Educational Master Plan for East Jerusalem

International Peace and Cooperation Center
Introduction

The goal behind building the educational sector strategy is to move Palestinian education in East Jerusalem from the process of rebuilding to the phase of comprehensive and holistic planning that provides both quality and quantity and that addresses the economic and social development needs. IPCC proposes that this should be done through preparing a master plan for education that will provide; a clear and strong vision for high quality education, a well-defined implementation strategy and a long term plan to support employment. It is hoped that this will generate structural solutions that promote education in East Jerusalem and increase educational attainment.

The strategy should be built on three basic pillars: enrollment, quality of education, and management. In addition, it should respond to the needs of the market and society, as realized and defined according to international and universal criteria and standards. The plan should consider the education in various sectors: kindergartens, general education (basic and secondary stages), literacy programs, lifelong or continuing education, vocational and higher education.

The five-year strategic plan for educational development (2008-2012) which was prepared by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE), adopted the principle of participation of all partners in the process of planning, highlighted the education situation in Jerusalem and suggested expansion of programs and projects to support all aspects of education and found solutions to overcome challenges and obstacles. However, the JIIS master plan was prepared for municipal schools but not the private and the public schools, and rather than dealing with development and innovation, the plan dealt with shortage of classrooms not with development and education innovation as we suggest.

Education in Jerusalem will be given special attention, especially in the field of provision of schools, classrooms, improving teachers’ salaries and encouraging the donors to invest in education in Jerusalem. Loans and grants should be provided to students need in the higher education institutions in Jerusalem.
Education in East Jerusalem

The education system in East Jerusalem is hampered by severe overcrowding. The area available for every student in most cases is 0.5 square metres and this results in severe overcrowding. It is estimated that over 9,000 school age children do not attend schools and are outside the educational system, where the dropout rate reaches 10 percent. Several factors contribute towards this phenomenon including: lack of available lands for Palestinians in East Jerusalem to construct new schools; restrictions on the construction of new schools and/or expansion of existing schools; lack of available funding for infrastructure projects in schools.

The summary following represents the current situation, which is one of the most important phases of strategic planning (long-term or medium-term planning), and also important as it constitutes the basic reference to study and comprehend the current situation and to define the priorities of the next phase which is viewed as the most practical steps towards the aspired plan which should meet the short and long term needs and answer, at the same time, the problems of the current situation.

A further major problem in the educational system in East Jerusalem relates to the curriculum and the quality of education. Kindergartens in East Jerusalem lack a unified curriculum and suffer from weak supervision and follow up. Early childhood, primary and vocational education institutions in East Jerusalem do not have the equipment necessary to support and improve the quality of education and learning processes.

These institutions lack equipment such as computers, projectors, copiers, and educational aids. Equipment in vocational education centers is outdated and centers lack sufficient funds to keep up with the latest developments in their field of specialization, particularly in...
terms of rapidly evolving technologies and professions. The curriculum in vocational education centers require updating and adjustment to better meet market needs. East Jerusalem vocational education centers lack recognition of their certification in the Israeli labor market and are confronted with aggressive competition from Israeli vocational centers. They are further impacted by negative perceptions within the Palestinian community regarding vocational education.

The quality of education is jeopardized further by access restrictions imposed upon West Bank teachers who represent 70 percent of teachers in East Jerusalem and generally have superior qualifications. This situation is compounded by difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified staff which are attributed to recruitment procedures, salaries, and incentives. Educational institutions, particularly in non-Municipality run primary and vocational education establishments, are unable to provide appropriate continuous training programmers for their teachers and trainers.

Israeli access restrictions applied to students violate their right to receive a sound education. Checkpoints and occupation barriers have led to negative repercussions on female students in particular. Fearful families in turn place restrictions upon girls and young women that impede their access to education and which may escalate the gender gap.

The poor quality of education has been further exacerbated by weak institutional coordination in the provision of comprehensive services to students, particularly for children with special needs. Resources are scattered, thus hampering the possibility of pooling and exchanging expertise. Additionally, the education system in East Jerusalem needs to develop administration capabilities at all levels and in all types of education.

