Entrepreneurship Development (2012 to present) (IYF)
- Partnership with Youth (2014 to present) (IREX)

Program	Period	Technical Focus	Model / Innovation(s)	Development Partner	Precursor Program
Palestinian Faculty Development Program	2005 to present	Quality and relevance of instruction in universities	-Centers of Excellence for Teaching and Learning -Community-based learning	AMIDEAST	None
Leadership and Teacher Development Program	2012 to present	Quality of instruction and leadership in basic and secondary schools	-Diploma programs -School-based management (SBM) -District Leadership Teams -Experiential, peer learning	AMIDEAST	Model Schools Network (2007-2012)
School Support Program	2013 to present	Quality of instruction and leadership in basic and secondary schools	-School-based guidance and counseling services -SBM -Diploma programs	AMIDEAST	Model Schools Network (2007-2012)
Youth Entrepreneurship Development Program	2014 to present	Youth development and workforce preparation, soft skills and leadership development in universities and schools	University-based Career Center services and tools -Personality assessment -Pathways to Success -Internship programs -Social Development -Building Your Business	International Youth Foundation	None
Partnership with Youth Program	2012 to present	Youth development and civic engagement	Youth Development Resource Centers	IREX	Ruwad (2005 to 2011)

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Defining Programmatic “Success” – Main Criteria

- Degree of counterpart ownership
- Demonstrated behavioral change
- Meaningful systems reform
- Gains in learning outcomes
- Positive changes in the organizational culture
- Clear pathways to sustainability
- Workable models for scale
- Opportunities for cross-program synergies and multiplier effects

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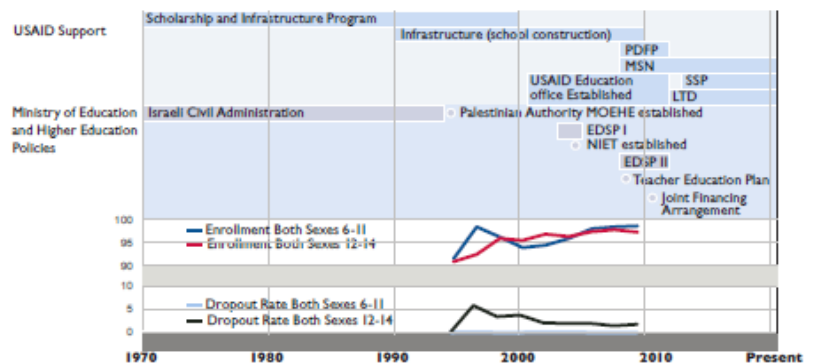
Case Study Methods and Activities

- Desk research and secondary source data (50+ articles and materials reviewed)
- Key informant and focus group interviews (appreciative inquiry)
 - USAID
 - MOEHE leadership
 - Implementing Partners (AMIDEAST, IYF, IREX, etc)
 - Counterpart institutions and beneficiaries (universities, schools, youth centers)

Historical Context – the Palestinian Education System and USAID's support

- **Pre-Oslo** mostly focused on scholarships and Infrastructure to support schools and nascent universities
- **Post 1994** – support to access and school facilities to help the fledgling Ministry and education system
- **Mid-2000s to present** – shift to quality and support to MoEHE's strategic priorities

USAID's support has been adaptive to the needs of the Palestinian education



****USAID's shift to focus on quality coincided with the Ministry's gains in access**

Ongoing Challenges Guiding post-2005 USAID Strategy

- Diminishing competitiveness of Palestinian labor, youth and graduates
- Dearth of soft skills produced by basic, secondary and higher education institutions
- Poor linkages between private sector and educational institutions
- Traditional instructional approaches perpetuate poor outcomes
- Systemic and capacity constraints faced by schools and the MOEHE
- Bureaucratic culture in universities tends to stymie innovation
- Youth centers and resources narrowly focused; not service or community-oriented
- Education and local communities not adequately preparing youth for the needs of the modern economy
- Engagement and accountability between schools and communities

