CONNECT A SCHOOL, CONNECT A COMMUNITY IN THE STATE OF PALESTINE

2018

PROJECT POST IMPLEMENTATION ASSESSMENT

CONNECT A SCHOOL, CONNECT A COMMUNITY IN THE STATE OF PALESTINE

Project Number.....2PLS13003

Project Manager .....Slaheddine Maaref

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Date.....16 January 2018

INTRODUCTION

Following-up on the outcomes of the World Telecommunication Development Conference (Buenos Aires, 2017), ("WTDC-17") and in particular, Resolution 18 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) Special technical assistance to Palestine, which resolves, amongst others that: to continue and enhance the technical assistance provided to Palestine for the development of its telecommunications/ICTs; to implement e-health, e-education, e-government, spectrum planning and management and human resources development projects and all other forms of assistance.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in cooperation with Ministry of Telecommunications & Information Technology ("MTIT") of the State of Palestine, implemented a Project where computer equipment was installed in schools around the State of Palestine, which were then connected to internet services.

This Project was designed to promote broadband connectivity in schools in remote, rural or underserved areas of the State of Palestine, with the purpose to also serve as community ICT centers. The Project aimed to improve ICT access and use by school children and members of the local community. It also promoted equal access to ICTs for all, regardless of their ICT knowledge, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as women, girls, indigenous and rural people, older persons and persons with disabilities.

This Project was able to connect schools to internet services, providing computer equipment to school children, as well as establishing in the connected schools, community ICT centres. Each centre will also be used for the socio-economic development of the community by providing fee-paying services. Furthermore, this Project has also provided relevant training to the teachers and managers of the ICT centres, as well as trainers who are offering relevant training to community members, to enable them to use ICTs in their day-to-day social and economic activities.

PARTNERS

Ministry of Telecommunications & Information Technology (MTIT) of the State of Palestine

International Telecommunication Union

1 BACKGROUND

There has been sufficient evidence that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) provide unprecedented opportunities to accelerate development. ICTs have proven to be a powerful driver of innovation, growth and productivity globally. Broad access to ICTs provides significant opportunities for improving government public services, health care, education, business development and the environment. They also open new channels for sharing of global knowledge resources and the free flow of ideas and opinions.

Although communities that lack access to know-how of the use of ICTs, risk marginalization, providing individual connectivity to rural and underserved areas as well as to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups is often too expensive for both the public or private sector. Smart policies promoting community access targeting these groups are essential. Existing school buildings can be used as community ICT centers. These centers can use ICTs to provide training and education for the improvement and social and economic development of marginalized groups. It is for this reason that the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) launched the “Connect a School, Connect a Community” in the State of Palestine.

“We would like to welcome and thank the ITU for the different projects, especially the “Connect a School, Connect a Community” in the State of Palestine. We are committed to ensure equal access for all, to affordable and quality telecommunications, as well as education. Furthermore, we wish to ensure women’s full and effective participation and give them equal opportunities to lead at all levels in the State of Palestine. We want our children to use these ICT centers to facilitate and improve their life.”

Quote: H.E. Dr. Allam Mousa, Minister,

Ministry of Telecommunications & Information Technology

ROLE OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

- MINISTRY OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE (MTIT): facilitated the successful implementation of this Project.
- MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION "MOHE": in charge of identifying the installation sites, as well as engaging the strong support from the School management and local community in each site.
- MADA ALARAB-INTRANET SERVICES PROVIDER to facilitate the connection and access to the internet for one Center of this project in cooperation with MTIT.
- HADARA-INTRANET SERVICES PROVIDER to facilitate the connection and access to the internet for one Center of this project in cooperation with MTIT.
- COOLNET-INTRANET SERVICES PROVIDER to facilitate the connection and access to the internet for one Center of this project in cooperation with MTIT.
- CALLU-INTRANET SERVICES PROVIDER to facilitate the connection and access to the internet for one Center of this project in cooperation with MTIT.
- PALTEL GROUP to facilitate the connection and access to the internet for schools in cooperation with MOHE.
- THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS UNION (ITU): was responsible for the implementation if the Project with the above mentioned key stakeholders in the State of Palestine.

