

USAID/EGYPT MBA RCO PROGRAM

Final Report

MAY 1, 2011 – DECEMBER 31, 2012

Contract Number: AID-263-C-11-00002
Effective Dates: 05/01/11 – 12/31/12
Contract Total: \$250,000
Obligated Amount: \$250,000

This Final Report summarizes the activities of World Learning and its subcontractor, The Institute for International Education (IIE), from May 1, 2011 – December 31, 2012, under the Contract Number AID-263-C-11-00002, with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The report is organized as follows: Summary; Activities; Observations; and Recommended Actions. The **Summary** provides an overview of the contract. The **Activities** section describes the accomplishments during the reporting period and the major tasks and deliverables fulfilled under the contract. The **Observations** section describes any issues and/or problems toward fulfilling the major tasks and deliverables under the contract. The **Recommended Actions** describes proposed solutions to address any concerns and /or constraints toward fulfilling the major tasks and deliverables under the contract.

I. SUMMARY

Background

Although the original FORECAST Task Order for Egypt MBA was designed to support 16 participants initially, cost savings and modifications under the FORECAST Task Order provided funding for an additional eight participants, who arrived in the 2010-11 academic year. In April 2011, in anticipation of the conclusion of the FORECAST IQC, which ended May 11, 2011, USAID/Egypt issued a separate contract in the amount of \$250,000 to World Learning and IIE to continue providing support services for a remaining time period for the eight students who began their studies under the FORECAST MBA participant training program (the ninth student returned to Egypt by December 2010).

The main objectives of the contract remained the same as those under FORECAST MBA: 1) to help the future leaders of the Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) to develop entrepreneurial attitudes, critical thinking abilities, organization change skills, and world-class business techniques; and 2) to provide participants with the ability to grasp the big picture, think critically, act entrepreneurially, and institute best business practices upon their return to the MOHP.

The MOHP envisioned far-reaching changes with the support of the Minister and others who shared a vision of a new paradigm of health care delivery. Part of the MOHP's vision included utilizing some of the world's top executive education institutions from the United States to provide world-class MBA training for the leaders of the MOHP. USAID, under the FORECAST mechanism, provided full, two-year scholarships for the employees of the MOHP to attend U.S.-based MBA programs. This program was in response to the Ministry's request to develop a cadre of business-minded professionals within the MOHP.

The following tasks were completed for eight Wave III participants: Pre-Departure Logistical Services for Candidates; Pre-Departure Logistical Services; Pre-Departure Medical Clearance Services; U.S.-Based Monitoring and Reporting Services.

As of August 14, 2012, all eight participants in Wave III had completed their programs and departed the U.S. Of the eight participants who completed training under this contract, three were women.

Program Summary

The participants' first year of academic study at their universities was underway as the new contract began. Assisted by World Learning, students had settled into permanent housing, and a system of regular monitoring was in place. World Learning contacted participants monthly by email, getting routine updates on their academic study, their housing, any academic-related activities, field trips, requests to join professional societies or attend and/or present papers at conferences. Program staff at World Learning also monitored participants' adjustment to U.S. academic and cultural life, and handled special requests, such as travel back to Egypt for breaks or emergencies outside of the normal routine. World Learning continued to provide their MMA and other allowances, and collected Academic Enrollment and Term Reports, end-of-program surveys, and arranged for payment of university tuition and mandatory fees.

After the participants successfully completed U.S. training, World Learning arranged return travel to Egypt. IIE contacted participants within three days of their return to Egypt and entered all required information into TraiNet. After participants had returned to their jobs, they were asked to complete a survey and participate in a program debriefing conducted by USAID.

The returned participant surveys provided feedback for future programs, and some of the recommendations are outlined in the Recommendations at the end of this report.

USAID held a debriefing with Wave III participants in December 2012 at the Mission. The results of that meeting are summarized in Section III.

