

British Council Work in Jordan / Higher Education, Research and Innovation

The British Council creates opportunities for people worldwide by helping societies achieve change in education, civil society, skills, the public sector and justice. Working closely with governments, donors and businesses, we deliver value for money international development solutions that are both effective and sustainable.

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INTRODUCTION

The British Council, established in 1934, is the UK's international organisation for international educational development and cultural relations, employing more than 7000 staff globally.

Education is at the core of our work in promoting sustainable human development. We connect our partners in education with expertise and the best ideas from the UK and around the world.

The British Council has extensive experience in delivering education programmes in a variety of contexts. We manage large sector wide programmes for a range of donors, as well as smaller in-country programmes. We engage in order to build trust and a mutual understanding of values. We work in all areas of education from **primary school to Higher Education, and also in Vocational Education/Skills**. Our main focus is building capacity and improving performance through working effectively with stakeholders and with project partners.

We are well networked through our on the ground presence, with offices in over 110 countries around the world. We employ national staff in management positions which strengthens our relationships with international and national organisations, as well as giving us better knowledge of the local context.

In Middle East and North Africa (MENA) we have designed and delivered programmes for the EU (the British Council has delegated cooperation status having passed the six pillar assessment), DFID and private donors in different education sectors, and have offices all across this region with significant education programmes. The team consists of experienced Technical Assistance managers, as well as sector specialists with practical experience of the region.



BRITISH COUNCIL IN JORDAN

The British Council has been present in Jordan since 1948, with offices in Amman on Rainbow St. We have more than 100 staff, who deliver our overall services and projects across English, Arts, Education, and Civil Society.

In Jordan all of our work in these areas supports the themes of 'employability' and 'voice', making a real difference in the lives of the people with whom we work. We enjoy good relations with, and easy access to, key decision makers in across the realm of our portfolio.

We have a structure that supports excellence in project management. In each of our in-country programmes portfolios we have well qualified Project Managers who have responsibility for initiating and overseeing various development projects in coordination with regional leads. Projects are typically implemented in-country by experienced sector focused project managers. They are supported by our UK-based Strategic Business Units cadre. We have unique knowledge of, and access to, the best products and project management expertise in the UK, from which we draw for our projects, as required.

We work with government bodies and non-governmental partners to effect systemic improvements, and work with social partners to bring about improvements in the wider social and economic context. Our work with governmental sector is through a multitude of projects; Connecting Classrooms with Ministry of Education; Internationalization of Higher Education program with the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission, as well as public universities. Equally we collaborate with a very diverse range of non-governmental partners, from both civil society and the donor arena. We engage with the former through grant activities, capacity building, cascading and other work as appropriate, for the latter we deliver through service contracts or co-funding partnerships.

For specific details on partners and work in Jordan please see <http://www.britishcouncil.jo/en/programmes>.

OUR WORK IN SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION IN JORDAN:

Our work in Jordan is anchored in response to the priorities of Jordan and increasing the exchange between Jordan and UK in our areas of work.

Our education portfolio, and specifically our Higher Education Program is in direct alignment with the key strategies of Jordan; Jordan 2025 Vision blueprint, and The National Human Resource Development Strategy.

In relation to the former, which aims to internalise SDGS, all our work addresses issues of youth bulge and the need to equip them with the right education and skills to succeed in life As well as working with state stakeholders to increase their capacity to respond to challenges exacerbated by the regional crisis.

As for the latter, the British Council has been a key contributor to the "thinking" and development of the National Human Resource Development Strategy. Providing access to UK expertise in the areas of improving quality of education across the spectrum. Our local knowledge, expertise in education, and access to UK best practice was drawn on by the head of the committee tasked with the development of the Strategy in 2015.

The main aim of Internationalization of Higher Education Programme is to enhance UK leadership and shared learning from international education and work with our partners in Jordan on issues such as quality assurance and curriculum reform. We also provide audiences with global education market intelligence products.

We do this by:

- facilitating the development of sustainable partnerships based on research and/or teaching agendas involving various local, regional and international funds
- building on the success of our work in HE contribute to systemic change in quality assurance in HE in Jordan
- promoting Enterprise and Skills Development among young people



- promoting Education in the UK and strengthening the network of UK programme alumni as advocates for change in education

Our specific projects in Jordan in Higher Education:

SYSTEM TO SYSTEM LEARNING AND REFORM OF EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES IN JORDAN

Support to the Establishment of Al Hussein bin Abdullah II Technical University as a transnational education co-operation between UK and Jordan:

The British Council was the first party that the Office of the Crown Prince reached out to as they were conceptualizing this novel educational institute.