There is a serious shortage of classrooms in East Jerusalem. What emerges from the master plan, children in East Jerusalem are prevented from learning in the public education system due to classroom shortages.
FACT SHEET: Education in East Jerusalem

- Thousands of Palestinian children in East Jerusalem are unrecognized by the authorities and it is unknown if and where they are studying.

- Many of the children enrolled cannot find places in the municipal schools, and so must attend private schools.

- For educational institutions in East Jerusalem, which was published in the beginning of 2003, is that the Palestinian student population in urban schools in Jerusalem has grown in the past decade at an annual rate of 7% Ir-Amim Foundation estimates that there is a need to build approximately 160 classrooms a year—in order not to lose ground. By 2010 the shortage in classrooms is expected to reach 1,883.

- Homes are converted into classrooms, creating crowded conditions, windowless classrooms, lack of bathroom, etc.

- The Israeli law states that every pupil must have a surface of 120 square centimeters, but in East Jerusalem schools only 50 square centimeters is allotted to every pupil.

- There are a lot of pupils registered in more than one school. The place allocated for a child is blocked the moment. There are registration areas but the address of the parents is not correct. Parents write the wrong addresses in order to get rights."

- Today, about half of the Palestinian children in Jerusalem study in the public school system while thousands of others are forced to pay for their education, whether Waqf schools or schools of other unofficial systems. Many simply do not go to school at all.

- Just 29% of the Jerusalem Educational JEA budget is spent in East Jerusalem, even though East Jerusalem school children are 33% of Jerusalem children population. A recent JCSER study revealed that the volume of Israeli investment per Arab child in compulsory education in Jerusalem is NIS 1,424 compared to NIS 4,214 per Jewish child.

- In West Jerusalem there is one computer for every ten students, while in East Jerusalem there is one computer for every 26 students.
Types and Number of Schools and Students in East Jerusalem

In the Jerusalem Governorate, there was a total of 162 schools (80 run by the PA govt., 16 by UNRWA, and 66 by private bodies), of which 64 were located within the area annexed by Israel (24 run by the govt., 7 by UNRWA, and 33 by private bodies). Some 43.3% of the total students were enrolled in governmental schools, 27.1% in Israeli municipality and cultural committee schools, 20.6% in private schools, and 8.7% in UNRWA schools (PCBS, Jerusalem Household Survey, 2003).

The education system in East Jerusalem itself is divided into the 35 ‘government schools' maintained by the WJM, and 32 non-municipal schools, which are owned and run by either churches, the Waqf, or private bodies, and serve approx. the same number of students. Students in East Jerusalem schools study according to the Jordanian curriculum.

Of the 39,229 Arabs in Israeli municipal schools, 3,342 were in kindergartens, 614 in special needs education schools, 21,029 in primary schools and 14,244 in grades 7-12 (Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem, 2002).

A Ha’aretz article recently revealed that a report prepared by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies for the WJM – entitled "Master Plan for Educational Institutions in East Jerusalem" - shows that some 40% (or 400) of classrooms in East Jerusalem do not meet minimum standards. The report states that:

"7%-annual growth rate of Palestinian school-age children in the city, East Jerusalem schools need 40 new classrooms every year. To overcome the current shortage, residential structures are rented and converted into inadequate classrooms. East Jerusalem schools will lack 1,354 acceptable classrooms in 2005 (302 pre-school, 161 kindergarten, 289 elementary school, 403 secondary schools, and 199 special education classes), and of 1,833 in 2010". (Ha’aretz, 9 Sept. 2003).

Table(1): School-age Palestinian children in East Jerusalem in the 2009-2010 school year according to type of school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Percentage of Registered students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal schools (not including kinderkartens)</td>
<td>42,271</td>
<td>50.78%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognized but unofficial schools</td>
<td>20,603</td>
<td>24.75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waqf school</td>
<td>6,408</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private schools(including UNRWA schools)</td>
<td>13,955</td>
<td>16.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Registered students</td>
<td>83,237</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totalal School-age population</td>
<td>87,624</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
There are 72,724 students in East Jerusalem (37,735 female and 34,989 male students) and 197 schools. There are four providers of primary education services in Jerusalem: PNA; private sector; the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA); and Jerusalem Municipality.

