

# International Forum “Policy, Research & Practice in Higher Education

*Evidence Based Strategy in HE: Current practices & Trends*

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# World reality:

Emergence of the fundamental role of higher education institutions:

- Benefits of Human resources , experts and qualifications, research.
- Fundamental contribution to human development.
- Development of a knowledge society

# Result of Globalization:

- Internationalization of education
- Considering HE as a Service Sector.
- Higher Education one of the most important cross-border services available (the Convention on the liberalization of trade in services - the World Trade Organization).
- Mobility of labor & students

# Trends:

- Thinking about using education institutions directly or indirectly as a means of economic development and as a means of production
- Polarization and mobility of students and labor: Importance of Tuning

In this situation, **How the international communities deal with the HE sector ?**

- **The European Union** focused mainly on: developing European HE area (LMD, ECTS, DS), ensuring the quality and reliability in institutions of HE (EQAR), & the mobility (Internationalization, Tuning, Transparency, etc.).

- **Arab Strategy for the development of higher education** focused on Developing the sector (mainly public), Quality Assurance, Accreditation & Research

- **The conferences of Arab Ministers Responsible for Higher Education** since 2000 (the Cairo conference) to 2005 (Conference of Yemen) Focused on ensuring the quality and the need for the establishment of national bodies or authorities for the evaluation and accreditation.

- **In Lebanon, all national conferences since 2001** (the Parliament, The order of Engineers, the Economic and Social Council , and the MEHE , etc.) Focused on the need of a new policies for HE, to introduce quality assurance procedures, to develop a new law for HE, to restructure HE system, to monitor the sys, etc.

# Outline:

- 1- A historical background concerning HEIs, Regulations and Reforms concerning the sector in Lebanon.
- 2- Strategic plan for HE
- 3- Action Plan: What has been done? & Where we are ?
- 4- Difficulties
- 5- The road ahead ?

# Historical Background:

- **History:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> HEI in 1866, 8 HEIs before 1961, 17 before 1996,
- HE law in 1961, Regulations for Equivalency, Engineering, and colloquium exams (1955 to 1965), Decrees for licensing, audit, TC committee, criteria in 1996.

- **1999-2000:** The Lebanese government had licensed **25** HEIs, passing the number of HEIs to 40 private and one public,
  - **Now:** 47 HEIs, 1 public
  - This increasing was without planning or existing national policy for higher education,
  - A challenge for the DGHE **created in 2002,**

# Students & Staff:

## Students:

- The number increases through 10 years by 44.6%
- From 132645 students in 2004 to 195788 in 2014, with 54.3% female
- Net increase of students' Number in the private:
  - 65836 students in 2004, 124348 in 2013 (82.7%),
  - Public university (LU) (66809 in 2004 to 71440 in 2013 (7%).
- Number of foreign students increases from 9.6% in 2004 to 16.6% in 2010 and decreases to 12% in 2014 because of the political issues in the country.

## Staff:

Human resources have been developed:

- Number of academic staff increased from 12000 in 2004 to 20082 in 2014 (40%) with 38% female,
- Also a net increase in administrative and technical staff .

# HE system in Lebanon:

- Old with good experience
- Multi divers system (American, French, now European, etc.)
- Major role in developing human resources in Lebanon and the region
- HEIs are non profit (by the law)
- High autonomy of HEIs (academic, financial) even public one.
- Lack of accountability.
- Problems of Governance (no clear separation of authority between academics & supervising authority.
- Expansion of the sector without developing regulations to assure the rights of the concerned stakeholders.

# Questions:

- What to do? How?
- To whom is the responsibility?
- Who is responsible of the developing HE system?
- Who will define the Mission & the Vision for the HE system in Lebanon & How to do that ?

**It is The responsibility of all stakeholders:**

State, Public & private HEIs, Socio-economic partners



## **National Mobilizations:**

- Conference “HE & Knowledge Economy”, Organized by the Education & Culture commission in the Parliaments, Beirut 30/10/2001.
- Conference “HE in Lebanon & the impact of licensing new universities”, Organized by the scientific committee in the order of engineers, Beirut 23/1/2002.
- Conference “Attracting Arab and foreign students to HEIs in Lebanon”, Organized by the Economic and Social Council, Beirut, Sep. 2002.
- Series of conferences “Reorganizing Higher Education in Lebanon”, organized by the DGHE, Beirut, 10 to 24 Feb. 2004.
- Audit of Higher Education institutions, during 2003-2004, Discover the situation, DGHE with SGS, APAVE, TUV-HELAS.

## **Strategic Framework:**

Through these conferences, General principles were adopted that constitute the foundations for Strategic Framework for HE in 2005.

# Strategic Framework (1)

1- **Adoption of a charter for national HE:** to Consider HE as a national priority, to provide educational opportunities for all, to put a map of the spread of HEIs, to assure for every body the right to have an education with good quality, to assure paths in the system, to put and apply precise specifications and criteria for licensing, to make the state take the responsibility of regulating education.

2- **Build the capacity of higher education administration:** the development of the structure of the DGHE, building an information system that provides data about HE, to reconsider the governing bodies, the dissemination of information about higher education, to strengthen the research system.

3- **Update legislation governing higher education:** the laws and decrees of private higher education, the law of the Lebanese University, Charter for the duties and rights of Staff, students & workers in HEIs.

