

October 31, 2022



State of Palestine  
Ministry of Education

## ***National Statement of Commitment to Transform Education State of Palestine***

***Submitted to  
United Nations Transforming Education Summit (TES)***

### ***Introduction***

In Palestine, education is a custodian of our national identity and an individual and collective survival strategy. At all times, education remained a unifying factor for all Palestinians at home and in the diaspora. Education has become an inspiring global model for resilience.

Palestine's commitment to the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been solid and unwavering. The National Development Plan 2017-2022 and the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2017-2022 articulate the agenda for national policies and priorities to achieve the SDGs, including SDG4. However, the sustained invasive Israeli occupation and its multifaceted collateral damage on all sectors constitute a paramount impediment to the timely fulfillment of such commitments. The COVID 19 pandemic affected the children's access to education and threatens progress on the achievement of the SDGs.

### **Recovery from Covid-19 disruption**

The Ministry of Education (MoE) in Palestine was one of the first ministries to develop a comprehensive and holistic COVID-19 response plan with support from all its partners and counterparts. The MoE in the State of Palestine will continue to strengthen and implement the strategies that were developed to expedite the country's recovery from COVID-19. These include, but are not limited to:

- Targeting all teachers and students to be vaccinated against COVID-19
- Ensure that every child in the country can access distance learning and psychosocial support through: improving ICT infrastructure, capacity building of teachers and parents on distance learning, establishing an MoE/educational satellite channel to broadcast lessons, and improving all MoE online learning platforms

- Ensured safe school learning environment by implementing strict safe school measures that included awareness raising, improving WASH facilities, and distribution of school and personal hygiene kits in all schools.
- Ensured continuity of learning during COVID-19 where the MoE adopted a blended learning approach to reopening schools, where children were learning half their time online and the other half face to face on school premises.

These quick interventions allowed the government to safely re-open schools, minimizing students learning loss and timely administering all twelfth-grade official exams.

In advance of the Transforming Education Summit, Palestine held three major consultations with key education stakeholders and partners, including but not limited to, relevant ministries, civil society organizations, international partners, universities, social activists, media, youth parliaments, parents' councils, teachers' union, social activities, practitioners, etc. Full details are presented in the National Consultations Report that was already submitted.

Based on the progress made on education so far and the outcomes of the National Consultation meetings, the State of Palestine commits to the following tracks of actions to transform Education in the State of Palestine:

**To ensure inclusive, equitable, safe, and healthy schools, the State of Palestine has made the following commitments:**

- Renews its commitment to the implementation of its education law and Inclusive Education policy and ensuring that legislations are binding commitments to provide all children, with free inclusive and quality education, with no discrimination based on gender, social or economic status, or disability of any sort;
- Expand access to quality education by construction of 450 additional classrooms per year to reduce pupil classroom ratio; and comprehensive rehabilitation for 5% of existing schools;
- Implement initiatives to ensure enrolment, protection and advocacy for safe access to education for children residing in volatile geographical locations that are experiencing education violations including: attacks on schools, movement restrictions, insufficient and/or inadequate school infrastructure due to Israel policies that obstruct construction of new schools in Area C and East Jerusalem including school demolition. This will be achieved through operationalizing the Policy Priority No. (27): Protection, Advocacy and Crisis Management Strategy, and Policy Priority No. (28): Education in Jerusalem; and the construction of schools in Jerusalem and Area C with the support of different local and international partners in obtaining construction permits.
- Screening children for early detection and early interventions for children with development delays and disabilities. Digital educational programs will be developed for students with disability (hearing, visual, and learning difficulties);

- Expand and sustain its drive for healthy, green, and sustainable schools. This will be done by generating solar energy from school rooftops; provision of WASH facilities and safety kits; periodic and annual maintenance for all schools; establishing school gardens; cultivating healthy habits and lifestyles, addressing digital addiction, and supporting students' agency in taking ownership of their wellbeing.

### **To ensure learning and skills for Life, Work and Sustainable Development, the State of Palestine has made the following commitments:**

- Continue to mainstream Life skills and citizenship education (LSCE) into the education system. Students' holistic [physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing] approach is the overarching envelope of our strategy. Life skills include amongst others: assimilating the values, attitudes, practices of reading, cultural heritage, scientific research, STEAM, civic engagement, entrepreneurship, leadership and innovation, community service, creative expression, art and theater, climate change, environmental awareness, agricultural experiential learning and more.
- Make student clubs and elected student parliaments mandatory in every public school as a catalyst for supporting students' agency and proactive engagement in co-authoring their learning environment. A voice of children survey instrument will be periodically deployed to capture students' perspectives and perceptions of different aspects of their learning experience. The survey findings will inform policy reform and priority setting.

### **The State of Palestine has made the following commitments to the Digital Learning and Transformation**

- Expand and improve the current e-learning platform and digital E-School platform that were deployed during COVID 19 and serving the educational, communication and administrative needs of the school community.
- Strengthening digital literacy through provision of Microsoft TEAMS accounts to all members of the educational community and training of teachers and supervisors on how to use teams for the blended learning approach.
- Establishing a dedicated educational TV channel with nationwide coverage.
- Widening access to devices and internet connectivity through initiatives such as the 'technology empowerment program' that provided schools, teachers, and students with devices and internet connectivity.
- Digitize administrative functions, allowing teachers and staff to enjoy a cohort of digital mobile-friendly self-services that alleviate the chores of bureaucracy and red tape to enhance efficiency of services.
- Digitize the national examination system through development and digitization of question banks to make smarter and safer national exam procedures.

- An interactive digital curriculum supported by digital reading, STEAM, and other simulations and virtual reality platforms and resources to enhance the teaching and learning experience for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM).

### **The State of Palestine has made the following commitments on teachers, teaching, and the teaching profession:**

- Enact a ‘teaching profession legislation’ to transform the teaching professions in order to uplift the moral, professional, administrative, and financial status of teachers and provide a path for merit-based accelerated professional development pathways.
- Review and revise the teacher preservice and in-service training programs as well as the teachers’ performance evaluation policy and criteria in order to transform classroom practice from teaching to learning – a system that produces a cadre of teachers that provide necessary skills to students to think creatively, wonder, inquire, and joy in learning, coupled with the capacity to learn, unlearn, and relearn throughout their life journey. Various components of the STEAM program will also feed in.
- Operationalize the several structural reform decisions that have been recently enacted by cabinet aiming at making education more capable of nurturing the desired transformation and delivering the desired returns on investment and achieving constitutional commitments. This includes the establishment of a curriculum center mandated with the continuous modernization of our curriculum; a national center for examination and assessment mandated with modernizing national and high-stake exams of various types, in synch with the curriculum center; a school education quality assurance unit; more flexible and inclusive school matriculation and tertiary education admission systems.

### **The State of Palestine has made the following commitments on financing of Education:**

- Implementing innovative initiatives such as the “school adoption program” aiming at increasing local community and expatriate contribution to the financing of education.
- Operationalize the legislation on the “education tax,” allowing for a manifold increase in education tax revenues.

Palestine’s lack of sovereignty over its natural resources and its borders constitutes a serious impediment to its capacity to generate sustainable financial resources to support its education. A free and sovereign Palestine won’t be needy, but a Palestine whose resources are systematically drained and hijacked by its occupier is entitled to solidarity and support from the international community to deliver on the commitments made in this paper.