

**Establishment of
Global University System (GUS)/Palestine in
Gaza Strip and West Bank
(GUS/Palestine/GS&WB)**

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I. Global University System

Global University System (GUS) ([Utsumi, et al, 2003](#)) aims to create a worldwide consortium of universities and healthcare institutions to provide the underdeveloped world with global e-learning and e-healthcare/telemedicine via broadband Internet technologies. The aim is to achieve “**education and healthcare for all**” anywhere, anytime and at any pace. Education and job skills are the keys in determining a nation’s wealth and influence.

GUS is headquartered at the Global E-learning Center at the University of Tampere in Finland, under the direction of the UNESCO/UNITWIN Networking Chair, held by Dr. Tapio Varis ([Varis, et al, 2003](#)). The GUS/Palestine/Gaza Strip and West Bank (hereinafter GUS/Palestine/GS&WB) consortium member institutions will also become members of this Chair Program.

II. Mobile Assessment & Maternal Aid Solutions (MAMAS)

MAMAS is an international non-profit organization, based in Seattle, in cooperation with University of Washington, and representing more than a decade of field analyses for maternal-child health related to population needs, existing health practices, and emerging technologies.

MAMAS will identify needs and potential solutions for mothers and infants at greatest risk for mortality, which includes those in remote, harsh environments and those in midst of regional conflict, displacement, and transition when previous medical infrastructure has been fragmented or destroyed. Focus on the identification of HIV/AIDS, particularly on the prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV/AIDS transmission, and other opportunistic diseases as they impact on maternal and neonatal health.

III. GUS/ Palestine/Gaza Strip and West Bank (GUS/Palestine/GS&WB)

<<http://tinyurl.com/25kl5n>>

This project is to create GUS/Palestine/Gaza Strip and West Bank, which is to be emulated in other developing countries. Its Secretariat will provide overall administration and co-ordination of GUS and emerging programs.

GUS/Palestine/GS&WB will be a consortium of Islamic University, Gaza International Foundation for Peace on Earth and The National Research Center and other local stakeholders, etc., and will serve as the overall framework for initiatives entailing rural and community-based development activities, especially (not exclusively) those pertaining to Healthcare, Education, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Earth Sciences, Communication Sciences, Management Sciences, Humanities, Economic and Social Sciences, Agriculture and Fishing.

GUS/Palestine/GS&WB is designed to provide tools to enable the people of the region to participate fully in their own development and to bring their culture forward, thriving with the influx of opportunities, and contributing to new prosperities. GUS/Palestine/GS&WB will provide a modernizing tool to fast-track peace-building, peace-consolidation and socio-economic development of the participating communities, and contribute to the accelerated integration of Palestine into the world economy, export and trade facilitation, rural and community-based economic growth.

IV. Project concept

- Proposed GUS/Palestine/GS&WB will link rural and refugee communities and support distance learning and e-health/telemedicine for:
 1. Regional technological infrastructure and
 2. Programs and academic content to increase stakeholder capacity.
- Both infrastructure and programs are supported by:
 1. Exchanges of educational courses and their credits through broadband Internet,
 2. Promotion of community development, and

3. Collaborative research.
 - Immediate focus is on community e-health/telemedicine and participatory governance because those programs are foundational and best developed for rapid start-up.
 - The e-university brings together resources of an extensive network of universities in Palestine as well as specialized programs from many international universities.
 - GUS/Palestine/GS&WB will provide tools, systems, partnerships and funding opportunities to strengthen local efforts for remote learning and health system.

V. Working Groups of GUS/Palestine/GS&WB

At the planning workshop (see below), following working groups will be formed, as following a previous project ([Utsumi, 2006-a](#)).

1. Infrastructure

GUS programs and services will be delivered via regional satellite hubs, typically located at a major university, that connect via broadband Internet to educational resource sites in the E.U., U.S., and Japan. In a sense, the regional satellite hub is to be the major Internet Service Provider (ISP) for not-for-profit organizations in the region and the gateway to the outside world. The GUS/Palestine/GS&WB consortium member institutions will be connected to very high speed Internet. Hopefully, its member institutions will then connect with secondary and elementary schools, universities, libraries, hospitals, local government offices and NGOs, etc., through broadband wireless Internet at drastically discounted rates.

The buildings with a broadband Internet connection will then also become relay points for the low-cost “WiMAX (Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access)” networks that are now rapidly appearing in Japan, USA and Europe. This advanced wireless communication with laptop computer will make e-learning possible for anyone, anywhere, and anytime with capabilities of Internet telephony, fax, voice mail, e-mail, Web access, videoconferencing, etc. This is not only to help local community development, but also to assure close cooperation among higher, middle and lower levels of education.

The GUS/Palestine/GS&WB will assure broadband Internet availability with combined use of fiber optic cables and wireless, where feasible. The aim is to provide a solid IT backbone that ensures uninterrupted Internet connectivity and satellite-driven communication systems.

