



1. Project Data

Project ID P111394	Project Name GZ:Teacher Education Improvement Project	
Country West Bank and Gaza	Practice Area(Lead) Education	
L/C/TF Number(s) TF-97315,TF-A1241	Closing Date (Original) 30-Jun-2019	Total Project Cost (USD) 8,000,000.00
Bank Approval Date 24-Jun-2010	Closing Date (Actual) 30-Jun-2019	
	IBRD/IDA (USD)	Grants (USD)
Original Commitment	8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00
Revised Commitment	8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00
Actual	8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

According to the Trust Fund Grant Agreement (page 6) and the Project Appraisal Document (PAD, page 5), the project objective was as follows:

- **To improve the competencies and skills of class teachers teaching grades one to four in West Bank and Gaza thereby contributing to enhancing student learning in primary schools.**



Additional Financing (AF) was approved for the project in order to scale up successful activities; key output and outcome targets were revised upward accordingly. Because of the *expanded* scope of the project, the split rating methodology is not applicable.

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?

Yes

Did the Board approve the revised objectives/key associated outcome targets?

No

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?

No

d. Components

1. Strengthening “School-based” Practice of Pre-service Teacher Education Programs - PRESET (Appraisal: US\$ 2.5 million; AF: US\$ 1.2 million; Actual: US\$ 3.6 million): This component aimed to improve the quality of graduates of teacher education programs by reforming and strengthening the school experience component of their studies, thus providing student teachers with effective professional learning experiences. The program was to be implemented in two phases, initially targeting a few higher education institutions to test the approach, then scaling up to all teacher education providers. Activities included: technical assistance to design and implement school-based practice programs using international good practices; training to staff at higher education institutions to implement the programs; upgrading teaching materials; and data collection/analysis for evaluation.

2. Upgrading Academic and Professional Teaching Qualifications of Under-qualified Class Teachers - INSET (Appraisal: US\$ 2.2 million; AF: US\$ 1.4 million; Actual: US\$ 3.5 million): This component aimed to upgrade the skills and competencies of approximately 3,500 underqualified teachers (out of a total of 4,400 in West Bank and Gaza) in grades one through four, to meet new standards for teacher certification. Activities included: technical assistance in assessing competencies and skills of current teachers; delivery of training modules to upgrade skills; and communication campaigns to inform unqualified teachers about the program.

3. Project Management and Implementation Support (Appraisal: US\$ 350,000; AF: US\$420,000; Actual: US\$894,000): This component aimed to support operations of the project implementation unit in the Department of Supervision and Qualification, as well as the National Institute for Education Training.

The AF added the development of accreditation processes through the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC), in order to validate the PRESET programs as per international standards and ensure the sustainability of the quality and relevance. Activities included: development of new courses in subject pedagogy; expansion of the mentor training program; portfolio development for evidence-based evaluation and production of a handbook; and finalization of a professional development index to inform and regulate the entire teaching career.



e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates

Project cost

- The project cost at appraisal was US\$ 5.0 million. AF revised the appraised cost to US\$8.0 million, which disbursed in its entirety.

Financing

- The project was financed entirely by Trust Fund grants in the amounts of US\$5.0 million and US\$ 3.0 million.

Borrower contribution

- There was no planned borrower contribution.

Dates

- *November 2015*: AF was approved, in response to events of 2014 (insecurity and blockade) that negatively impacted the fiscal situation for the education sector. The AF was also intended to scale up activities, due to promising progress thus far. Outcome targets were increased in accordance with the scale-up. Funds were also reallocated to increase financing for Component 2. The project closing date was extended from June 2015 to November 2019.

3. Relevance of Objectives

Rationale

As part of ongoing efforts to create a future Palestinian state, the governing Palestinian Authority (PA) has put forth national goals to achieve economic independence, through developing domestic capacities and resources. Thus, improved quality of the education system has been a focus area of the PA, which has provided significant budget support and directed donor investment to the education sector. At the time of project appraisal, despite the unstable political situation, enrollment in basic education was almost universal, and the gross enrollment rate for secondary education was nearly 80%. Access to education was mostly equitable, and the national curriculum had been developed. However, demographic shifts were overcrowding the system, and attendance/non-completion of basic education were emerging problems. Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE) prepared an education sector plan (FY 2008-12) that shifted from a focus on access to a focus on quality, with reform of teacher education as a critical element to improving quality. Teacher education programs at the time had an "outdated and



over-theoretical insufficient focus on the practicalities of actual teaching and inadequate teaching practice arrangements" (PAD, page 3).