2
SCOPE OF REVIEW

The scope of the implementation review mission for the Project 2PLS13003 “Connect a School, Connect a Community in the State of Palestine” was to review the overall success of the Project and the level of achievement of its objectives, activities, expected results, use of the budget, timely execution of the work plan and equipment delivered (a list of the equipment is shown in Annex B, as per the Project document).

Following the implementation of the Project, a post implementation review mission was carried out by the ITU, from 20-24 November 2017. Meetings were held at MITT premises with the H.E Dr. Allam Mousa, Minister of Telecommunications & Information Technology. During the post implementation review mission, several meetings were held with policy makers, operators, internet service providers, members of the education sector, users, students, teachers, local representatives and local communities, to discuss details related to the Project. (A list of several persons met is included in Annex C).

The post implementation review of the Project included several sites' visits to schools. Visits were made to the established ICT centers in:

1) BEIT IKSA- SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR BOYS- CENTER

2) KING GHAZI SECONDARY SCHOOL CENTER

3) BEIT IKSA- SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS- CENTER

4) BEIT IKSA YOUTH SPORT CLUB- CENTER

BEIT IKSA- SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR BOYS- CENTER

KING GHAZI SECONDARY SCHOOL CENTER

BEIT IKSA- SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS- CENTER

BEIT IKSA YOUTH SPORT CLUB- CENTER

Meetings were held with the schools directors, teachers and the representatives of the local communities, as well as the Project key stakeholders. Detailed information is reflected in the following sections of this report.

3 RESULTS/ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1 Schools in remote, rural or underserved areas of the State of Palestine equipped and connected to broadband Internet services.

Key Performance Indicator

Number of schools in remote, rural or underserved areas equipped and connected to broadband Internet services.

Remarks

The ICT- Centers in the visited schools were equipped and fully used by students and teachers.

Initial Target

5

Achieved

Yes

3.2 Associated community ICT center established in each of the five schools

Key Performance Indicator

Number of associated community ICT centres established.

Remarks

It is our understanding that each connected school serves as a Community ICT Center, due to cost and safety, this is a challenge for the schools management to keep the schools open after the school working hours.

Initial Target

5

Achieved

Yes

3.3 ICT equipment, software, applications and services procured and installed in the selected school.

Key Performance Indicator

Identification of equipment suppliers, procurement and installed in the selected school centers.

Remarks

The list of equipment is shown in Annex B.

Initial Target

5

Achieved

Yes

3.4/3.5 Use and awareness of ICT services and applications enhanced/ Training teachers and trainers.

Key Performance Indicator

a. Number of teachers and trainers trained.

Remarks

The teachers met are professional in the subject and were very well trained.

Initial Target

5

Achieved

Yes

b. Number of training programs delivered.

Initial Target

5

Achieved

Yes

4
FINANCIAL STATUS

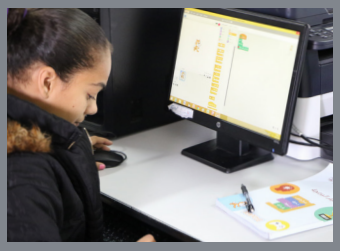
Project cash contributions ensured as planned?		
(Y/N/Not applicable)	Percentage (%)	Explanations
Yes	100%	Funds from the ITU

Is the level of expenditure at the expected level?		
(Y/N/Not applicable)	Percentage (%)	Explanations
Yes	92%	As of December 2017

Any funds remaining unused?		
(Y/N/Not applicable)	Percentage (%)	Explanations
Yes	8%	As of December 2017

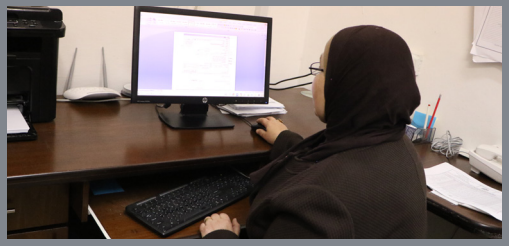
5
FINDINGS

- It is worth to say that ITU was very impressed with the full understanding of the students, teachers and the local communities on the positive impact and the needs of ICT on their life and on the future of their children.



"As a mother, my children benefited from these devices too, we are now open to the world, my daughter does not come back to me for information anymore, instead she searches the web to do her homework".