Schools belonging to the private sector represent the largest share (51 schools) and absorb approximately 20,000 students. Fifty schools are funded by the Municipality and absorb over 37,000 students, which is the largest proportion of students. UNRWA offers education services to refugees and supervises a total of 3,400 students in eight schools. The figure below show the numbers in detail.

Jerusalem Municipality controls 205 educational institutions, including kindergartens, elementary, secondary and private schools. Fifty eight kindergartens are run by the Municipality and absorb 1,374 children. The application of an Israeli curriculum in Municipality schools has been accompanied by imposition of Zionist, Israeli ideology on Palestinian students. This has particularly been the case in the social sciences (i.e. history, geography and social studies) where new emphasis has been placed on the Jewish character of the country.
The Strategic Framework and Education Vision of Palestinian Education

The Palestinian development vision is considered the compass which guided the education vision of the five-year plan and the message of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, including developmental and economic values and approaches, human principles and rights dealing with justice and gender equality and access to education for all.

Idea

It is urgent that the educational sector in East Jerusalem be enhanced, focalized, and sharpened. IPCC proposes that this be done through preparing a master plan for education that would provide a clear strong vision for quality education, and a well-defined implementation strategy that would bring about system-changing solutions that promote the human capital, increase level of performance, and a long term plan to support employment.

Strategic objective

To improve the quality of education and learning in East Jerusalem.

Strategic Goals

- To increase school age children enrollment opportunities and improve the system's capacity to keep them in schools (enrollment).
- To improve quality of education and learning (quality).
- To develop the capacities in planning and management and improve the administrative and financial systems and their uses (Management).
- To achieve gradual transformation in the higher education sector from supply-oriented education to demand-oriented education because this will increase more harmony between the higher education outputs and the market needs (relational), especially with regards to higher education, including vocational and technical education.

Expected Outcomes

In order to achieve the above-mentioned goals; implementing these operational programs will lead to the most important expected results as follows:

1. **Enrollment**
   1.1. Increase in the student enrollment rates, including the students with special physical and psychological needs.
   1.2. Increased capacity of the system to keep students enrolled.
   1.3. Provision of education opportunities in the areas of literacy programs and lifelong or continuing education and supplementary opportunities for those who graduate from the literacy programs or continuing education.
1.4. Support to education in Jerusalem (reinforce national education in Jerusalem)

2. **Quality**
   2.1. Review of the Palestinian curriculum of formal education and literacy programs and continuing education.
   2.2. Reinforced employment of learning technology.
   2.3. Improved school and educational environment criteria.
   2.4. Reinforced and development of the competences of the teaching staff.
   2.5. Reinforced and development of the system of measurement and assessment.

3. **Management**
   3.1. Developed administrative systems to serve the educational goals.
   3.2. Developed planning system at all levels.
   3.3. Developed financial system for educational planning.
   3.4. Upgraded levels of competence of the administrative cadre at all levels.
   3.5. Developed cooperation and partnerships with universities and the civil society and partners in development.
Education Strategy and Methodology

Key policies for Jerusalem

1. **"Education for All":** The Ministry of Education and Higher Education is committed to provide quality education for all school age children in general education, higher education, vocational education, literacy education and lifelong or continuing education.

2. **Focus on Quality:** To focus on improving quality of education in the next phase and to implement the teacher rehabilitation national strategy, and there will be review and development of the general education curricula and school textbooks on a regular basis.

3. **Gender:** Despite the notable achievement of the education system in this regard, additional measures have been taken to bridge the remaining gaps between males and females in the rates of enrollment at all levels and in all kinds of education, and to encourage women to work in the field of education at all levels, especially in the highest decision making posts.

4. **Reducing Poverty:** To grant special attention and care to the poor through providing educational services in the marginalized areas and poorest areas, especially in the areas near the Apartheid Wall, and exempt poor students from school fees and open kindergartens in the poor remote areas.

5. **Students with Special Needs:** Additional efforts shall be exerted in the field of inclusive education and at all levels of education.