The Bank Interim Strategy in effect at the time of project appraisal/approval (FY08-10) included Support to Human Development in Education as one of two key pillars (as quoted in the PAD, original document could not be located in the system). The Bank's subsequent Assistance Strategies in effect during the middle of the project period (FY 12-14 and FY15-16) had limited references to basic education quality, instead shifting focus to higher education with linkages to the labor market. The Bank's Assistance Strategy at project closing (FY2018-21) identified building skills for the private sector's labor market needs, via the education system, as a key upstream activity for outcomes in increased private sector investment and job creation. However, there were no explicit indicators or outcomes directly linked to basic education quality.

Relevance of the objectives is rated Substantial based on strong alignment with country conditions, although the Bank strategies had less explicit focus on basic education quality.

Rating

Substantial

4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

OBJECTIVE 1

Objective

To improve the competencies and skills of class teachers teaching grades one to four in West Bank and Gaza

Rationale

The theory of change was overall sound, with the two main project components (strengthening school-based training practicums for new teachers and upgrading qualifications of unqualified teachers) addressing both new cohorts and current inadequately trained cohorts of teachers, likely to contribute to the intermediate outcome of improved teacher competencies. This outcome, in turn, was likely to lead to the broader goal to improve student learning.

Improved competencies and skills - "readiness to teach" - were defined as having professional values and practices (i.e. consistent treatment and respect for students, positive attitudes, responsibility for performance), professional knowledge and understanding of academic content, and professional skills and application (i.e. setting learning objectives, managing time, planning lessons).

Outputs

- Development of the Readiness to Teach Index (RTTI), which was later expanded and refined into the Palestinian Teacher Professional Development Index (PTPDI). The PTPDI is a multipurpose-



competency framework and policy tool linking pre-service and in-service professional development programs under one harmonized and comprehensive competency-based performance framework. The PTPDI included a clear description of the skills involved at each stage of planning for teaching and learning, teaching to facilitate learning, and assessing and reporting learning progress and outcomes. The PTPDI represented the first teacher competency-based index in the Middle East region aimed at promoting a new culture of teacher performance and performance evaluation.

- Redesign of pre-service training programs, including development of handbooks and extension of the teaching practicum from four weeks to 14 weeks.
- Development of a student teacher mentorship scheme, which was implemented in 110 schools with 439 mentors. 33% of classroom teachers were engaged in mentoring student teachers (target: 33%).
- Development of a portfolio for evidence-based evaluation of student teachers.
- Development of an accreditation framework, including tools/procedures for application to teacher education programs. Although there were some initial delays in implementing the accreditation process, due to lack of leadership at the AQAC, by project closing all six participating institutions had received accreditation. Of these, five received unconditional accreditation, while the sixth program is working on implementing the panel's recommendations in order to secure full accreditation.
- Development of nine new modules for core curriculum areas, which integrated content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in accordance with international good practices. New modules included special education/inclusion and cross-curricular learning.
- Training of 167 INSET trainers.
- Formation of communities of practice and networks of participating teachers.
- Evaluative studies, including a series of classroom observations to assess teacher competencies and an end-of-project report that used qualitative evaluation techniques to assess project impact.

Outcomes

- In the pre-service training program (PRESET), the percent of class teachers graduating from teacher education and licensing programs in participating higher education institutions with readiness-to-teach scores above 70% was 96%. This surpassed the original target of 70% and the revised target of 80%. 2,352 teachers participated in PRESET during the project period, of whom 1,313 completed the training and graduated with the required qualifications, while the remaining 1,039 were still undergoing training at the time of ICR preparation.
- In the in-service training program (INSET), the percent of class teachers graduating with readiness-to-teach scores above 70% was 91.6%. This surpassed the original target of 70% and the revised target of 80%. 1,976 teachers participated in INSET (target: 1,800).
- The proportion of qualified class teachers/total number of class teachers increased from 39% in 2010 to 91.6% in 2019. This surpassed the target of 80%.
- 79% of beneficiaries (PRESET and INSET participants) felt project investments reflected their needs (i.e. satisfaction with impact, satisfaction with mentors). This fell short of the target of 88%.

