

## Sustainable Economic Development, Employment and Labour Market

# More Job Opportunities for Palestinian Youth II (MJO II)

### Background and Objective

In the Palestinian Territories, high youth unemployment is one of the most pressing problems. University graduates are especially affected, with the unemployment rate reaching nearly 50% (30% in the West Bank and 73% in the Gaza Strip). Unemployment among female graduates is significantly higher (76%) than among male graduates (around 42%). Many graduates work in professions that do not correspond to their attained degree. Depending on the field of study, it takes an average of up to two years for graduates to start their first employment.

*‘The interest of the university in Dual Studies programmes comes from its belief in the necessity of true partnership with the private sector. Thanks to the practical experience and skills, which Dual Studies students gain during the study period, the opportunity to be employed or self-employed are improved compared to regular students.’*

*Ayman Sultan, Vice President for Planning and Development, Palestine Polytechnic University, Hebron*

At the same time, companies often do not find suitable candidates to fill their vacant posts. This is partly due to the inadequate university curricula which is not tailored to the requirements of the labour market. The Dual Studies approach is unique in the Palestinian Territories and the region. It aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice and is based on the German model which refers to a mode of studies that combines practical work placements at a partner company with academic training at the university.



Project name	More Job Opportunities for Palestinian Youth II (MJO II)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Palestinian Territories
Partners	Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE)
Duration	July 2021 – June 2026

### Approach

Since 2015, five Dual Studies Bachelor programmes have been successfully established at Al-Quds University (AQU) in East Jerusalem as part of the GIZ programme More Job Opportunities for Palestinian Youth I (MJO I). Graduates of the Dual Studies Bachelor programmes at AQU have been able to achieve above-average employment rates. In 2025, AQU independently accredited a sixth Dual Studies programme (Food Quality and Technology), reflecting the approach's long-term impact.

More Job Opportunities for Palestinian Youth II (MJO II) builds on the successful approach of the ongoing Dual Studies programmes at AQU and aims to systematically improve the quality and quantity of Dual Studies programmes to the benefit of Palestinian young adults and the private sector.



*Students of the Dual Studies Programme in Renewable Energy Engineering at Palestine Polytechnic University*



Students of the Dual Studies Programme in Financial Technology at Palestine Polytechnic University

MJO II supports the Palestine Polytechnic University (PPU) in implementing Dual Studies programmes. Two programmes were successfully launched in 2022 (Renewable Energy Engineering and Financial Technology). A third programme (Business Technology) and a fourth (Digital Systems Engineering) were successfully accredited in 2023 and 2025, respectively.

MJO II advises PPU on curricula development, practical phase design and implementation, and organisational processes for academic and technical staff. As a result, the capacity of PPU is strengthened and a governance structure for Dual Studies is established. Additionally, MJO II supports PPU in attracting partner companies and enhancing cooperation with the private sector. Practical training phases are jointly developed and implemented based on mutually agreed quality standards, such as training plans and trainer qualifications.

Furthermore, MJO II cooperates with the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC), to improve the framework conditions for employment-oriented Dual Studies programmes. This includes the development of policy recommendations, Dual Studies guidelines, and digitization initiatives. MJO II also supports AQAC in addressing the challenges of fragility and conflict in employment-oriented higher education in the Palestinian Territories.

Additionally, the programme supports knowledge transfer and innovation by fostering collaboration between universities and the private sector through applied research and entrepreneurship. Moreover, MJO II fosters international mobility for students and staff by enabling PPU and AQU to build lasting global partnerships with academic institutions and the private sector. Student and staff gain international work experience, and the universities strengthen their professional networks.

## Achievements

By the winter semester of 2025, MJO II aims to achieve the following:

- 300 students (150 of whom are women) are enrolled in four Dual Studies programmes at Palestine Polytechnic University (PPU).
- Four Dual Studies programmes at Palestine Polytechnic University are accredited by AQAC.
- 110 companies will participate in the Dual Studies programmes at PPU.
- Quality standards for the gender-sensitive implementation of the practical phases are operationalised in the participating companies and at selected universities.
- Framework conditions for the quality and implementation of employment-oriented Dual Studies programmes are improved.

So far it has been achieved:

- Four Dual Studies programmes at PPU have been accredited by AQAC (Financial Technology, Renewable Energy Engineering, Business Technology, Digital Systems Engineering).
- 369 students (228 of whom are women) are currently enrolled in three Dual Studies programmes.
- More than 190 companies are currently participating in the Dual Studies programmes at PPU.
- 28 DS students from AQU and PPU have completed a three-month internship abroad to date.

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH  
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