

**Summary Report**  
**Elham National Consultative Meeting**

**Grand Park Hotel, Ramallah, Palestine**  
**May 13, 2007**



The Universal Education Foundation (UEF) - *Education by All for the Well-Being of Children* - held its national consultative meeting at the Grand Park Hotel in Ramallah, Palestine, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2007 in partnership with the Ministry of Education & Higher Education, the Ministry of Health, UNRWA, Welfare Association, the Palestinian Union for Information Technology, and in cooperation with several NGOs and networks. The participants were from a wide spectrum of decision makers and activists in the fields of education, media, IT, communication, and health, as well as young people.

This national consultative meeting was held to introduce the “ELHAM Palestine - Inspiration of Palestine” Program, its targets and main features which would open the way for an in-depth discussion for the Well-Being of children and youth. The aim was to come out with ideas and suggestions that would help enrich and develop the format suggested for the “ELHAM Palestine” Program as a stepping stone before its launch.

Key note speakers at the opening session included:

Dr. Nassir el-din el-Shaer, Minister of Education & Higher Education,  
Dr. Mr. Fahd El-Sayed on behalf of Dr. Radwan el-Akhras- Minister of Health,  
Mr. Sufian Mushasha, Director of Programs Operations of Welfare Association,  
Dr. Mohanad Beidas, Head of Education Department in WB&GS at UNRWA,  
Mr. Daniel Kropf, Executive Vice-Chair of UEF, and  
Dr. Marwan Awartani, Secretary-General of UEF.

Dr. Assad Ramlawi – Director General of Primary Health Care at Ministry of Health chaired the plenary session. Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi- Minister of Information and Media, apologized for his absence due to external reasons.

In his speech, his Excellency Minister Dr. El-Shaer declared the willingness of the Ministry to cooperate fully and support the "ELHAM Palestine" Program in such a manner that would help accomplish and secure the chance required to explore the initiatives, capacities, means, and creative mechanisms, besides motivating the development of quality education in Palestine through a comprehensive view of education. He said: "We hope that this program will contribute in creating a better atmosphere for education and for engaging all foundations in this process, pointing out that the ministry supervises the education of about (1.3) millions students in the Palestinian Territory."



For his part, the Under-Secretary of the ministry Dr. Fahd El-Sayed, gave a speech on behalf of the Minister of Health on the importance of securing a sound health environment for the educational process and for students in such away that would encourage and motivate their innovation particularly since the environment impacts directly the development of the child's mindset. Dr. El-Sayed confirmed in his speech the willingness of the Ministry of Health to facilitate making available resources for the program, stressing the need to develop interest in creative thinking by management by engaging the staff through developing programs and qualifying specialized coaches in this field in the way that would better serve the educational process on all fronts by having well-trained and specialized individuals in this field.

The representative of Welfare Association, Mr. Mushasha', also affirmed the eagerness of the association to support childhood and education in Palestine, particularly the education course in Jerusalem facing many challenges. He pointed to the eagerness of their Association to be fully involved with the "ELHAM Palestine" Program due to the essences it calls for, targeting various groups in our communities, moreover, engaging youth, children and parents in this process.

For his part, the Representative of UNRWA, Dr. Mohannad Beidas, stressed the need to hold this conference and the confidence he had in this program which constitutes an additional move in securing an educational environment for children at school that is more open and safe. He added: "We look forward to achieving this goal and that the UEF will build partnership between the media institutions and national and official institutions, stressing the willingness to present the support necessary for carrying out the program".

Mr. Daniel Kropf, Executive Vice-Chair of the UEF, explained that well-being is the realization of one's own physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual potential. Furthermore, he emphasized that the first thing to do is to ask children...our children how to create a better learning environment that nurture their well-being. They are our clients and they instinctively know what is good for them and they are able to express it if we listen to them with curiosity and desire to learn. To conclude; he said, that the successes that we hope to achieve in Palestine, despite all the difficulties and uncertainties encountered, will continue to be an inspiration for many other countries.



Dr. Marwan Awartani, Secretary General of UEF, indicated that this Program is deemed to be “a significant” contribution for the advancement of the education system. Dr. Awartani presented the Programs carried out by UEF, including “ELHAM Program” due to be carried out in Wales as well. He added, UEF with its partners, will contribute to the rooting, customization, design, planning and implementation of UEF programs in Palestine, taking into consideration that ELHAM program design will be best fit the Palestinian contextual needs and aspirations



Dr. Mohammad Shaheen, Dean of the Public Health College at al-Quds University, presented some of the indicators of the Voice of Children study that was conducted in Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon, reflecting on the current educational system that may not encourage innovations and inspiration. He added that “ELHAM Palestine” Program would be the first initiative of its kind in the whole region to promote such concepts to be integrated in the Palestinian educational system.

Mr. Basri Saleh, Director General for Public and International Relations at the Ministry of Education, explained further details about ELHAM, and stressed that the Ministry is interested in hearing all recommendations and thoughts of the participants in the consultation’s activities, particularly since the groups included experts from the various fields. This was important to ensure that the program would be implemented in the most efficient way

Afterwards, participants were divided into 4 groups each facilitated by an expert moderator in Health, Education, ICT and Media.



Media discussion group



Health discussion group

The meeting was attended by a group of around 140 key actors and was characterized by very rich and stimulating discussions between all participants and by a keen interest in ELHAM’s vision and approach. Invited speakers and partners, as well as the participants in the four parallel groups made most valuable contributions and provided very interesting insights. The meeting paved the way for the implementation of the ELHAM program.

The detailed methodology, preparations, proceedings, and recommendations are presented in a comprehensive report that may be requested from UEF-Secretariat office in Ramallah.

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