

## **Consultation Report**

### **The Palestinian Commission for Mathematics (RAFA'H)**

#### **1. Given that there are clear benefits of education, why do you think people have not acted and invested in education at the level needed?**

##### **At the policy level:**

In our region, education is not one of the main priorities to decision makers, despite the fact of the clear benefits of and from education,, policy makers are still too busy with political, ideological, and personal issues and conflicts, for that education is still suffering.

In many cases, politicians used to invest in “engineering educational outputs” rather than “engineering for the outputs”; they are not investing in educational inputs, processes, or context, but in “the show-game for having artificial high quality outputs/outcomes”

In many countries, educational policy makers are coming from non-education sectors/backgrounds, and this may cause the miss planning for education, resulting in this failure of the educational systems, that produce a bad image of education.

From other perspectives, some leaders still in believe that it is easy to control non-educated pupils, rather than controlling educated ones, so why education?!!

##### **At the impact and benefit level:**

Since the impact of education is a long-term issue; that may take decades to realize this impact, investing in education still considered to be one of the risky games at the short term, and this may shift the intention from focusing on education toward other domains that may give immediate/ short term impact.

##### **At the community level:**

The issue of huge rates of unemployment among educated graduates in the region may lead/encourage parents not to invest in educating their kids, they prefer to have their kids uneducated, for free jobs that are not in need for “a high educated people”.

(In Palestine, more than 42000 candidates apply for the placement tests to be teachers for only 2000 Jobs)!!

## **2. What do you think has been the biggest single obstacle to raising educational quality in developing countries?**

The dramatic political changes that may cause mis-planning for education is the “most” single obstacles, Other obstacles are:

- Teacher quality, assuming that quality of education cannot exceed quality of teachers.
- Economic crises and poverty.
- Huge infant birth rates.
- Low quality curricula.
- Tackling educational reforms as single/fragmented issues not one system.
- Traditional style of teaching that focus on memorizing and teaching for score not for skill.
- Teaching to the test, but a bad test... “teaching to the test is not bad if the test is good”

### **2b. How can we overcome this/these obstacle (s)?**

Education is a wide sector. In Palestine one third of the population are in schools. Reforming this sector is not an easy task, but with collaborative approach of work, changes and reform will be applicable.

To overcome such obstacles, some strategies and activities might be proposed:

- Enhancing an effective accountability system.
- Investing in capacity building programs with special focus on the impact of these programs on the real life situation.
- Developing assessment and evaluation strategies that promote commitment and engagement of all stakeholders.
- Enhancing student–centered teaching and learning strategies.

## **3. For those countries that have made the greatest improvements in education in recent years, what do you think have been the critical factors in their success?**

- Strong accountability and transparency systems.
- Tackling educational reform as “system issue” not “single issues”.

- Proper use of policy-oriented researches in informing policies and decision-making.
- More budgets/funds for education at the national level.
- Investing in teachers and teaching as respected profession.
- Utilizing assessments' findings in developing remedial programs, reforming national curriculum and developing teacher education programs.
- Reaching schools with assessments' findings to be used by teachers and head masters in action researches at the school level.

#### **4. How do you think education/school will look different in 2030?**

It depends on the region. In developed countries, schools will be more attractive, child-friendly ones, with more ICT use, and more community involvement/participation.

In developing countries, especially in the Arab region, one still can't predict the future of education/schools with this amalgam and hazy situation; were ideologies control politics and control also educational systems.

But we all hope that investment in education will become one of the priorities, and “quality education for all” to become the slogan of the future, to have:

- Schools open for 24 h, 7 days for community use.
- Schools open for the society, out of the black box.
- More learning for life and from life.
- More digitalization of education: e-curriculum, e-testing, e-teaching.
- More fun in schools.
- With more “intentional” free time and playing.
- More learning by doing.

#### **4b. What implications does this have on the Commission's recommendations?**

- Involving more policy-makers in this discussion/consultation.
- Advocating for the consultations' results on the post 2015 agenda at the international, regional and national levels.
- More involvement of donors and private sectors in this process of consultation.
- More focus on quality issues, rather than quantity.
- More networking with ministries, NGOs, and individuals.

- Establish a solid “think tank” bases through developing action plans and frameworks that facilitate any future actions.

## **5. What will be the most important (new) sources of finance for global education over the next decades?**

- More funding from Communities.
- More funding from private sector.
- More funding from companies that benefit from researches.
- More volunteers and voluntary work.

### **5b. How could these sources be harnessed?**

Best ways of attracting those future "donors"/ supporters are:

- By enhancing public participation, and ownership with communities.
- By opening schools to be part of the society.
- For private sector, we can “further” engage them in educational issues through media and advocacy events/ campaigns, showing that investing in education is the best way in developing economy.
- By reallocating national budgets from army and military funds to fund education.