In addition,

- In the PRESET program, according to two representative samples of student teachers observed, new teachers having finished practicum 5 showed improved scores in all competences included in the observation form except in two areas. In six of those areas of improved competences, there was a



statistically significant difference (to .05) between pre-/post- intervention observation results. In INSET, there were nine areas of competencies where improvements were statistically significant.

- The project was awarded the prestigious Times Higher Education Award for International Impact in 2018 in recognition of the "groundbreaking work undertaken in the project and the potential to replicate its strategic approach in other countries." Also, according to the ICR (page 18), the impact of the project "has been noted by other countries and has been referenced in other teacher reform programs. Vietnam presented [the project] as a model of effective reform in a major policy document while an OECD (2014) review of education in Egypt also cited it as a model of good practice."

Achievement is rated High based on surpassing of targets for indicators on improved teacher competencies.

Rating

High

OBJECTIVE 2

Objective

To contribute to enhancing student learning in primary schools

Rationale

Outputs

See outputs reported above under Objective 1.

Outcomes

- According to the end-of-project evaluation report conducted by an international consulting firm, teachers could identify key differences in their pupils as a result of changes that they had made in their teaching. This included: i) pupils cooperating and collaborating more; ii) pupils expressing their ideas and asking more questions; iii) an increase in pupils' confidence; iv) pupils being more creative; v) pupils being more interested and engaged; and vi) improved performance of students. The ICR did not describe or provide specific data that supported these findings. (The ICR did list the end-of-project evaluation report in a footnote and in the references, but no link or other means of access to the report was provided.)
- The ICR (page 23) noted that the country has not participated in international testing since 2014 and that the Early Grade Reading Assessment was conducted in 2013, but only in the West Bank with a non-representative sample of students. A national assessment system for Grade 5 was implemented only starting in 2017. Therefore, data on student learning outcomes is not available.

Achievement is rated Modest based on insufficient evidence on improved student learning.

Rating



Modest

OVERALL EFFICACY

Rationale

Overall Efficacy is rated Substantial based on High achievement of the first objective to improve competencies and skills of class teachers, with a Modest rating of achievement of the second objective -- to contribute to enhancing student learning -- based on insufficient data.

Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

5. Efficiency

The economic analysis at appraisal of the original project did not include quantitative analysis, but instead discussed potential efficiency gains for the education sector as a whole, due to investments in the quality of primary education (leading to reduced repetition and drop-out rates) and also increased earning potential for graduating students.

The economic analysis at completion (Annex 4) did include a rate of return analysis as well as a unit cost comparison. The rate of return analysis compared private monetary returns to students (who benefited from improved teacher instruction) to direct project costs. An estimated 91,400 primary school students benefited from instruction by a project-trained teacher. The "effect size" is based on assumptions related to improved student learning and estimated increase in future earnings. The estimated net present value was US\$81.9 million and the internal rate of return was 17 percent. For the latter, even with conservative assumptions of "effect size" on student performance/learning at 0.1 standard deviations and the number of beneficiaries at a quarter of students who were taught by project-trained teachers for two or more years, the project still yielded an IRR of 10 percent. The ICR suggested that, as extra benefits were not captured in this quantitative analysis (such as increased employability of graduates from the school system, increased demand for Palestinian-trained teachers in other countries, enhanced teacher well-being, reduction in teacher turnover, and even improved health outcomes and reductions in crime), the impact may likely be even higher.

The unit costs of implementing the INSET program compared favorably to similar interventions in other countries. The unit cost per teacher per day of face-to-face training, for the original project, was US\$ 23, while the unit cost for the AF period was US\$22. This compared favorably to similar interventions implemented by the Bank and an international NGO: Ghana: US\$101/day; Lebanon: US\$57/day; Pakistan: US\$62/day; Iraq: US\$186/day.

