A. Status of Higher Education in the Arab Region

1. 30% less than 15 years old.
2. 60% less than 25 years old.
3. Arab population 360 million.
   - 100 million new jobs to be created by 2020 (WB 2007).
   - 25% of Arab youth not employed.
4. 7.5 million higher education students, in the arab region.
5. 2250 higher education per 100,000 inhabitants.
6. 360 universities in the arab region. Private universities are expanding rapidly.
7. One university per one million compared to world average of one university per 700,000 population.
8. 150,000 faculty members, 30% women.
9. Prof – Student Ratio
   1:14 OECD
   1:16 world average
   1:30 Arab region

B. Challenges:

What are the challenges:

1. Capacity building of HE should be based on quality and relevance in undergraduate and graduate programs. For building the human capital needed for the k-economy.
2. Research-based institutions to deliver R&D and innovations to move developing countries into developed economy.
3. **Merit-based** in procurement, recruitments, admission policy etc.

4. To deliver **R&D linked with business** and **industry**.

5. **Independent and autonomous** higher education institutions. Freedom of thought and expression.

6. **Bridging** with other quality higher institutions abroad.

7. **Life-long** education, refreshing courses, realignment of specialization to meet markets needs, training and retraining.

8. **Out-reach** programs with the community.

9. **Technology transfer** through incubators, business parks and commercialization.

10. **Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship** are the vehicles of development and the output of quality delivery of higher education.

11. To stimulate growth through flexibility of higher education to react quickly to market-trends, and create new market-demands.

**How to face the challenges:**

**a. Quality relevance and governance based on merits:**

1. Attracting **quality faculty members** for teaching and research. Equal opportunity for all **on merits**.

2. Launching an **aggressive scholarship program** to the best universities abroad for graduate studies to create the core of high caliber faculty and staff. Those should be chosen from the best point-average students, interviewed extensively for their academic, ethical, and personal qualities.

3. **Students-admission policy** should be based on merits.

4. Creating **a sustainable funding mechanism** and creating trust-fund for the university for stability, continuity and innovations.
5. **Management** and **sound governance**.

6. **Quality assurance** by self and international assessment and evaluations.

7. **Inducive university environment and smart-campus**.

8. Develop the university to become a house of **expertise, consultation and culture** for public and private sectors to serve the community.

b. **Establish alliance**

1. **Liaise with** corporate, research institutions locally and abroad.

2. **International cooperation** in teaching, research, joint programs and projects.

3. **Bridge public-private** to stimulate commercialization.

c. **Accreditation and quality assurance mechanics:**

1. Continuous internal and external assessment.

2. Updated curricula to be on the edge of knowledge and skills.


4. Establish bench-mark in quality education by fulfilling the criteria in joining quality accreditation boards and quality assurance schemes.

d. **Assessment and feed-back.**

1. Graduates to be assessed as alumni at work by their employers for feed-back evaluation of the delivery of the higher education institution.

2. Career-week for the graduation class to interact with employers on the campus for employment.