

For Immediate Release



Beirut: 6-7-2017

AUB Hosts the First Meeting of TAMAM Lebanon Hub

Gathering together for the first time, all Lebanese private and public schools participating in the TAMAM project for school reform came to the American University of Beirut (AUB) for a series of workshops, presentations, and networking opportunities, as well as a celebration of their accomplishments thus far.

Founded in 2015, the TAMAM Lebanon Hub (TLH) builds on the foundation of the regional TAMAM project which empowers educators to initiate school-based reforms and to build connections among schools, researchers, and policy-makers. Funded at AUB through a generous grant from the Lore Foundation, TLH specifically serves Lebanese public schools in association with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

The opening ceremony on June 30 included a welcome from AUB President Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri as well as representatives from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), the Lore Foundation, and the Arab Thought Foundation. Dr. Rima Karami of the TLH Steering Committee also introduced the project mission and recognized the achievements of TAMAM schools with certificates.

"We must remain keen on the importance of the development of education in the Arab world, therefore, working together in education is very important," said President Khuri. "That is why we come today not to teach you but to learn from you. I hope that at the end of the day we will be able to develop together to provide tomorrow's students with projects that will make them interested in their future in Lebanon and in the Arab world, and not always in immigration."

Fawzi Kyriakos-Saad of the Lore Foundation spoke about the transformative partnership between the government, academia, and civil society partners serving on the TLH advisory board.

“[It is] a partnership whose aim, clearly and simply, is to put the public school system in Lebanon back to its past pre-eminence so it can give the best possible education to every child in Lebanon, and by doing so lay the foundation for a model state,” said Kyriakos-Saad.

The original TAMAM project began in 2007 as a collaborative effort between the Arab Thought Foundation and the American University of Beirut to build knowledge capacity, foster collaborations, and support school-based initiatives for sustainable improvement. The original TAMAM mandate included schools in Lebanon, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia; later expanding to eight Arab nations with more than 45 participating schools. Speaking on behalf of the Arab Thought Foundation, Antoine Haddad addressed the importance of the TAMAM project for the Arab region.

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“In the forefront of the principles that the educational mission of the institution is based on is its belief in the importance of focusing on the development of human capital and on supporting the culture of change in the educational system, as well as supporting change and development in the Arab reality through the school system,” said Haddad . “These are the same goals of the TAMAM project.”

Fadi Yarak, Director General at MEHE, said that the project has gone further than research, resulting in concrete recommendations that can be implemented. He added that the project has revealed points of strengths and weaknesses in schools both in the public and private sectors, putting them on the same level and helping in the building of a generation whose members are open to each other.

With the TAMAM Lebanon Hub, the transformative TAMAM model is being customized to accelerate the internal reform of Lebanese public schools. The first goal of the TLH is to complete a five-year pilot project with six Lebanese public schools in order to develop a scalable model for expansion to more schools within Lebanon. TLH also includes a focus on building relationships between schools and their communities to ensure the best possible outcome for students.

A key aspect of the TAMAM model is called the “TAMAM improvement journey,” which focuses on training teachers and school administrators to identify needs within their home school, devise a plan of action, and then implement, monitor, and evaluate this school-based initiative.

After the opening ceremony, the TAMAM schools and the TLH Steering Committee got down to work for two days on presentations, poster sessions, and networking events. The gathering ended with a World Café on the challenges facing school members as change agents. By the end of this event, it became clear that there is still much work to be done, but it was also clear from the optimism and enthusiasm of the participants that they are ready to do what is needed to help transform their schools.

“As a group we believe we will make a difference,” said Dr. Karami. “Our collective minds are our assets. Coming together to work in concert is our only path to regain ourselves, honor our history, and bring back our pride.”

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 130 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 420-bed hospital.

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