



Press Release

MAS Announces the Skills Forecasting Model Results



Ramallah, 13 Feb 2020 – UNESCO Ramallah Office, in partnership with The Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), held the launch event for the Skills Forecasting Model in Palestine, which was opened by His Excellency the Minister of Education, Dr. Marwan Awartani. This initiative is part of UNESCO’s 3-year Youth Employment in the Mediterranean (YEM) project, with funding from the European Union. The project addresses the issue of youth unemployment in the region by improving skills anticipation and assessment systems, the quality and relevance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and by fostering regional cooperation among beneficiary countries, including Palestine:

The initial results of the Skills Forecasting Model were also developed in partnership with MAS in 2017, and provided an anticipation of occupations needed in the Palestinian Labour market for the next 5 years. The current results are an update based on new data provided by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Labour and the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, involving all other relevant national and international stakeholders, including GIZ, Enable and ILO.

In his opening remarks H.E. Minister Awartani confirmed that the discussion on skills forecasting had a perfect timing, given the Technical and Vocational Education and

Training policy changes in Palestine. He stressed the importance of empowering students with the skills needed in regional and global markets as well as Palestinian market.

The Deputy Minister of Labour, Mr. Samer Salameh, highlighted the necessity of forecasting skills due to the skill gap in the Palestinian labor market. He further reiterated the need of changing admission policies at universities to rely more on skills rather than results of the secondary exams.

The EU representative, Mr. Odoardo Como and the TVET Director General at the Ministry of Higher Education, Dr. Ahmad Othman, highlighted the importance of the project and expressed their hope that results of the skill forecasting model would be used in policy making.

MAS Director General, Mr. Raja Khalidi praised the unique partnership between MAS, three ministries and UNESCO. He also stressed a lack of a clear economic policy linking required skills in the labour market with education and noted the importance of improving the data on skills, demanded in the labour market.

In his welcoming remarks, UNESCO Officer-in-Charge, Head of Office, Mr. Junaid Sorosh-Wali, highlighted a high rate of unemployment due to the mismatch between supply and demand as well as the skill gap between the graduates and the skill needed by employers. He offered that the results will contribute to reducing unemployment and directing youth to TVET as a future career pathway by informed policy decisions building on this skill forecasting model.

A presentation by Mr. Hiromichi Katayama, TVET Programme Specialist at UNESCO Headquarters, focused on global and regional trends in TVET as well as an introduction to the YEM project, including a skill forecasting activity. MAS research team presented the methodology and results of the model and top jobs in demand and imbalances in occupations during the upcoming three years in Palestine.

During the following session, three-line ministries and youth organization “Leaders” intervened on how they will build on the results of the model to inform their policies. This was followed with some questions and answers and further ideas on the model application from partners and a wrap up session, which included next concrete steps, facilitated by Ms. Lina Benete, Head of Education Unit at UNESCO National Office for Palestine.