This was a significant opportunity to influence the Jordanian education system at both policy and practice levels and at the highest levels in the country – resulting in significant visibility for brand UK education and opening doors across the board in transfer of expertise spanning employability, skills and innovation. The Institute is set to be the very first national project championed by the Crown Prince and is led by the Royal Court Education and Skills Advisory Unit. This landmark institution is set not only to be a benchmark education and training institute, but a beacon of reform in the stalemate facing the TVET sector in Jordan. British Council and UK are positioned to part of all of these innovations and transformation – supporting socioeconomic development and ultimately security of the country.

The proposed Technical education institution plans to decrease the nexus of quality, uptake and mismatch with labour market needs; locally, regionally and internationally. This institution will be a driver of reform of TVET through its mere existence; outdated TVET laws will need to be rewritten and a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) will have to be developed and adopted.

As a result of involvement in shaping and advising the development of this institute, cooperation and articulation discussions with UK HEI are underway.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The British Council in Jordan, and in cooperation with UK expertise and QAA, partnered with the Higher Education Accreditation Commission to build institutional capacity in QA certification in Jordan for HEIs.

Our contribution and support led to the revision of the first draft of the Jordan QA standards. We also provided training and capacity building for self assessment in HEIs.

As part of this work, we conducted research on knowledge, attitudes, and practices to Quality Management in HEI in Jordan. As a result of this, a focus on the teaching and learning QA standard has been recommended for all HEIs, and as a stepping stone for wide spread uptake of QA certification.

HIGHER EDUCATION INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP

In our aim and strategy to support the education sector, and stakeholders in Jordan, to respond to the changing context and dynamics of higher education, we embarked on introduction of the Entrepreneurial University Framework to HEIs in Jordan.

This is in alignment with the global movement to support the transformation of a traditional research universities into entrepreneurial universities. Globally, the number of such transformations is increasing due to the reduction in the university funding from government sources and the emergence of a competitive market for education and research. If universities do not become agents of innovation, i. e. entrepreneurial universities, they will hamper regional and national development as well as international competitiveness. The situation is even more amplified in Jordan.

Based on information from the Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research MOHE in Jordan, there are 29 public and private universities in Jordan covering different disciplines and use the credit-hour system. In the academic year 2012/2013 there were 249.432 students enrolled in Jordanian universities. Economic and Administrative Sciences had the highest percentage of students (25%). The Jordanian government works on directing universities towards entrepreneurship and teaching leadership through its offices (such as Queen Rania Center for Entrepreneurship in collaboration with Intel Corporation). The Government pushed universities into adopting an entrepreneurship role in order to graduate better quality students.



Whilst a multitude of enterprise support services, incubators and financing specifically targeting youth (aged between 18 – 30 years) exist in Jordan and throughout the region, these seldom effectively include the university itself. Indeed, the university as a key institutional stakeholder within the entrepreneurship eco-system is often absent. To ensure they graduate optimally skilled and employable graduates, universities here must consider their own entrepreneuring enacted through their institutions, staff and students.

Our work to develop models of Entrepreneurial Universities is in partnership with Queen Rania Center for Entrepreneurship - Jordan , and a number of higher education institutes in Jordan and in collaboration with Plymouth University-UK

The project as initiated in 2015 and brought together 32 HEI and mapped a 4-dimension framework to teach enrolled how to bring in entrepreneurship concept to the university strategic plan, leadership and culture.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Professional Career Development for Early Career Academics in Jordan

To enhance the performance and competitiveness of the Jordanian higher education sector, Jordanian higher education institutions (HEIs) must invest in the preparedness and readiness of their academic staff. Whilst academic staff in Jordan are highly qualified within their respective specialisms, this is no longer sufficient for regional or international competition where the positioning of Jordan's higher education sector is stagnating.

The overall aim of the proposed programme is to deliver a certified professional development training programme for early career academics (ECAs) in Jordanian universities. This program is under the auspices of the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and in partnership with Plymouth University-UK. The aim is to develop local capacity through a training of trainers programme for the staff of the Faculty Development Centers in all 32 HEIs in Jordan.

RESPONDING TO HIGHER EDUCATION NEEDS OF REFUGEES:

1. Language, Academic Skills and E-Learning Resources (LASER)

This EU-funded programme of 4 Million Euros and run in partnership with key UK, international and local partners: (OU, Talal Abu Ghazaleh/Amety University, Jordan Education Initiative, NRC, and Local NGOs such as Johud and a local CBO run by Syrians - SAB) and over a three-year period will deliver language and academic skills training to 3,100 Syrians as well as to disadvantaged Jordanian and Lebanese students in host communities affected by the crisis.

The project provides access to and support for, accredited on-line higher education courses for approximately 350 students (around 35% of language learners) who have performed best in the language and academic skills courses. The participants selected for the on-line courses (some of whom will have had their studies in Syria interrupted by the crisis) will have the opportunity to continue their studies and obtain a higher education qualification.

Access to Massive, Open, Online Courses (MOOCs) in Arabic and in English will be provided for at least a further 400 students who complete the language element of the programme. While those who have the language skills can continue their studies online in English, French and German, Arabic-language MOOCs may be the preferred option for many learners who wish to develop skills and continue learning.