II. ACTIVITIES

Participant	Program	University	Departure Date
Nader Mousa	MS/MBA	Boston University	May 26, 2012
Dina Zaki	MBA	Brandeis University	Dec. 27, 2011
Hythem Abdelwahab	MS/MBA	Boston University	May 25, 2012
Osama El Saket	MBA	Babson College	Dec. 26, 2011
Radi Hammad Radi	MBA	Loyola University/Chicago	July 31, 2012
Rania Ahmed	MBA	Loyola University/Chicago	July 31, 2012
Lamiaa Nagib Younis Hassan	MBA	George Washington Univ.	May 24, 2012
Ahmed Selim	MBA	University of Portland	August 14, 2012



Ahmed Selim takes public transportation in Portland

WAVE III PARTICIPANTS – FALL 2009 AND 2010 START DATE

One Wave III MBA participant approved by the Ministry of Health & Population (MOHP) in 2009 (Islam El Beih) successfully completed his training at Brandeis University and returned to Egypt prior to the start of this contract. Eight other participants arrived in the Fall and Winter of 2010 and completed their programs by August of 2012. Below are highlights of their programs:

Osama Mohamed Ahmed El Saket: (Babson College, August 2010 - December 26, 2011). Osama graduated with a cumulative GPA of 3.2.

Program Highlights

Internships:

Due to working at capacity in his course load in order to graduate early, Osama did not pursue an internship.

Conferences/Meetings:

Osama attended a meeting with representatives from the Global Economic Forum (GEF) who came to his university on May 24, 2011 and met with the dean, faculty members, and students.

Return:

Osama departed the U.S. on December 26, 2011. IIE reported on December 29 that he arrived safely back in Egypt on December 27. His status was changed in TraiNet.

Dina Mokhtar Othman Mohammed Zaki: (Brandeis University, August 2010 - December, 2011). Dina graduated with a GPA of 3.64.

Program Highlights:

Internship:

During her final summer in the US, in lieu of an internship, Dina participated in Brandeis's

summer Team Consulting Project with a client organization for a total of six credits. To that end, Dina was accepted at Beth Israel Hospital for a four-month project. Beth Israel is part of Harvard's university hospitals. Dina and two colleagues evaluated operations, marketing and financial analysis of the expansion of the orthopedics clinic outside Boston, at the end of which they gave a final presentation on August 26, 2011, before hospital management and university staff. Dina successfully completed the project on August 31.

“Our presentation was wonderful, we were the only team that has a health care project and we had tons of data but we managed it. Our team impressed the audience, my 2 teammates were awesome and I was the only international student in all the presentations and really did a good job as a non-native speaker... everybody praised me for my performance and I was very proud.”

Departure:

She returned to Egypt, arriving on December 27, 2011. IIE reported on December 29 that she arrived safely, and her status was changed in TraiNet.

“At the end, this was a very good experience that changed me a lot and changed my way of thinking, I become more analytical, open minded and experienced. This definitely will be reflected in the progress of both my practical and private life. Thank you very much for sharing in the person I am now.”

Hythem Mohamed Abdel Aziz Abdel Wahab: (Boston University, August 2010 - May 2012).

Hythem was enrolled in a joint degree program (MBA/MS Information Science). He graduated with a cumulative GPA of 3.06 in his MBA program and with a GPA of 3.71 in his MS program.

Program Highlights

Projects:

Hythem participated in numerous group projects for his classes while at Boston University, including an Operations Management Project, analyzing and developing process recommendations for Panera Bread, Inc. store operations; a project for an optics firm for his *Supply Chain Management* class; an Operations Modeling project; and a Licensing Project.

Internships:

Hythem was an unpaid Systems Analyst Intern at the Gemini Initiative, working on a fulltime basis through his summer vacation of 2011, and on a part-time basis through the next academic year. With funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and UNITAID, the Gemini Initiative project team at the Boston University School of Medicine is creating an international, open access database to understand and describe the global, donor-funded market. The database includes donor-funded pharmaceutical and diagnostic transactions collated with additional data relating to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The team also designed and developed tools to provide advanced understanding of the information and conduct analyses for economic research and monitoring of the donor-funded market and that will have far-reaching policy implications.

Hythem worked on a market landscape analysis project, as well as on the data warehouse and analytics side of the project. As part of this process, he participated in a two-day workshop with various stakeholders from the World Health Organization and others.

“...the GEMINI project uniquely bridges my backgrounds as a formal focal point of many healthcare donor programs in Egypt, and a current MSIS / health sector MBA candidate, in addition to its genuine scholar and diverse team...”