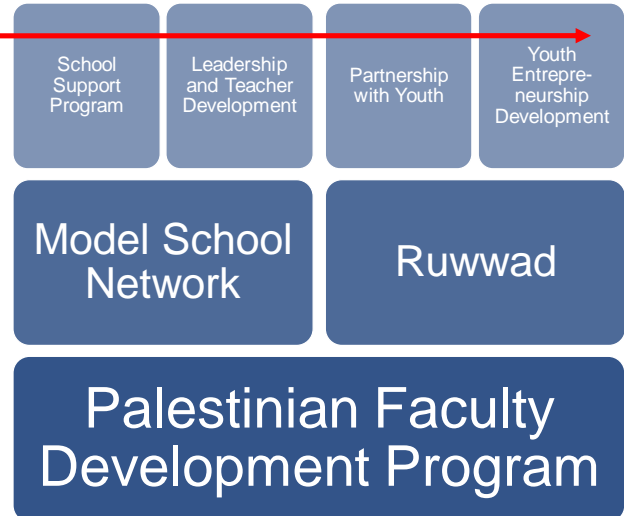
Discussion on Key Takeaways

Summary of observations and findings from the Case Study

Takeaway #1 : Consistent Strategic Focus Since 2005

Current programs have built on past successes and adjusted from lessons learnt

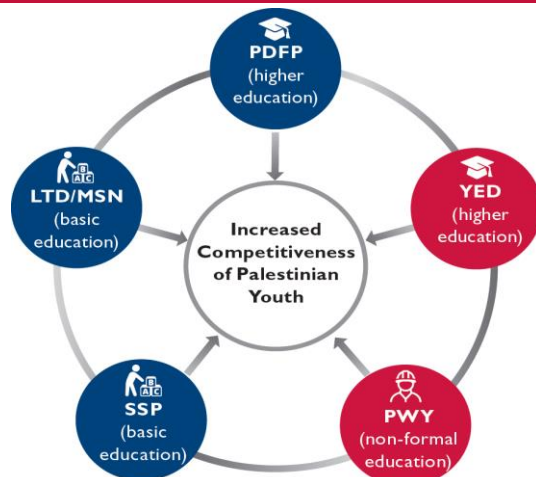
- USAID Education Office formally established in 2005
- USAID shifted focus to quality and systems in response to:
 - MOEHE's initial Teacher Education Plan
 - MOEHE's EDSP I, II and III



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Takeaway #2 – Program Coherence, Vision and Strategic Alignment

- Programs had a unifying objective
- Complementary foci across sub-sectors: basic, higher and non-formal
- Consistency of vision and purpose across all programs
- Programs aligned to counterpart strategic plans and priorities



The blue-shaded blocks reflect those programs that are predominantly focused on changing school culture and instruction; the red-shaded blocks reflect those programs that are focused on youth employment and development.

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Illustrative examples of Takeaways #1 and #2

Takeaway #1 – Staying the Course

- Diploma program introduced under MSN in 2008 was formally accredited by the MOEHE in 2012 under LTD
- Instructional practices introduced to universities in 2005 are now the basis for quality standards supported by Centers of Excellence for Learning and Teaching (CELTs)

Takeaway #2 – Program Coherence

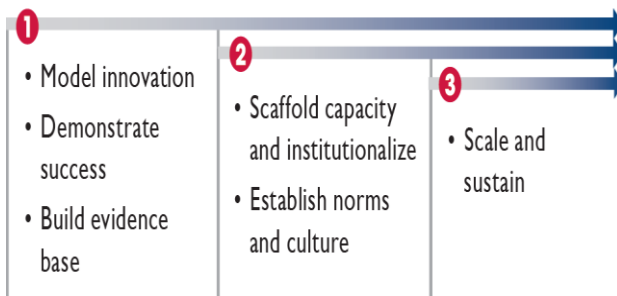
- Universities benefiting from PFDP supported Centers of Excellence (CELTs) and YED Career Centers have multiple channels to engage and respond to private sector demands and community needs
- Youth Development Resource Centers supported by PWY program make use of guidance counseling tools introduced under the YED program

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Takeaway #3 – Introducing innovative, workable models for evaluation, replication and scale

Modeling interventions for counterpart uptake

STAGES



Key Models Introduced

- School-Based Management
- Leadership and Teacher Diploma Programs
- District Leadership Teams
- Youth Development Resource Centers
- University Career Center Services
- University Centers of Excellence for Teaching and Learning

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Illustrative example of Takeaway #3

- The Leadership and Teacher Diploma programs have been formally adopted/accredited by the Ministry; the diploma programs have become the model for in-service teacher professional development
- Youth Development Resource Centers have become integral to community efforts for youth engagement activities; The North Hebron YDRCs is used as a multi-purpose facility providing a host of services to the community
- The CELTs for PPU and Bethlehem University have become integrated into the universities' strategic plans and institutionalized as a driver to advance education policies and practices
- PPU and An Najah Universities have earmarked budget and programs to sustain Career Center service offerings; PPU has made compulsory participation in at least two of the Career Center programs
- District Leadership Teams are formalized structures mandated by the Ministry with specified roles and responsibilities

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Takeaway #4 – the Models were generally responsive, practical and effective

- The innovations responded directly to needs articulated by counterpart beneficiaries
 - MOEHE need to establish effective, scalable in-service professional development
 - Universities need to better prepare youth for the workforce
- The innovations were practical, feasible and within the capacity of the counterparts to implement
- The innovations worked
 - Universities took up the Career Center services based on the demonstrable improvements in post-academic employment
 - The MOEHE took up the Diploma Program based on the demonstrable effect it had on the quality of classroom instruction and school leadership practices
 - YDRCs sustained their services based on the impact it has had on increasing membership and girls' and women's participation

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Takeaway #5 – Credibility and relationship with counterparts

- Seeds were sown during the 1970s and 1980s – scholarship alumni took on leadership positions in universities and the Ministry. They later became crucial champions for models introduced
 - Dr. Basri in the Ministry of Education
 - Dr. Abdulkarim in An Najah University
 - Dr. Said Assaf, LTD Chief of Party
- USAID has been visibly active with senior leadership and counterparts; is a trusted partner with the Ministry and universities.
- AMIDEAST has been working in the West Bank since 1962 and has an outstanding reputation in-country for providing a host of educational services



Photo credit: AMIDEAST. Dr. Said Assaf, LTD COP, addressing plenary at the North Hebron Regional Conference. July 2016

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Takeaway #6 – Program leadership matters (but it's not the only thing!)

