Regional Center for Quality & Excellence in Education

Under The Auspices of UNESCO
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# Table of Contents

- Introduction ........................................................................................................... 1
- Category II Centers under the Auspices of the UNESCO ................................... 2
- About RCQE .......................................................................................................... 3
- Mandates of RCQE ............................................................................................... 4
- Services .................................................................................................................. 5
- Areas of work & Scope of services ....................................................................... 5
- Research ................................................................................................................. 6
- Capacity Building ................................................................................................. 7
- Hosting of RCQE in Saudi Arabia ......................................................................... 8
- Board of Directors ............................................................................................... 9
Introduction

The Regional Center for Quality and Excellence in Education (RCQE) was established in October 25th, 2014 under the auspice of The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a category II Center and based on the establishment agreement concluded between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the UNESCO. The establishment of the Center is an attempt from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to significantly support the UNESCO humanitarian mission to promote the positivity in people’s lives. This initiative represents the commitment of the UNESCO and the Kingdom to secure the “Right to Education for All” and quality and excellent education to all four corners of the world, as it is a milestone of the global sustainable development.

The Center aims at disseminating the culture of quality and excellence in educational systems through developing policies based on the best international experiences and research findings in this field in addition to training programs necessary for promoting the awareness of these trends in the Arab educational institutes. From RCQE perspective, Quality refers to the processes involved in the sustainable development of educational services, and the institutional consistency to promote learning processes and outcomes to a higher level of quality. Within the same context, Excellence is the final outcome of these ongoing quality processes, which is reflected on the human acquisition of essential knowledge and skills, with the ability and desire to pursue education. Excellence delineates cultural values through critical thinking, international understanding, tolerance and coexistence with different cultures, religions and societies.

The prominent value of the Center comes through the representation of several Arab countries in the Board of Directors, in addition to a number of national, regional and international experts. The sustainability and success of the Center are grounded on the participation of various sectors and expertise in the development and implementation of its programs across the Arab region and the ongoing evaluation thereof in the light of UNESCO’s goals.

RCQE is looking forward to the participation of all experts and specialists in quality and excellence in education field in the Arab region. Their initiatives and contributions are highly needed to constantly develop education systems in the Arab countries in order to serve the Arab nations and promote the role of the Arabs in building the global civilization through achieving quality and excellent in their education.
Category II Centers under the Auspices of the UNESCO

Category II Centers are specialized in research, consultation and training, and are technically connected with one of the three sectors of the UNESCO: Education, Culture, and Science. A Category 2 Center is recognized as an important extension of UNESCO’s program delivery arm and a tool to raise UNESCO’s profile in Member States. All Category II Centers in education contribute to one or more of the Sector’s priority areas of teachers, literacy, and sector-wide planning.

Category II Centers also provide opportunities for member states to showcase and share the capacity, technical expertise, and knowledge banks they have. They can facilitate regional networking and have the potential to act as resource hubs in specific education fields.

A Category II Center under the Auspices of the UNESCO is established under an agreement between the UNESCO and a suggested member state and is authorized by the General Conference of the UNESCO. The agreement is reached based on a feasibility study conducted by the UNESCO. The study decides the readiness extent of the suggested country to host the Center depending on the expertise of work force regarding the activity of the center and their ability to sponsor the center. Such Centers are considered financially and administratively autonomous from the UNESCO and the government of the host country, yet the center works on administrating and promoting UNESCO’s programs concerning areas of their specialization within a geographical scope outside the host country.

In other words, the Category II Center carries out the agenda of the UNESCO in a number of member states within the vicinity of the host country. Therefore, these centers are regional considering their scope of work and the host country merely caters to operate the center. Specifically, Category II Centers in the Education are managed by a Board of Directors that is headed by the minister of education of the host country and members on the Board must include ministers of education from a number on countries within the geographical scope of the center, in addition to local and international experts.
About RCQE

Vision
To be the reference center in promoting quality and excellence in education in the Arab region.