“My internship is going great. Am currently reporting on my summer work and preparing for my fall semester involvement. Our Project Workshop went great. It was a great opportunity to network with several stakeholders from various org. form WHO, UNTAID, CHAI, etc.”

What I really like about my internship is how the scope of involvement entirely shifted overtime, from a pure business focus to actually diving in to our database and playing around with various data sets. Yet, at this point, I couldn't but admit that the most important thing I have learned through my internship experience is how to work efficiently in such huge teams. I really admire how my supervisor used to set her expectations clear in terms of my deliverables, how robust and efficient our communication was, and finally how everyone was personally involved in the capacity building of each team member.”

Conferences and Meetings:

On March 24-25, 2012, he attended the [Egypt NEGMA conference](#) at MIT, which featured sessions on the following:

- The Online Opportunity: Using the Internet as a Catalyst for the Economic, Social, Cultural and Political Aspirations of Egyptians
- From Charity to Investment: Experience of a Community Foundation
- Education for Employment: Bridging the Gaps
- Egypt and the Productivity Challenge

The conference sought to bring together Egyptian-American professionals and friends of Egypt interested in developing concrete ideas to contribute to a brighter future for Egypt.

Memberships and Certifications:

Hythem joined the Project Management Institute and planned to take the Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification exam in June 2012. He belonged to the Collaborative Consulting Community at BU (organized into project teams to provide consulting services for a local non-profit organization each semester). He was an active member at BU's Institute for Technology Entrepreneurship and Commercialization and the School of Management's Healthcare Community.

Departure:

Hythem graduated with high honors and returned to Egypt on May 25. His return to Egypt was confirmed by IIE, and his status changed in TraiNet.

“Yesterday, I received my MSIS/MBA graduation diplomas (with high honors!!). As I reflect on such inspiring experience I had at Boston University, I realized that I couldn't make it without your sincere guidance. Thank you for being my advisor/mentor, and for being some(one) I look up to!!”

Nader Abdel Mawla Anwar Mousa (Boston University, August 2010 - May 2012). Nader Mousa participated in a joint MBA/MS degree program and graduated with a 3.18 cumulative GPA in the MBA program and a 3.7 in the M.S. program.

Program Highlights

Internship:

From June 2011 until December 2011, Nader did a 400-hour internship at Boston Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in supply chain and operations management. Following its completion, he was assigned to be assistant project manager, reporting directly to the director of the department, which provided great exposure to influential people in the Institute and to professors from Harvard, in effect managing the entire project. In addition, he also helped another project related to data mining and the creation of a standardized kit to be used in the institute.

“This internship makes me in contact with the admin workflow in a big organization. I am trying to discover everything about the work flow and every single detail in operation management algorithms.....”

Nader graduated with high honors from Boston University on May 20, 2012. He departed for Egypt on May 26; his safe return was reported by IIE and his status changed in TraiNet.

“I have good news for you. I received a "High Academic Honor" in my MS.MBA study. This honor is the highest possible academic honor received by any student at BU. They gave me the golden ribbon which is the sign of this honor. Commencement party was awesome. They mentioned my name and that I received the "High honor" and the dean gave me the graduation envelope. I was so happy for that.”

Lamiaa Nagib Younis Hassan: (George Washington University, August 2010 - May 2012). Lamiaa graduated with a cumulative GPA of 3.4.

Program Highlights

Internships:

During her program, Lamiaa secured an unpaid internship for the Center for Pharmaceutical Management at the nonprofit international health organization Management Sciences for Health from June 2 to July 22, 2011. She also did volunteer work at a local animal clinic.

Field Trips:

In May 2011, Lamiaa traveled to Sweden for her international residency program (for credit) (May 7-21), for which she prepared by taking a Swedish language class (January-April). In March 2012, during her Spring Break, she also participated in a volunteer trip organized by the Global Health Network, a George Washington University student association. This group of 30 George Washington University students traveled to a rural village three hours from Managua, Nicaragua to volunteer at the Roberto Clemente Health clinic (www.nicaclinic.org), which offers primary healthcare to the community as well as public health outreach. Since Lamiaa is a pharmacist, she volunteered at the clinic's pharmacy, as well as participated in public health outreach at the clinic and primary schools. Immediately prior to the trip, she fractured her wrist and underwent surgery on March 5 to put in metal plates to stabilize it. Fortunately, her surgery did not negatively impact or impede her work there. The Global Health network took care of hotel reservations, translators, in-country transportation, and transportation to and from the airport, although students booked their own flights. The trip was self-funded. Lamiaa called the trip "a very rich experience."