With regard to implementation efficiency, the project outputs and outcomes exceeded targets, including the expanded targets in the AF. The project closing date extension from 2015 was due to the AF only; both original



project activities and AF project activities were completed within their respective time periods. There were no fiduciary problems that could have led to implementation inefficiencies. According to the ICR, costs of project preparation and implementation support remained low (\$125,000 for preparation and an average \$75,000 for supervision per year). There were some minor implementation efficiencies, such as delays in signing contract approvals, disruptions caused by transfer of mentors, transition in the consultancy providing technical assistance for Component 2, and delays in the start of the accreditation program; however, these were mostly resolved during the AF period.

Based on the favorable economic analyses and implementation efficiencies, Efficiency is rated Substantial.

Efficiency Rating

Substantial

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	17.00	100.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

Relevance of the objectives is rated Substantial based on strong alignment with country conditions, although the Bank strategies had less explicit focus on basic education quality. Overall Efficacy is rated Substantial based on High achievement of the first objective to improve competencies and skills of class teachers, but Modest achievement of the second objective (to contribute to enhancing student learning) due to lack of specific data on achievements. Efficiency is rated Substantial based on the favorable economic analyses and implementation efficiencies.

Overall outcome is rated Moderately Satisfactory based on insufficient evidence of outcomes achieved for the objective to contribute to enhancing student learning, as the modest achievement of that objective is indicative of moderate shortcomings in the project's preparation and implementation.

a. **Outcome Rating**
Moderately Satisfactory

7. Risk to Development Outcome



The project support the institutionalization of key programs - PRESET, INSET, accreditation, and teacher professional development through PTPDI - all of which appear strongly likely to be sustained as policy reforms/institutional frameworks. However, there remains some uncertainty with regards to financial sustainability. PRESET activities are likely to be sustained, as they are financed by traditional sources such as student tuition and revenues from teacher institutions. However, INSET and AQAC rely on MOEHE budget support, which in turn is heavily dependent on donor support. The ICR also noted some reluctance on the part of the MOEHE to put in place policies and measures regarding the career promotion of teachers, due to the politically sensitive nature of such interventions.

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

The Bank has played an active role in the education sector, through the donor Education Sector Working Group, and has helped to draw attention to issues of quality. Through policy dialogue, the Bank has helped to cultivate strong ownership by the MOEHE and higher education institutions over the policy goals of the project. The lengthy preparation period, almost two years, resulted in a solid consensus among most stakeholders, a detailed plan of action, continuous dialogue, and transparency, all of which helped to ensure project effectiveness. The risk assessment rated overall risk as High, due to the unstable political and security situation, and to potential deterioration of operational conditions in Gaza (compared to the West Bank). The mitigation measures adequately focused on flexibility in project design and supervision arrangements to respond to the risks. The ICR noted one minor shortcoming in the pilot phase, the lack of an awareness campaign (among school principals, district supervisors, and targeted unqualified teachers), which could have helped to develop a common understanding of the sector reforms and prevent some initial implementation delays for INSET activities.

The results framework was simple and straightforward, with a strong M&E plan to track implementation progress and evaluate various aspects of the project to inform implementation and to measure impact; however, a key shortcoming was the lack of indicators to measure the project objective to enhance student learning.

Quality-at-Entry Rating
Moderately Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

The political and security situation in West Bank and Gaza posed ongoing challenges throughout the project period, including budget constraints, suspension of teacher pay, teacher strikes, and travel restrictions. In particular, the limitations on travel to and from Gaza led to relocation of project workshops, cancellation of travel permits for study tours, and limiting of contact with project personnel in Gaza to videoconferencing only. Also, there were five changes of Ministers of MOEHE in the period 2008-2019, which led to some delays in signing of contract approvals for goods and TA, although the long tenure of



the Deputy Minister of MOEHE helped to ensure that there was an effective champion and line manager for the duration of the project.

The Bank team used the opportunity of project restructuring and AF to further cement achievements of original project, as well as to refine the project design based on lessons learned (lessons on the focus on class teachers vs. subject teachers, the subject-based vs. integrated approach to teaching and learning, logistical issues with mentors transferring to other schools and taking on additional workloads with mentoring responsibilities, lack of supervision time to observe practicum classes). However, the ICR reported (page 10) that the project was seen to be "a very influential project by MOEHE senior officials as it proved to be of great impact amongst the different players in the education sector. In fact, [the project] had led other donors to invest in the professional development of in-service teachers, chief among which was the USAID parallel project for lower secondary teachers (grades 5 to 10)." There was satisfactory fiduciary performance throughout the project period with no problems reported, as well as strong M&E implementation of both project monitoring and evaluative activities.

