

"Strengthening the institutional capacity of Arab Universities in support of policy, management and planning at national and regional levels"

Project background

In a globalised world where knowledge creation is essential and competition becomes critical, Higher Education Institutions are put under pressure to formulate, discuss and communicate clear priorities and focus on efficient management, planning and resource processes to achieve excellence and ensure continuous performance improvement. In recent years, many Arab Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has been adversely affected by economic social and even political conflict situations as well as by diminishing financial resources.

In view to this, **the overall objective of the project is to strengthen the institutional capacity of Arab Universities in support of policy, management and planning at national and regional levels** in order to meet accountability needs and successfully address growing demands upon Arab HEIs, despite diminishing resources.

Objective

A major mean capable to simultaneously generate improvement of Universities management, planning capacities and overall institutional performance is the development and embedding of a quality culture for institutional quality assurance within HEIs. Referring to the European experience and the statement of the Berlin Communiqué stressing that “the primary responsibility for assuring quality lies with higher education institutions”, it is evident that putting in place effective mechanisms for assuring quality within an institution enables a critical self-analysis of its programmes, its institutional capacities and its services as well as formulation of recommendations for improvements. In consequence embedding quality culture and continuous implementation of self-assessment mechanisms within HEIs may lead to increased efficiency of planning, administrative and management of Universities.

In view to this, the specific project objective addresses the **Development of sustainable Quality Culture and Capacity Building Quality Assurance in Arab Universities (AUs)**.

Outcomes and outputs

1. Enhanced managerial and administrative staff capacity in implementation of quality assurance and assessment techniques.

Intangible outputs: Enhancement of knowledge concerning the techniques and models for assessments of institutional services, academic programmes; enhancement of strategic skills in implementation of quality culture within the Universities' mission, managerial and administrative skills for the operation of the Q-Units acquired.

2. Sustainable structures for the implementation of quality culture strengthened at ten Arab Universities;

Tangible outputs: Capacity of 10 Q-Units strengthened; adapted IT and data-base technologies, 10 homepages for the units established- 10 Q-Units fully operational until the end of the first project year;

3. Developed methodologies for quality assessment and pilot assessments at ten Arab Universities implemented;

Intangible outputs: Enhancement of self-assessment practices through practical implementation of pilot assessments, Methods and processes for students and teachers involvement in self-assessment practices developed and tested.

4. Increased innovation, efficiency, strategic thinking and ideas for self-improvement through development and adoption of a long-term strategy plan for quality assurance at Arab HEIs;

Intangible outputs: Increased innovation, efficiency, strategic thinking and ideas for self-improvement at university level.

5. Increased awareness for quality culture through the development and dissemination of a Guide for the Promotion of Institutional Quality Culture in Arab Universities

Intangible outputs: Reflection of the specific local context for the implementation of quality culture within the Arab Universities; Summary of the experience gained within the project will serve as a basis and best-practice for other Arab Universities;

6. Increased inter-institutional networking and sharing of best-practices for the promotion of quality culture within Arab countries