Conferences/Meetings:

While in the U.S., Lamiaa attended the following conferences in 2011:

- Health Affairs Briefing, Strategies for the Global Decade of Vaccines
- SPS Global Meeting, Management Sciences for Health
- United States Pharmacopeia

Return:

Lamiaa graduated from George Washington University on May 20, 2012. She departed the U.S. on May 24; her safe return was reported by IIE and her status changed in TraiNet.

Rania Mohamed Ashraf Ahmed: (Loyola University, August 2010 - August 2012). Rania graduated with a cumulative GPA of 3.97.

Program Highlights

Field Trips:

On May 14, 2012, Rania had the opportunity to take a university-sponsored field trip to Brazil and Argentina to study their healthcare systems. She felt the time she spent in Latin America was extremely beneficial and particularly liked Brazil, with its booming economy and people motivated to develop the country, which she said motivated and inspired her. Nonetheless, she observed that Brazil faces some formidable challenges with poverty, education, and healthcare, which will require hard work, vision, and commitment. Argentina (Buenos Aires) was very different and reminded her more of Cairo; she witnessed a great deal of social unrest there due to corruption and lack of opportunities for a large number of educated and talented people.

In terms of health care systems, Rania felt that both were substantially different from both Egypt and the U.S., but there are still some similarities. They are both considered “pharmerging” (pharmaceutical emerging) markets with a lot of potential, with a great deal of opportunity for collaboration and learning. On their visit to one of Argentina's pharmaceutical companies, Rania realized she had worked on one of their products in the Ministry.

Conferences/Meetings:

Rania attended a conference in June 2011 at Abbott Labs. The conference theme was *Regulatory Intelligence—Making A Difference In Companies of All Sizes* and featured regulatory colleagues from the Chicago area for networking and expert presentations. The event was sponsored by the Regulatory Affairs Professional Society (RAPS) Chicago Chapter and was intended to promote knowledge advancement and facilitate networking among local regulatory professionals. The evening included presentations, a panel discussion and audience engagement. Experts from the pharmaceutical industry shared their experiences in the following topics:

- Defining Regulatory and Competitive Intelligence
- Communicating Intelligence Within an Organization
- How Regulatory and Competitive Intelligence Add Value to an Organization
- The Role of Regulatory Intelligence in Developing Regulatory Strategy
- Making a Difference – Shaping the Regulatory and Legislative Environment
- How Competitor Intelligence Can Complete the Puzzle
- Competitor Intelligence vs. Market Research

Speakers included:

- Kimberly Belsky, Director of Policy and Communication, Global Regulatory Affairs, Bausch + Lomb
- Linda Bowen, Senior Director of Regulatory Policy and Intelligence, Global Regulatory Affairs, Sanofi-Aventis
- David Hitchcock, Principal, SAI Med Partners

One of Rania’s strongest impressions is how information on regulatory affairs is so readily available in the U.S.

In the Fall of 2011, Rania attended a seminar on the treatment of AIDS in developing countries given by an advisor from the pharmaceutical giant Abbott Laboratories. The presenter talked about the demographics of AIDS and its decline in incidence from countries like the US, but which still has high rates in Africa. Abbott has developed a second line treatment drug for adults, which can be given to an HIV-positive mother right after birth to prevent mother-to-child transmission. Rania talked about her interest in the discussion, not only from the business and medical aspects, but from the human one as well. Afterward, she talked to the presenter about HCV (Hepatitis C virus), which is epidemic in Egypt, and treatment is expensive. The presenter said they are approaching a cure that is specific to the genotype prevalent in Egypt; Rania hopes one day to work on helping to bring a cure for it.