4- **Strengthening the capacity of the Lebanese University:** the development of the structure of the university, a new law, the development of educational and research resources, updated full-time legislation, securing facilities and equipment, the development of specialties, the development of mechanisms for assessment.

## **Strategic Framework (2):**

**5- Ensure quality standards and quality assurance in HE :** Quality assurance and/or accreditation bodies, Academic mechanisms to assess institutions and to provide quality assurance, common rules of information between the administration and institutions.

**6- The development of new missions for HE :** meeting the needs of economic development, development of human resources capacity, continuous training opportunities.

**7- Put HE in line with the knowledge economy:** acquire IT skills, promote the most promising sectors of higher education such as: information and communication technology, energy and environment, to make educational programs more suited to the requirements of the labor market, the involvement of HEIs in the development of educational systems.

**8- Promoting scientific research in HEIs:** consider the scientific research as an "essential element" in HE, promoting the establishment of research centers in HEIs, make scientific research as a duty of faculty members, consider scientific research as "key role factor " in the economic development.

## **Action Plans:**

- 1- Define responsibilities and actors
- 2- Planning in priorities.
- 3- Put Schedule timelines
- 4- Analyze resources (human and financial)
- 5- Go in Execution

## **Difficulties:**

- 1- Political context
- 2- Administrative context
- 3- Financial context
- 4- Human Resources

# What Has been Done (1)

## Starting 2004:

### *Strategy, Action plans and Reforms to develop and monitor the sector*

- Audit of all HEIs (External Bodies)
- Dissemination of Quality Assurance And quality control culture
- New Decrees and Decisions
- Activate commissions in the DGHE: (EQ, TC, Eng. Com, CHE, etc.)
- Active collaboration between DGHE & Universities.
- New procedures for Licensing, Starting-Up and Recognition of Degrees
- Official Information system about HEIs & Procedures  
(Website: [www.higher-edu.gov.lb](http://www.higher-edu.gov.lb))
- Promoting Lebanese HE System Worldwide.
- Training on EQA (IIEP), etc.
- Promoting Research (National & International Projects)

## What Has been Done (2)

- **2007**: Higher education strategic policy (plans and proposals).
- **2006-2014**: Structural measures projects with the European and Lebanese universities (14 Projects): External Quality Assurance, Student services, Employment Offices, Orientation, Career services, International relations, Employment Observatory, Distance Learning, etc.  
**Now**: Participation in other Erasmus plus projects
- **2010-2014**: Training with Erasmus+ & HERE: LO, LMD, EQA, Students services, Credit system, etc. 2015: ELearning (Debate), Civic Engagement, IQA

# What Has been Done (3)

- **2012-2013**: Benchmark on the governance in higher education institutions (WB project): 29 university from Lebanon.
- **2012**: Regulating Doctoral Studies: Decree Number 10068 /2013
- **2013**: Regulating paths VTE to HE
- **2013**: Regulating Licensing in Medical schools
- **2014**: New law for higher education ratified by the parliament  
285/2014: Frame work for the governance of higher education institutions, management, finance, autonomy, participation, students and faculty members rights, QA and accreditation.
- **Since 2014**: 2 Other laws in discussion in the parliament (ratified by the government):
  - Creating LQAA agency: Autonomy, standards ... indicators, etc.
  - Reorganizing the DGHE structure.
- **2014-2015**: Tuning Engineering, Architecture & Medical schools studies

# Where We Are? (1)

## At the Local, Regional & International levels:

- Partnerships between Universities in & out side the country (Tempus then Erasmus+ projects helped in this direction – 75 bilateral or multilateral projects),
- Exchange of experts in Evaluation & QA procedures,
- Double & Joint degrees.
- Exchange for recognition (National authorities, ERIC-NARIC network) & accreditation with European agencies, CTI, FEANI, FIBAA, EVALAG, HERES, etc.
- Bilateral & multilateral agreements between regional & European HEIs,
- Tuning to internationalize competencies & facilitate mobility,
- EQA & Accreditation of HEIs by European Agencies
- Networking with regional & international associations
- Local Taskforces (Governance, Monitoring system , QA, HERE, Competitions, etc.)



# Where We Are? (2)

## At the Level of HE Institutions :

- Progress at the level of governance
- Implementation of QA procedures in most Universities
- EQA & Accreditation in some HEIs
- Ability of most of HE Institutions to align with the national policy
- Trained staff on QA.
- More transparency
- Partnerships with MEHE, other ministries & Labor market

## At the Level of regulation of the Sector:

- Procedures to Regulate Licensing, Starting Up and Recognition
- Visible Information System about the sector
- Reinforcing collaboration between HEIs & DGHE
- Reinforce Cooperation with All stakeholders
- Training Experts on EQA
- Success of disseminating QA Culture
- 3 major laws regulating the sector,

# The road ahead

Continue the action plan, & Develop a NQF

## Still there is many difficulties ??

- **Political:** the project laws wait to be ratified by the parliament),
- **Resources:** Need of Human & Financial,
- **Engagement of Stakeholders:** MEHE, HEIs,  
Orders & Syndicates.
- **Implement New procedures and indicators for licensing:**  
Social & Community Needs Assessment, Capacity of the sector,  
Ethics & Code of conduct, Review of the strategy, implementation  
of the new law of HE, etc.

*Thank you*



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