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## Develop Business and Economic Research Centers Capacity at Palestinian Higher Education Institutions (BERC)

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### BERC Newsletter No. 2





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## 1. BERC Project

Develop Business and Economic Research Centers Capacity at Palestinian Higher Education Institutions (BERC), Contract no 561966-EPP-1-2015-1-PS-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP is a project that has been funded with support from European Commission, within ERASMUS + programme coordinated by the Islamic University of Gaza, IUG for the period of October 2015 till October 2018. The project has consortium of 8 universities and IUG : Royal Institutes of Technology (KTH) (Sweden), Laquila University, (Italy), University of Almeria (Spain), University of Huddersfield (UK), Al Azhar University of Gaza (AUG), Birziet University (BZU), University College of Applied Sciences (UCAS) and Al Quds Open University (QOU).



## 2. Management Meetings

- 4<sup>th</sup> Management Meeting



On 15, February, 2017, Develop Business and Economic Research Centers Capacity at Palestinian Higher Education Institutions” BERC” held Project Committee’s Fourth Meeting at the Islamic University of Gaza in the presence of all partner universities in the Gaza Strip including: Al-Azhar University and University Collage of Applied Sciences) at the Islamic University while universities of the West Bank are :Al Quds Open



University, European universities (Almeria University and the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) attended the meeting through Go To Meeting technology.



During the meeting, presentations were made by partner universities in the project about the progress of the project, the challenges facing each university partner in the implementation of the project, whether inside the university or the challenges related to the difficulty of the EC regulations and recommendations to overcome these obstacles to each of the following

universities: the Islamic University presented by Dr. Wassim Al-Habeel, University College of Applied Sciences presented by Eng. Hatem Abu Sultan, Al-Azhar University presented by Dr. Mahmoud Sabra, and Al-Quds Open University presented by Dr. Yousef Sabah.

- **5<sup>th</sup> Management Meeting**





UCAS conducting the fifth management on 14 March 2017 to follow up the implementation of progress at partners' institutions and updates regarding upcoming activities. During the meeting, Dr. Khalid Dahleez from IUG presented a brief about implemented activities after the 4th management meeting at IUG, Dr. Yousef Sabbah from QOU presented the implemented activities at QOU, Dr. Omar Omran from BZU presented the implemented activities at BZU, Dr. Mahmoud Sabra from AUG introduced AUG implemented activities at AUG and Eng. Hatem From UCAS talked about implemented activities at UCAS.

They agreed on holding the national workshop on 4 April 2017 at UCAS. Dr. Wael Al Daya (Project Manager at IUG) discussed the next training activity at Spain and Italy.

### 3. National Workshops

#### UCAS National Workshop

UCAS holding the national workshop for "Engagement of the Local Community Institutions and Private Sector in at Business and Economic Research at Palestinian Higher Education Institutions" Prof. Rifat Rustom, the director of UCAS, welcomed the attended partners, and Dr. Wael El Daya, the project manager, introduced BERC project. Moreover, Dr. Wasim Al Habil expressed the role of the economic research centers emerged from BERC project, and Dr. Khalid Dahleez explained the needs of the private sector and linking them to academic outputs.



#### Comments and Recommendations:

- Reducing the loads of academics in Palestinian universities.
- Link the scientific promotion of the researcher to number of research projects financed by private sector.
- Enhancing the trust between universities and private sector through research partnerships.



- Provision of funded research services and exploitation of intellectual property
- Adopting a model coordinate the relationship between the private sector and the academic sector.
- Identify national priorities for scientific research and to prioritize them within a national strategic plan.
- Developing common understandings between the private sector and universities.

## BZU & QOU National Workshop

On Wednesday 12/4/2017, Birzeit University and Al Quds Open University held a workshop on integrating community institutions in administrative and economic researches in the higher education institutions in Palestine, as part of the capacity building for administrative and economic research centers project funded by EU-supported Erasmus program.



Prof. Samir Al-Najdi mentioned that QOU interest in the development issue is not limited to education, but also it includes taking part in solving many of the problems of the community of the universities and pointed out that QOU is aware of the importance of establishing Scientific Research Centers referring to establishing (4) scientific research centers , some of which has been in

operation while others are still under construction. Dr. Nidal Al-Jayousi talked about the program and its importance to our Palestinian universities, pointing out that it seeks to strengthen cooperation in the field of research between Palestinian universities on the one hand and Palestinian universities and their European counterparts on the other.



He also called on the universities to generate ideas that would benefit the society mentioning that the program succeeded in establishing (7) new master’s programs that were introduced in the Palestinian universities with qualitative topics, noting that the program sent (850) students to study one or more semesters in the European universities, but it failed to send 450 students

from Gaza as a result of the blockade and restrictions on travel. Dr. Jayyousi also pointed out to the importance of the project in focusing on both management and research.

- **1<sup>st</sup> Field Monitoring Mission**

On 26 April 2017 the first field-monitoring mission led by Dr. Nidal Jayossi aimed mainly to measure the project progress and to ensure that implementation is proceeding as planned. Dr. Jayossi highlighted that



the entire project which are currently co-funded by the EU will host three field monitoring visits; the first visit is an advisory visit to inform the partners with the importance of signing partnership agreement, the second visit is a control visit to investigate the level of project completion and the third one is evaluation visit.

He added that this project is the only one running in the field of developing business and economic research centers out of the total 41 projects co-funded by EU currently.

On the level of mobility obstacles, he clarified that they do not have the needed political power to get permits from Israel nor to get no-objection from Jordan to facilitate movement of Gaza participants. However, they are trying through the administrative affairs (e.g. embassies) to help



in this matter. Finally, Dr. Jayossi asked Dr. Wael Al Daya to provide brief presentation on the implementation of the project, any bottlenecks and the recommendations to solve the bottlenecks.

The main discussion points were as follows:

1. Coordination and communication for the project with the local, national and EU partners.
2. Improving the project implementation process.
3. Project bottlenecks.