She also attended the American College of Health Care Executives (ACHE) conference in Chicago in March 2012. Her favorite sessions focused on health care reform and general management topics, such as emotional intelligence and managing low performers. She found it to be extremely beneficial.

Memberships:

Rania joined Egyptians Abroad for Development, a new NGO based in Chicago that provides assistance to the Egyptian community. She also worked with an NGO while in Cairo on break last summer, serving as a member of the health subcommittee in this organization.

“I am proceeding with my role as a health care subcommittee member in Egyptians Abroad for development Organization an NGO based in Chicago aimed at providing aid to the Egyptian community through transfer of knowledge and raising awareness in fields like health and education. It is a very interesting experience and I find that it aligns perfectly with my goal from this program, we are even planning a public event by next Jan to celebrate the Egyptian revolution.”

She also became a member of the American College of Health Care Executives and feels it should be a useful opportunity for her to network in the future.

Departure:

On May 12, Rania participated in graduation ceremonies (Loyola has one ceremony for its graduate students). During June, she completed assignments and attended the graduation dinner on July 7, where she gave remarks. Rania departed the U.S. on July 31, 2012. IIE reported that she arrived safely, and her status was changed in TraiNet.

“It was a great experience. I learned a lot in my field and was introduced broadly to the US healthcare system. I have both gained some very important management skills and enhanced my knowledge of different healthcare systems and policies. I couldn’t have chosen a better time to study healthcare management in the states. The Healthcare reform is a big topic. It was an eye opening experience to see how policies evolve and change to the better or to the worse sometimes.”

“I have been working through my study in the United States on a couple of projects regarding the drug registration system in Egypt and I believe they will help develop the pharmaceutical industry as a whole. I have taken feedback from my professors on those projects and used all that I have learned in developing them. I plan to introduce them to different stake holders in the Ministry of health. I also plan to work within the Ministry and use all that I have learned in health care management to help develop and implement policies that enable us to better serve patients in Egypt through the support of the healthcare industry.”



Rania Enjoying the Chicago Spring

Radi Hamad Radi Hammad: (Loyola University, August 2010- August, 2012). Radi graduated with a 3.95 GPA.

Program Highlights

Field Trips:

Radi participated in a university-sponsored field trip to Latin America in May 2012. He described the trip to Brazil and Argentina as “amazing.” He gathered a great deal of information about the health care systems of both countries. The trip was organized to allow time for both lecture and study, as well as free time to explore both Rio and Buenos Aires. During the visit to Brazil, they met with Axis Biotec, the national health agency, Sao Jose Hospital, and the National School of Public Health and Primary Care Unit. In Argentina, the group visited Austral Hospital, Richmond Laboratories, Argentina Hospital, and the Clinic Confederation.

Conferences/Meetings:

Radi was quite active in outside events during his program, taking full advantage of opportunities to attend conferences, join groups, and organize events related to his degree program and to cultural life. In June 2011, he attended a global healthcare and medical travel discussion group. Later that year, he attended meetings for the organization Egyptians Abroad for Development. He also attended several events and lectures in October, among them *Supply Chain Risk in a Global Marketplace*, a panel discussion held on October 13; an MBA-HCM social networking event with the dean on October 22; and *Trade Trends and the Economy* on October 25. In addition, he attended *A Vision for Energy Independence, Jobs and National Wealth* and had a medical tour at the Loyola Medical Center.

In November 2011, he was a featured speaker at Loyola’s Graduate School of Business International Dinner, an event organized by international business association and GSBIC. He talked about Egypt, giving basic information on its history, culture, as well as what is going on politically at the moment. There were also speakers from India and China.

Radi helped to organize several events in January 2012: one was a career-focused event to help international students understand the difference between the professional experience in their own countries and the American work experience to help them when applying for internships in the U.S. One of the sessions was designed to give them information about resumes and letter-writing skills, as well as how they should think about their career paths. The second event was free language classes for Arabic and Chinese languages in the school; Radi taught Arabic.

He also helped to organize an event entitled “Operating in Multiple Cultures in a World Without Borders,” held on February 5, a collaboration between the International Business Society and the International Club (he was president of the International Club). He organized an Egyptian movie night on February 25, and organized International Night at the school on March 16; it was the second largest event after graduation that Loyola Graduate School of Business has hosted, and was represented by 14 countries and over 250 guests. Among the guests were the Chinese Consul and two representatives from the Italian Consulate. Proceeds went to the organization Action Against Hunger.