Quote: Ms. Raiqa Dali, Secretary and mother



- The Project connected schools to internet services in remote, rural and underserved areas, through the installment of computer equipment in five selected schools and one club (to serve the local community). Equipment included servers, desktop PC, UPS, multifunction machine-medium (Laser printer-scanner-photocopier-fax), laptop, projectors and the wireless routers were provided by the State of Palestine, with list of the installed equipment can be found in Annex C.

"This project targeted schools and communities in rural areas of Palestine. It has not only enabled students and community members to improve their digital skills but has also helped to reduce the digital divide between rural and urban areas".

Quote: Mr Fadi Morjanh, the Local Project Manager

- The Beit Iksa Secondary School for Girls Center is providing, in addition to their students, training for the local community, especially for women. King Ghazi Secondary School Center is also providing training for neighboring schools in the area.

"As for the local community, we held a training workshop for students' mothers on "Computer illiteracy Eradication" to enhance their role in using technology".

Quote: Ms. Ibtisam Taha, Director,

Beit Iksa Secondary School for Girls

- Students are using ICT applications such as SketchUp Application: the 3D modeling computer program for drawing in architectural, interior design, landscape, buildings, cars (mechanical engineering), film and video game design. Also, students were trained to use the Office Professional (Word, Access, Excel, Published, PowerPoint, etc.) and net browser.

"Receiving computer devices, I clearly noticed the difference in my learning process especially in technology. The teacher used to draw and write as much as he could on the chalkboard, so we can form an approximate image of the theories we study, but now we study theories and apply them practically on the computer too".

Quote: student

- Students are using Scribus for design/ layout, preparation of files for professional image, animated and interactive presentations, forms for brochures, posters and books. Students are entering schools information (recorders, files and facilities) in the school database system.

- Teachers are using the ICT centers' facilities for teaching not only computer but also other coursers.

"This project helped me as a teacher to give opportunities to students and achieve extra goals outside the curriculum plan. It also helped the students to become more creative. We achieved the creativity we were seeking."

Quote: Ms. Hanan Geith, teacher

- All the IT teachers that ITU met are professional, very well trained and expressed their contentment, gratitude and appreciation to the ITU for putting in their hands and their students, the ICT centers, which teaches use of computers and ICT-applications. This achievement will help to ensure the Project's long-term sustainability and improve the quality of life of the community members.

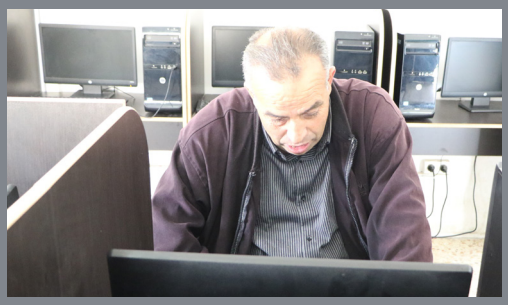
"It was very difficult to teach technology without computers. Now the teachers and the students can apply the theory they learn on the computers and see the results of their projects".

Quote:
Mr. Mohamad Mansoor, Director,
Beit Iksa Secondary School for Boys

“Thanks to the ITU, King Ghazi School held its first practical exam for high school students in the field of information technology using the ICT center which was equipped with the latest computers and accessories and connected to the Internet. The ICT center was established by the efforts of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and the support of the ITU”.

Quote: Mr. Mashal Shamasneh, Director, King Ghazi Secondary School for Boys.

- All stakeholders that the ITU representative met, especially at the ICT centers, have a common vision and understanding of the important role of the ICT Centers for their children, their community and themselves. Furthermore, the ICT Centers created awareness among senior government officials, local communities and other national stakeholders, to sustain this Project on a long term basis.



"We are proud to contribute to this project, which will hear our Childrens voice in the internet". Quote by a local member of one of the beneficiary communities.

“There has been an improved communication and contact between the parents and the school, where the parents of the students can now know the level of their children, by using the e-school platform”.

Quote by a local member and teacher of one of the beneficiary communities.

- Teachers in the State of Palestine are very well educated and need to be more equipped with the necessary digital skills to empower them to take advantage and share with their communities the opportunities offered by ICTs and the global economy.