Quality of Supervision Rating

Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

The M&E design included project monitoring to track progress as well as evaluative studies to assess impact. The results framework was simple and straightforward, with the indicators clearly linked to project outputs and intended outcomes. One important shortcoming was that despite the inclusion of "enhanced student learning" in the project objective statement, there were no indicators on student learning in the results framework.

Several modifications were made to the results framework at the time of project restructuring, to further refine wording and measurement of indicators. Evaluative studies included two sets of internally administered evaluation studies of PRESET and INSET, the first one covering the pilot period (2010-2015), and the second covering the AF (2016-2019) (satisfaction questionnaires, focus groups, classroom observations, teacher performance evaluations); there was also an external impact evaluation study covering the entire project period.

b. M&E Implementation

Implementation progress was regularly tracked through indicators that were updated using three sources of information: the student registries of the PRESET and INSET training institutions, data from satisfaction surveys administered by the MOEHE, and AQAC's accreditation process. Evaluation studies were conducted as planned. Implementation capacity was supported through the addition of a part-time



M&E Officer responsible for updating project monitoring information, and also TA to help MOEHE carry out the internally-managed impact studies.

c. M&E Utilization

According to the ICR (page 24), the following were examples of use of M&E: project monitoring data and initial impact studies informed preparation of the AF; and the project introduced the concept of evidence portfolios as effective instruments for self-assessment.

M&E Quality Rating

Substantial

10. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project was classified as an Environmental Category "C" project, and therefore no environmental assessment was required. No other safeguard policies were triggered.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial management: Financial management (FM) performance was rated as satisfactory by all supervision missions. The ICR (page 25) stated that the project coordination unit maintained a sound FM system that was able to generate accurate and timely financial information including on budgeting, internal controls, accounting, fund flows, external auditing, and financial reporting. Interim financial reports were prepared and submitted regularly, and eight audit reports were undertaken during the project period, all unqualified. One minor issue noted by the ICR was the delay in some payments caused by occasional requirement changes from the Ministry of Finance.

Procurement: Procurement performance was rated satisfactory by all supervision missions. The project procurement unit adhered to Bank procurement procedures, and no major issues were identified during the implementation support missions. Eight annual ex-post procurement reviews were carried out, concluding that procurement was generally carried out in compliance with Bank Procurement Guidelines and Grant Agreements with no incidence of corruption.

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

None reported.



d. Other

11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Overall outcome is rated Moderately Satisfactory based on insufficient evidence of outcomes achieved for the objective to contribute to enhancing student learning.
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	Quality at Entry is rated Moderately Satisfactory due to shortcomings in the results framework.
Quality of M&E	Substantial	Substantial	
Quality of ICR	---	Substantial	

12. Lessons

Lessons drawn from the ICR (pages 28-29) and adapted by IEG:

- The presence of a committed leader at the Deputy Minister level can counter any negative impact from multiple changes in Ministers of Education due to geo-political transitions. In the case of this project, the Deputy Minister served a long tenure during the lengthy project period, despite five changes of Minister of Education, championed the project concept, and governed over the various implementing entities, supported by an effective project coordination unit.
- A teacher accreditation framework/process can serve to harmonize the work of different stakeholders in the teacher education sector. In the case of this project, the accreditation process included establishing formal relationships among teacher education institutions, mentor schools, and mentee schools, as well as coordinating the work of different units within the Ministry of Education.

13. Assessment Recommended?

No



14. Comments on Quality of ICR

The theory of change and sound, with the results framework simple and straightforward given the fragile environment. The ICR was strongly results-oriented, notable for the high quality of evidence that went beyond the original results framework (i.e. reporting data on actual improved scores on teaching performance). One shortcoming was the minimal discussion of the lack of indicators to measure the project objective to "contribute to enhancing student learning." Reporting on M&E implementation and utilization was strong, despite the lack of data on student learning outcomes. The analysis of efficiency was of good quality, offering both quantitative analyses and discussion of project implementation efficiencies. Lessons were specific and clearly derived from project experience.

a. Quality of ICR Rating Substantial