2. Global E-Learning

The GUS will be anchored in universities in Palestine to enhance e-learning to their students and life-long learners in their community for the development of technical and professional human capital and attendant enlightenment etc., and to ensure the sustainability of global e-learning via links with universities and other academic establishments in North America, Europe, Japan and more industrially advanced countries.

Learners will be able to take their courses from member institutions around the world to receive a GUS degree, thus freeing them from being confined to one academic culture of a single university or country. These institutions also act as the knowledge center of their community for the eradication of poverty and isolation through the use of advanced Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs).

3. Global E-Healthcare/Telemedicine

GUS/Palestine/GS&WB will increase access to customized communications and related resources which mobilize and encourage hospitals and e-healthcare centers to use the Internet and hybrid technologies to provide patients online second opinion for various infectious and chronic diseases, including malaria, HIV/AIDS, polio, cancer, heart disease and other conditions. Existing university and community programs will help define communications and medical information management systems, which reduce obstacles to good health management.

Doctors will also be taught (through a train-the-trainers program) how to use computers effectively to order tests and drugs, which has been shown in studies to reduce medical errors and flag patient drug allergies. Nurses will also be taught to use computers to track patients as they go through the primary healthcare centers and hospitals.

Medical records will be computerized, including lab results, drug data and records of office visits in text files, which would be standardized in a format that can be shared. Crosscutting priority will be to encourage government and donors to develop incentives to encourage health administrators, doctors, health workers to use the Internet.

4. Community Development

Learners, faculties, and public policy makers can promote community development and many other advances at a local, regional and even on a global scale. GUS/Palestine/GS&WB consortium member institutions will act as the flagship of their community development, particularly on the facilitation of entrepreneurial initiatives for the creative economy of Knowledge Society in the 21st century.

5. Globally Collaborative Research and Development

The learners and their professors from participating institutions will form a global forum for exchange of ideas and information and for conducting collaborative research and development ([Utsumi, 2006-b](#)). Researchers can partner with colleagues in more advanced countries, and perform joint collaborative research and development with the use of virtual reality/virtual laboratories on inexpensive Beowulf mini super-computers (clusters of PCs) for experiential/constructive learning and creation of knowledge through the emerging global GRID computer networking technology, which concept Prof. Utsumi initiated in early 1970s ([McLeod, 2000](#)).

VI. Financing.

This GUS projects will combine (1) the Japanese government's Official Development Assistance (ODA) funds and (2) Japanese electronic equipment (including technical assistance and training) with (a) the Internet technology and (b) content development of North America and Europe.

VII. Action Plan

1. Fact Finding and Assessment Trip

The first practical step in this process is the preparation of a detailed program document encapsulating the diverse components of the enterprise. This requires a fact-finding mission to Palestine-Gaza Strip to be undertaken by Prof. Utsumi of GUS and Ms. Linda Hawkin Israel of MAMAS. During this period, an initial stakeholder meeting will be held for formal confirmation of project partners in Gaza, and to form working groups mentioned above. This trip must include following:

- 1) Visits to participating colleges, universities, hospitals, local governments and community based programs in Gaza Strip and West Bank:
- 2) Establishment of working groups for each aspect of collaborative proposal writing, with representation from the communities, institutions, and governmental agencies that will benefit from the initiative.

2. Planning Workshop for Convening of Working Groups (about 4 months after the above action)

Each working group will produce proposal with necessary steps to be taken during the following three months with their budgets, which will be summarized into a proposal. This proposal with precise budget for the next design phase will be used for the fund raising.

The emphasis will be placed on the design of tech/facilitator support and marketing survey for sustainability of GUS/Palestine/GS&WB with their applications and others at anchoring institutions, mentioned above. This proposal will be submitted with endorsements from various UN, governmental, universities, NGO agencies to the nearby Japan Embassy for the Japanese ODA fund.

3. Design Phase Workshop

This phase will conduct market survey, feasibility study, system design of infrastructure; design of support system and administration structure, as well as to construct a business model for maximum effectiveness and sustainability and replication in other locations. This phase would produce a project proposal for deployment, for which Japanese ODA fund will cooperate with federal and regional government for funding as GUS/Palestine/GS&WB program.

VIII. Timeline/Budget.

1. Phase A: Fact-Finding and Assessment Trip

Time Period: October 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007; Budget: \$50,000

- 1) Establishment of local secretariats to move project forward,
- 2) Confirmation of official participation,
- 3) Convening of initial stakeholders meetings in Gaza Strip.

2. Phase B: Planning Workshop

Time Period: April 1, 2008 to June 30, 2008; Budget: \$150,000

- 1) Collaborative development of infrastructure, program tracks, and timelines by stakeholders,
- 2) Development of relationship with grantors,
- 3) Written proposal, with budgets, for Japan ODA support and matching grants,
- 4) Grants agreed upon and mechanism for administration put in place.

3. Phase C: Design Phase

Time Period: January 1, 2009 to April 1, 2009

GUS/Palestine/GS&WB implemented per agreements.

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