- The Fixed Network Operator in the State of Palestine, PALTEL, showed high interest to further provide connectivity to support the ICT centers and their local communities.

- The State of Palestine needs further support in the development of ICT related matters such as: capacity building, climate change, ICT applications, cybersecurity and child online protection, regulatory and market environments, spectrum management and digital broadcasting and technology and network development.

6
LESSONS LEARNED

- A strong national political commitment to support and promote the Project among national media, local communities and different stakeholders, has been key for the Project's success.

- This project targeted schools and communities in rural areas of Palestine. It has not only enabled students and community members to improve their digital skills but has also helped to reduce the digital divide between rural and urban areas.

- This project brought technology into the classroom and allowed teachers to use ICTs in combination with their teaching methods, as well as provide students with life skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and collaboration abilities.

- The importance of an active involvement of the different key stakeholders, a strong commitment from the government, as well as the local community, including teachers and students, was key for the success of the Project.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- This Project was able to build ICT related capacity for teachers, which also improved students' capabilities and their performance. Students, teachers and local communities were able to use ICTs to improve the quality of their life.

- The Project assisted the State of Palestine in improving ICT access in several schools, especially for school children and members of the local communities, including persons that are part of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in remote, rural or underserved areas.

- The Project also contributed to raise awareness on the importance of having connectivity in schools and the need to properly connect them.

- The Project significantly improved access to ICTs in several schools and increased the use of ICTs by students in the State of Palestine. Furthermore, the Project promoted the importance of having a technological environment in rural areas, which allows people in those communities to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by ICTs.

- In the sites visited by ITU, the Project received strong support from the local communities as it was considered important for their children education and the future of the State of Palestine.

- The State of Palestine needs further support in the development of ICT related matters such as: capacity building, climate change, ICT applications, cybersecurity and child online protection, regulatory and market environments, spectrum management and digital broadcasting and technology and network development.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- MTIT, Paltel and Ministry of Education are invited to coordinate and work more closely to ensure high quality internet connectivity for the schools, so that the community ICT centers can provide sustainable services to the local population.

- The center in the Sport Club is very well set up and equipped, so it can also be used as a training centers for local communities, teachers and trainers in the State of Palestine.

- It is recommended that teachers in the State of Palestine receive advance ICT related training to improve their digital literacy skills.

- It is highly recommended that a follow-up of the established Youth Club ICT center to ensure that it is supporting the ongoing economic and social activities of the local community from rural areas. It is suggested that the users of the ICT center could receive ICT related training on planting and harvesting crops, better access to markets and how farmers can obtain online information on valuable resources to improve their crops and lives.

- The established community ICT center in the Youth Sport Club may also be used to support socio-economic development activities of the local community, by providing free internet services.

- Calls upon ITU Members to provide the State of Palestine with assistance in the implementation of ITU projects, as well as ICT applications, in environment, climate change and emergency telecommunications, in confidence and security in the use of telecommunications/ICTs, digital financial inclusion, Internet of Things, smart cities and big data, innovation and entrepreneurship and ICT related capacity building.

9
ANNEX A:
PROJECT TABLE SUMMARY & PROJECT METRICS

Project Number	2PLS13003	Project Budget	CHF 74,000 cash and 60,000 in-kind
Project Title	Connect a School, Connect a community in the State of Palestine		
Brief Description	This Project "Connect a School, connect a community in the State of Palestine" was designed to promote broadband connectivity in schools in remote, rural or underserved areas in the State of Palestine. This Project aims to improve ICT access and use by schoolchildren. Furthermore, this Project will also provide relevant training for teachers, managers of the ICT centers and the trainers who will provide socio-economic relevant training for community members to enable use of ICTs in their day-to- day social and economic activities.		
Partners	MINISTRY OF TELECOMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (MTIT)		
Prepared by	Mahmoud Al-Wreikat	Date	December 2017

Summary – Project Metrics

Perspective	Performance (%)
Expenditure & Commitments	92%
Implementation level	100%
Adherence to the work plan	100%
Overall Performance	97%

Project Background

The goals of the World Summit on the Information Society ("WSIS"), which are aligned with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals ("MDGs"), can be achieved in regions through the use of ICTs. For meeting the WSIS targets of connecting all villages, towns and cities, as well as the MDGs, the "Connect A School, Connect a Community" Initiative, undertaken by the International Telecommunication Union ("ITU"), is a global multi-stakeholder partnership aimed at mobilizing human, financial and technical resources required to bridge major gaps in information and communication technology ("ICT") infrastructure across the regions.