Mission
To promote quality and excellence in education across the Arab region, through:

- Fostering the culture of quality and excellence.
- Disseminating knowledge and best practices.
- Providing consultations, applied research and capacity building programs.
- Coordinating regional efforts in enhancing the educational experience.

Goals

01
Develop high quality research programs related to quality and excellence in education to meet the needs of Arab states.

02
Promote and develop capacity building initiatives serving the needs of educators and policy makers.

03
Provide technical consultation, practical ideas and best practices related to quality teaching and learning.

04
Oversee and manage aid programs related to quality and excellence in education across the Arab Region.
Mandates of RCQE

In accordance with the establishment agreement of the Center, the mandates of RCQE are as follows:

1. Promote research to improve the quality and excellence of education systems.

2. Develop capacity-building and training initiatives to re-orient existing education programs towards quality and excellence.

3. Build and reinforce networks for the exchange of knowledge, technical and policy information, and best practices in the field of education quality and excellence among institutions and individuals.

4. Implement knowledge and information transfer activities including international symposia or workshops, and to engage in appropriate awareness-raising activities targeted at various stakeholders.

5. Provide technical consulting services.

6. Produce research reports, technical publications and other media items related to activities of the Center.
Services

RCQE is providing the following services:

1. Research.
2. Capacity building.
3. Consulting.
4. Funds management.
5. Coordination and facilitation as an enabling service for the aforementioned core services.
6. Knowledge dissemination as an enabling service for the aforementioned core services.

Areas of Work and Scope of Services

RCQE provides its services within the following scope and areas:

- Quality for educators including teachers, leaders, etc.
- Quality in curriculum including the subject of lifelong learning.
- Educational system and school governance.
Research

Research programs at RCQE encompass all issues related to quality and excellence in education systems of the Arab countries. The aim of the research programs is mainly to conduct fact-finding research based on which the needs of the educational systems in the Arab region can be satisfied in addition to developing such systems to be of a high quality value reflects on the education processes in order to generate the desired outcomes.

Scope of research activities:

- Develop research programs of a global quality through International partnerships to develop world class 012-education and training programs.
- Publish studies, reports and distinct evidence on education quality, which are in line with the expectations of the government and public policies, through communicating with all relevant governmental and non-governmental sectors.
- Validate and benchmark current practices against the most effective education systems.
- Provide consultation services for private and governmental educational institutions specialized in quality and excellence, either nationally or regionally.
Capacity Building

Training programs at RCQE are targeting educators and personnel professionally involved in education process in order to provide them with a specialized training in all aspects of quality and excellence in education. The programs are of a local and regional nature to accomplish the significant goal of the Center of spreading the awareness about quality and excellence in education on the national and regional levels. RCQE undertakes the following activities:

- Analyzing the needs of UNESCO member states within the geographical work scope of the Center in the area of quality and excellence in education.
- Providing training programs to implement best practices and ideas of quality and excellence in education.
- Providing training for educators in all aspects of quality, excellence and innovation in education to ensure the sustainable development of learning outcomes.
- Providing training on applied educational research and investigation skills.
- Providing training on the identification of program characteristics related to learners’ development and the recognition of the effects of such programs on the process of learning.
- Preparing and publishing periodicals to spread the awareness of issues of quality and excellence in education.
Hosting of RCQE in Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hosts the Center for the following purposes:

1. The Center fulfills the vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to become an international standard-setter for educational quality.

2. The Center is an international promotion of quality and excellence projects.

3. The Center strengthens educational development operations in regional and international venues.

4. The Center is a strategic link to the system of institutes of quality and excellence assurance, as a hub of expertise and a consultation regional center.
Board of Directors

The establishment agreement of RCQE states a number of articles concerning the formation of the governing board and its functions. Particularly, Article 8 stipulates the following:

“The Centre shall be guided and supervised by a Governing Board having one third of its members renewed every two years and composed of:

- The Minister of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as the Chairperson.
- A representative of the Director-General of UNESCO.
- Up to seven representatives from different Arab states.
- Up to five members from national agencies, institutions and/or private sector.
- Two members from international agencies, institutions and private sector.
- The Director of RCQE as Secretary-General of the Board.”