- USAID's leadership and visibility has been consistent since the inception of the Ministry in 1994
- Dr. Said Assaf, the LTD Chief of Party is one of the "founding fathers" of the Palestinian Education System
- Dr. Mohammed Mbaid is a respected Palestinian authority on youth and entrepreneurship development

Perhaps the hardest thing to replicate is the unique stature of the individuals. However, their work ethic and leadership attributes can serve as models for other program leaders

(note the PFDP went through a number of COPs, as has the SSP, which illustrates the counterpoint that leadership is not the only thing)

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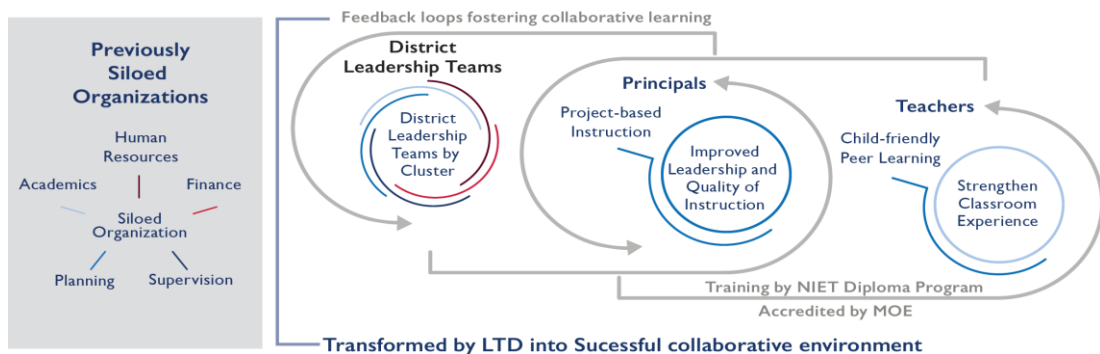
Takeaway #7 – Emphasis on experiential, project-based and peer learning

- The diploma programs under MSN/LTD require participants to undertake “projects” that are both experimental in nature, and focused on improving learning outcomes.
- CELTs assist university instructors to develop project-based learning courses that can range from community and social development programs to services for private sector industries.
- Under LTD, school principals and teachers meet on a monthly basis for in cluster meetings

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Takeaway #8 – Strengthening the monitoring/feedback systems pays off

- LTD established a feedback mechanism whereby the Ministry and Districts review and evaluate projects undertaken by diploma trainees
- District Leadership Teams were formed to coordinate school supervisory and mentoring activities
- LTD undertook comprehensive functional review of MOEHE which has led to continued engagement in their systems reform efforts



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Takeaway #9 – Programs adjusted to lessons learnt, adapted to needs

- YED shifted focus from schools to intensify support to universities based on the findings from the mid-term evaluation
- LTD shifted focus from relying on universities to strengthening Ministry agency for delivering the diploma programs
- YDRCs evolved from highly capitalized, resource intensive facilities under Ruwwad to service-oriented centers under PWY
- PFDP introduced CELTs to institutionalize instructional reforms and professional development opportunities for university lecturers and professors

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Takeaway #10 – Celebrating victories, sharing successes, garnering widespread recognition

- LTD/SSP schools recognized in national and international competitions
- Regional project conferences give chance to showcase projects and share ideas
- Publications generate evidence and research base for model effectiveness
- District Leadership Teams recognize high performing school leaders and teachers



Photo credit: AMIDEAST. School principals presenting their projects at the at the North Hebron Regional Conference. July 2016

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In Summary

Defining Success

- Counterpart ownership
- Behavioral change
- Systems reform
- Learning outcomes
- Organizational culture
- Pathways to sustainability
- Models for replication and scale
- Cross-program synergies

Factors for Success

- Take the long view, stay the strategic course
- Ensure program coherence
- Model innovations
- Demonstrate their effectiveness
- Cultivate credible partnerships
- Identify talented leadership
- Foster project-based, peer learning
- Strengthen feedback systems
- Adapt and adjust to lessons learnt
- Celebrate victories; share success

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Concluding Remarks

- The picture is not 100% rosy; the programs were not 100% successful
- But the models discussed under each program have led to significant change on the culture of educational institutions and the behaviors of the participants and counterparts
- The lasting legacy of the USAID-supported education programs may fundamentally be how the Ministry and Universities now view their role in preparing students and youth for the demands of the modern economy and the acumen for global citizenship
- Through these programs, they have the tools, the wherewithal and most importantly, the desire to do so

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