In this context, the ITU has developed and signed a Project to support school connectivity and ICT applications development in the State of Palestine.

Brief Description

This Project was designed to promote broadband connectivity in schools in remote, rural or underserved areas of the State of Palestine. This Project aimed to improve ICT access and use by schoolchildren and members of the local communities.

Furthermore, this Project also provided relevant training for teachers, managers of the ICT centres and the trainers who provided socio-economic relevant training for community members, to enable use of ICTs in their day-to- day social and economic activities.

The project expected results

In particular, the following outputs were expected:

- Five schools, including one sports club, in remote, rural or underserved areas of the State of Palestine equipped and connected to broadband Internet services.
- One associated community ICT center established in each of the five schools (i.e., a total of five community ICT centers were established under this Project).
- ICT equipment, software, applications and services procured and installed in the selected school-based community ICT centres.
- Enhanced use and awareness of ICT services and applications.
- Five school teachers and five trainers of the community ICT centers, were trained in all five schools.

ANNEX B:
RECEIPT OF EQUIPMENT BY MTIT

№	Description	Quantity
1	Server	5
2	Monitor	93
3	Desktop PC	88
4	Projectors	5
5	Multifunction (Laser Printer-Scanner-Photocopier-fax-Digital sender)	5
6	Switch	5
7	Network Cables	
7.1	0.5 m cable	98
7.2	3 m Cable	98
6	Network node Installation	98
8	Port Patch panel	5
9	Cabinet	5
10	Main power cable ~25m	5
11	SMDB Power	5
12	Power node	114

ANNEX C: LIST OF PERSONS MET IN THE STATE OF PALESTINE

Name	Job title
Dr. Allam Mousa	Minister of Telecommunications & Information Technology (MTIT)
Mr. Sulieman Zuhairi	Deputy Minister of MTIT
Mr. Fadi Morjanh	Director of Government Computer Center/ Local Project Manager of MTIT
Ms. Hadeel Hamdan	Projects Coordinator of MTIT
Mr. Radi Naser	Deputy Director of the Ministry of Education
Dr. Maher Natsheh	Acting President, An-Najah National University
Dr. Khaled Al-Sahili	Dean of the Engineering and IT Dept. An-Najah National University
Dr. Mohammed Al-Ameliah	Professor An-Najah National University
Dr. Yahya Al-Salqan	Chairman of the Board of Directors Palestinian Information Technology Association of Companies PITA
Mr. Maen Melhem	General Manager Paltel Group
Mr. Montaser Kanan	Director of the Government Sector, Palestine Telecom (Paltel)
Mr. Rami Qutteineh	General Manager, Hadara (Internet Provider)
Mr. Usaid AL-Shanti	Sale Manager, Hadara (Internet Provider)
Mr. Mansour Hamoudeh	School Director, Iksa- Secondary School for boys
Mr. Mohammad Mansour	IT-Teacher, Iksa- Secondary School for boys
Ms. Raiqa Dali	Secretary, Iksa- Secondary School for boys
Mr. Mashal Shamasneh	School Director, King Ghazi Secondary School
Mr. Iyad Azmi	IT- Teacher, King Ghazi Secondary School
Ms. Ibtisam Taha	School Director, Iksa- Secondary School for girls
Ms. Hanan Geith	Teacher, Iksa- Secondary School for girls
Ms. Hana' AL-Thaer	Teacher, Iksa- Secondary School for girls
Mr. Mahmod Geith	Member of the local community
Mr. Na'eem Geith	Member of the local community
Mr. Bilal AbdelWahhab	Member of the local community
Mr. Fadi Om Eid	Member of the local community
Ms. Ebaa' AbuLeya	Member of the local community
Mr. Murad Arouri	Member of the local community
Mr. Mohammad Jomaa	Member of the local community
Mr. Atef Jawdat	Member of the local community

This ITU project is contributing to the
achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

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