2. HOPES

HOPES (Higher and Further Education Opportunities and Perspectives for Syrians) is a €12 million EU funded response to the Syrian refugee crisis. It aims at significantly improving the situation of Syrian refugees of post-secondary age as well as local young people by directly addressing their education needs in host communities affected by the high influx of refugees.

Young Syrians will benefit from improved learning opportunities, language skills and better access to information regarding study and employment opportunities. Further and higher education providers in host communities will receive financial support to provide innovative educational offers and thereby improve their own capacity. Syrian learners will profit from recognised learning achievements, completed degrees and advanced academic and language training. This will enable them to continue their studies and careers when they return to Syria.

In Jordan this project is led by DAAD and in collaboration with 3 higher education institutions: Hashemite University, Jordan University for Science and Technology, and Luminous Education (Al Quds College).

ENHANCING GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY & CAREER EDUCATION /GUIDANCE

Our work in providing opportunities for school to work transition of young people and enhancing the employability of university students and fresh graduates has benefited more than 1600 young people in the last 2 years. This is through our work with social partners by building their capacity to engage with employers to provide work placements and internships for university students. We have also supported novel initiatives that use peer to peer exchange for career education for young people making university study choice after their graduate from school. This program has reached more the 7,000 young persons and provided them with tools and access to informed peers to make better higher education choices.

RESEARCH TO PROMOTE PARTNERSHIPS, AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

The British actively seeks to connect and promote research and education partnerships between institutions in the UK and Jordan (and region).

Trilateral Research Partnerships:

British Council Jordan has been pivotal in facilitating trilateral research collaborations under the Science, Technology and Research Exchange Across MENA (STREAM) initiative. With our strong networks and local knowledge, we were able to secure a Jordanian partner in the first round of funding under STREAM. Through our efforts and involvement, The West Asia-North Africa Institute (WANA) in partnership with The University of Oxford & EcoPeace, have been able to explore the applicability of employing similar strategies in Jordan and Palestine with the aim to restructure the agricultural sectors in a way that accommodate growth without degrading water resources.

This research was done by examining the utility of agricultural production vis-à-vis water use, food security and economic growth. The study articulates potential improvements in agricultural water productivity levels, composition and key technologies. Moreover, the research examined the political and economic pathways and institutional underpinnings to facilitate such change and deliver improvements in both socio-economic and environmental outputs.



RESEARCH TO SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION PROPOSITION:

1. *Research into online learning in tertiary education¹ in MENA (in collaboration with the Open University):*

This research aims to better understand the potential of and hindrances to online learning in the MENA region.

- Provide an overview of international best practice and innovation in online learning, with a focus on developments in the UK
- Consider different forms of online learning, both formal and informal, to cover a wide range of tertiary education offers, looking broadly at what is considered as higher education, particularly in the formal university sector
- Look at the legal frameworks for online learning in three countries in the MENA region to identify regulatory barriers in the first instance, to identify key providers as well as innovative practices in MENA and to look at how these have / have not been able to overcome regulatory requirements, as well as to get insight into potential future changes
- To look at what needs to be done to bridge the gaps between international good practice in online learning and online learning in the MENA region both in terms of regulatory and operational change
- Consider the role of blended learning in online offers and what this might mean for university providers
- Consider the potential role of mobile learning as a way to access online learning or as complementary activity.

2. *Higher Education provision for Syrian Refugees in MENA (in collaboration with UNHCR)*

The British Council with partners UNHCR's are implementing this research to map the provision of Higher Education opportunities available to refugees of the current Syria crisis, and from this to facilitate displaced Syrians and disadvantaged host communities to access quality higher education opportunities within the region. It is hoped that this research will enable the British Council with partners UNHCR to better understand the opportunities and potential barriers involved in accessing higher education in identified countries: namely Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and the responsible key stakeholders in order to facilitate agencies and organisations including the British Council and UNHCR to work with these stakeholders to a facilitate better access to quality HE opportunities for refugees, and b) to scale up practice of effective solutions, through partnerships and for greater international collaboration.

¹ This research will focus broadly on tertiary education, but will have particularly strong focus on the higher education and university sectors. The rationale for this is to look closely at higher education but not to rule out examples of successful online learning courses which take place at the college or vocational level in order to provide a balanced overview of the sector.



Helping you create effective and sustainable change

The British Council creates opportunities for people worldwide by helping societies achieve change in education, civil society, skills, the public sector and justice.

We do this by working closely with governments, donors and businesses to deliver value for money solutions that are both effective and sustainable.

Operating in often very challenging environments, our approach is innovative, professional and transparent.

With a presence in 110 countries and territories and almost 80 years' experience, we have unrivalled local knowledge, proven expertise and a unique track record.