6. **Matching and linking education with socioeconomic development:** Special focus will be given to the process of linking education, especially in the post-secondary stage, to the labor market and the needs of the society.

7. **Science and Technology:** There will be improvement in studying science and technology with special attention to expanding the use of Information Technology and Communications in education at all levels and in computer related areas, and the policy of science and technology will be developed in higher education along with encouragement of relevant research.

8. **Role of the Private Sector:** To integrate strategically the private sector through holding consultations in the field of policies, especially in the fields of higher education, vocational education, kindergartens, literacy education and lifelong or continuing education.

9. **Improving Partnerships:** To coordinate and cooperate with the UNRWA and reinforce the relations with the private sector and international development partners, and have all partners join the dialogue on policies, planning, implementation, monitoring, regular review of the progress that will be achieved in the plan. The education strategic developmental plan
shall be a framework to improve partnership. Investment outside the context of the plan will not be encouraged.

10. **Planning and Organization Capacity:** Work will focus on developing systems to support planning decisions and skills and the implementation and management of the plan. Work will also focus on developing a training strategy in the relevant fields and on setting up and implementing and linking incentives with training. There will be assessment of the performance of the various units in the Ministry, directorates, higher education institutions and schools on the basis of the progress that will be achieved in the plan.

**Strategic response**

1. **Increase the number of classrooms and improve school infrastructure.**

This involves maintaining and rehabilitating existing schools, renting and/or purchasing buildings and undertaking necessary modifications to render them appropriate to serve as schools. It also involves the construction of new schools, and the development and improvement of the physical infrastructure of educational institutions. This includes sanitation facilities, playgrounds, lighting and ventilation systems, libraries, access facilities for those with special needs, maintenance of laboratories, areas for recreational activities, and ensuring safety precautions for students. The strategy will require legal advocacy to address the need for the Municipality to comply with its obligations as well as to address the limitations placed on building, construction and expansion.

2. **Strengthen education support structures.**

This involves: provision of equipment and furniture; overall human resource development, including training of staff and continuous education for educational professionals to improve the level of quality provided to students; development of educational aids and guidelines for teachers maintenance and upgrading of existing equipment in vocational education institutions; introduction of new technologies and teaching methodologies; raising awareness about vocational education within schools and in society; introduction of e-learning, particularly in primary education; development of a curriculum for early childhood education; provision of counseling services; activation of Parent-Teacher Associations; pooling of resources and expertise as well as technical facilitation to ensure coordination among educational institutions.

3. **Develop financial and administrative capabilities and systems.**

This focuses on building the financial and administrative capabilities of staff of educational institutions through capacity building, particularly within primary education. It also focuses
on the introduction of information technology (IT) to improve the performance of educational institutions and facilitate the sharing of data, resources, and expertise. Moreover, it concentrates on developing the planning and supervisory capacities of MoEHE’s Education Directorate and schools in East Jerusalem through establishing computerized networks linking them. This also includes training administrative staff in managing and using the computerized system. Legal and engineering support to the Directorate in planning for the rehabilitation and construction of existing and new schools shall be provided, as well.

Outcomes and Impact of the Master Plan for Education

Functions for the Palestinian sector:

- Responsibility for maintenance, safety, and cleaning services of educational institutions in East Jerusalem;
- Supervision of special education institutions;
- Cooperation and planning in construction of new educational institutions (in cooperation with the unit of physical and education planning);
- Regular use of inspectors;
- Training and placement of teacher assistants and secretaries;
- Management of transportation (mainly special education children);
- Transfer of monies for ongoing management of schools and kindergartens;
- Development of playgrounds;
- Management of training centers in East Jerusalem, including an array of continuous education programs for kindergartens and schools.

Functions of the JEA:

- Promotion of achievements and basic skills in Arabic, mathematics, English, and sciences;
- Programs to prevent school dropout, especially in preparatory programs and high schools;
- Programs helping children with learning disabilities;
- Programs for gifted children;
- Development of social education programs with an emphasis on reduction of violence;
- Activating school-based initiatives and cultural activities.