

المنظمة العربية لضمان الجودة في التعليم
The Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in EDUCATION

AROQA

ASREN
Arab States Research and Education Network



DECLARATION

**The 8th International Platform on Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure
in A Global Environment
(e-AGE18)**

**The 10th Annual Conference of the Arab Organization
for Quality Assurance in Education
(AROQA 2018)**

2-3 December 2018
Marriott Hotel, Amman, Jordan

Amman - 3 December 2018

Under the patronage of His Excellency Minister of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research in Jordan and chairmanship of His Excellency Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, the “8th International Platform on Integrating Arab e-Infrastructure in A Global Environment: Capacity for Transformation” and the “10th Annual Conference of the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education: Quality and Accreditation in Education” has been concluded with more than 200 participants from 30 countries.

The participants praised the e-infrastructure currently available at the Arab countries and the development of the Arab e-infrastructure for research and education that can be beneficial to enhance research connectivity and make it available for use at the regional level, and developing new internet exchange points, like the Point of Presence in London and Fujairah. Coordination is underway to utilize and establish other Points of Presence in Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia to connect with other regional research and education networks around the world.

The participants also discussed the quality of education and cooperation frameworks for improving quality of education at the Arab regional level, including entrepreneurship and innovation as the main components of economic growth.

The participants commended the role of the Arab States Research and Education Network in providing specialized high-speed networks and regional e-infrastructure services to serve research and education institutions and the wider regional research and education community, and linking them on a global scale. They have also commended the role of the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education in enhancing quality and accreditation services for educational institutions at the Arab regional level.

The International Platform and the Annual Conference are two scientific platforms organized annually by the Arab States Research and Education Network and the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education, and were held this year during 2-3 December 2018 in Jordan.

The meetings identified priorities for the future focusing on the development of Arab e-infrastructure and services, the coordination with regional and international e-infrastructures, and the strengthening of cooperation in the field of research and education among the Arab countries and with regional and international communities.

Both the platform and the conference are held annually with an aim to enhance dialogue between experts, researchers and decision makers to cooperate in the preparation and implementation of national and regional e-infrastructure projects as well as to crystallize research and education on important topics such as energy, water, environment and other pressing issues in the Arab region.

The platform and the conference were attended by speakers, decision makers, experts and scientists from all Arab countries, Europe, the United States, Africa, Latin America and Asia. This demonstrates the sustainability of the dialogue held by both the Platform and the Conference towards the development of Arabic research and education networks and quality in education.

- The participants expressed their appreciation to HE Minister of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research in Jordan for patronizing the 8th International Platform and the 10th Annual Conference.

- The participants expressed their appreciation to the Department of Education and Scientific Research at the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States for participation and support.
- Appreciation and recognition to the European Commission for its continued participation and support to the EUMEDCONNECT and AFRICACONNECT projects.
- Appreciation and recognition to the pan-European GÉANT network for its continued support for the development of Arab e-infrastructure.
- Appreciation and recognition to the national research and education networks in Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Palestine, Somalia, Algeria and Iraq the founding members of the ArabResearch and Education Network, and the member networks in the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria and Comoros.
- Appreciation and recognition to the regional research and education networks in America and Africa for their continued participation and support.
- Adopting the programs and strategy of the Arab States Research and Education Networks and the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education for the next phase, with a focus on establishing e-Infrastructure links between the Arab countries and on enhancing the quality of education.
- Enhancing cooperation with the League of Arab States and Arab countries towards the development of integrated research and education networks as well as the development of quality assurance in education.
- Focusing on ASREN's internet exchange points, operating now in London, and in Fujairah in cooperation with the UAE research and education network- Ankabut, and planning to utilize other internet exchange points in the Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.
- Cooperating with the League of Arab States and with the respective regulatory commissions and ministries to establish the "Arab Connect" for research and education, and setting up high-speed networks at subsidized promotional costs.
- Focusing on the quality of education in the Arab world to enhance and develop its outputs to meet the needs of communities and the requirements of the labor market and to improve Arab educational systems in light of rapid changes and information revolution and progress of technology.
- To plan for the 9th e-AGE and the 11th AROQA annual conferences in December 2019, the location will be determined later.

At the closing of the platform and the conference, the following recommendation were declared:

- To accelerate the integration of Arab e-infrastructures and connection with Europe, the United States, Latin America and Africa through the exchange points in London and Fujairah.
- To continue to support research networks and infrastructure development in Arab countries.
- To emphasize the importance of effective participation in the Arab States Research and Education Network and the unified integration of Arab e-infrastructure in order to enhance the role of research and education communities in the Arab world.
- To emphasize the importance of linking Arab research and education networks to their counterparts through developing regional such as in Fujairah, Cairo and Jeddah.
- To provide computational services and resources, including eduroam, edugain, and science gateways.

- To benefit from and build on the success of the EUMEDCONNECT and AFRICACONNECT and other European funded projects to enhance collaboration between Arab and European scientists as promote the development of research that focuses on the use of e-Infrastructures.
- To encourage and raise funding of donors, research institutions, and organizations in the Arab region, Europe and the world to support the development of pan-Arab network and research infrastructure.
- To encourage the participation of the private sector and enhance cooperation in research and development of education.
- To develop and update standards and indicators of quality in education and academic accreditation for schools which adopted five years ago by the organization according to the indicators of digital learning, research, creativity and innovation.
- To seek partnerships with local and international organizations in line with the activities of the Arab Organization and events and to help them reach their goals.
- To support initiatives aimed at improving the quality of education and undertaking further studies and research on quality, accreditation and dissemination in the Arab Journal of Quality Education.
- To focus on creativity and invention as one of the quality standards of education and accreditation for Arab educational institutions.
- To demonstrate the urgent need to transform education into innovation and invention and to continuously update accreditation standards and indicators of the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Education as an independent, non-profit organization that promotes educational and educational institutions to control and develop quality in education.
- To develop programs to graduate innovators not job seekers.
- To develop programs to achieve the quality of education for Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

This year's platform witnessed the launch of the connection to the research and education networks in Tunisia and Morocco with ASREN's Point of Presence (PoP) in London, and the international connection between a number of Arab countries and the pan-European GÉANT network with capacities of more than 1 Gbps, and announced the continued support of the European Commission for the development of the AFRICACONNECT Project. The conference also witnessed the signing of an agreement with the Palestinian Ministry of Education on the development of creative education in Palestinian schools and educational institutions.

A comprehensive report will be prepared on the outcomes of the platform and the conference as well as a proposal for long-term cooperation with the League of Arab States and international organizations and institutions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh

Chairman of the Arab States Research and Education Network

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