Radi attended the American College of Healthcare Executives Congress on Healthcare Leadership, its largest annual event, held in Chicago from March 19-22, 2012. During that same quarter, in his spare time, in addition to teaching Arabic, he took a class in Mandarin Chinese, having gotten an offer from one of his professors to attend; he considered it useful for economic strategy and game theory.

In April 2012, Radi attended a panel discussion featuring the general consuls of France and Germany entitled “European Perspectives on Economics and Politics.”

He was in the process of getting his CPHQ certification (Certified Professional of Healthcare Quality), and while on campus, he was actively involved in organizations, becoming president of his student association, which was extremely helpful in cultivating his conflict management and leadership skills. He was also president of the Graduate School of Business International Club and, like Rania, participated in a group called Egyptians Abroad for Development.

Memberships/Certifications:

Radi joined the American College of Healthcare Executives and plans to attend their Congresses regularly. He received a certificate for membership in Beta Gamma Sigma, the international honor society for Collegiate Schools of Business, based on his GPA.

Return:

He attended his graduation ceremony at Loyola on May 12. Radi departed the U.S. on July 31, 2012. IIE reported that he arrived safely, and his status was changed in TraiNet.

“I can’t count the benefits on myself and my career. The costs were being away from my family and my patients for two years... My net assessment is excellent. It was very beneficial to be here specially during the overwhelming [discussion] about Healthcare reform. “

During his program, Radi needed to return to Egypt several times due to family medical emergencies. World Learning worked with USAID and Loyola University to get approval for these trips.



Cubs vs Pirates: Radi Radi at a baseball game in Chicago

Ahmed Selim: (University of Portland, January 7, 2010 – August 2012). Ahmed had a cumulative GPA of 3.9.

Program Highlights:

Group or Special Projects:

Ahmed's final term projects for Fall 2011 included a group project for his *Operations Management* class that looked at Staples, a high-inventory capacity company, discussing the operational issues the company faces that are inventory-related, with their suggested solutions, from making orders to follow-up customer care issues. Another group project for *Decision Modeling* used computer programming to simulate three years of demand and supply in OHSU inventory systems to predict shortages, and whether excess inventory could result in unnecessary capital. A third project for his *Leadership* class was an individual project that required him to make a personal video about his personal values and beliefs, and his plans as a leader. Ahmed viewed this last project as the most difficult one, since it is so much easier to explore one's surrounding than oneself. It was a cause for much self-reflection.

His Spring Term 2012 was the toughest and most demanding of the program, but also the most interesting: *Project Management*; *Systems Analysis*; and *Marketing*.

About *Project Management*, his comment was: "Project management is a science and art of measuring achievements and avoiding risks," and he enjoys that perspective. He also refers to marketing as well as an art and science, and says further, "...if business is a cake, marketing would be the cherries on top. Very elite and high class specialty."

The *Systems Analysis* course required a project that focused on running a business to analyze the business process that will check the points of redundancy and inefficiency. The final phase of the project was to redesign the system more efficiently utilizing IT systems. Ahmed chose Egyptian

Ophthalmic Center as a case study because ophthalmology is a high tech specialty, and ophthalmology hospitals thus have a great potential for more enhancement and improvement of systems there. It was also his career for five years, and he knew a great deal about the process. He felt the *Systems Analysis* class was the most interesting of all.

Internships:

Since Ahmed's capstone component provided a final integration of the themes covered in the MBA Program with an emphasis on the strategic role played by top management in integrating corporate policies, it served as a replacement for an internship. It took place from May-August 2012. The course was *Strategic Issues and Applications in Management*, and its intent was to "...examine(s) the competitive process through the firm's management of its strategic issues. Students are exposed to the techniques used by managers to evaluate their firm's competitive position, to develop a strategy based on competitive advantages, and to successfully execute their chosen strategy. "

Memberships/Certifications:

Based on academic achievement, the University of Portland has granted Ahmed a free lifetime membership in Beta Gamma Sigma Society, an international honor society that serves business programs accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). Membership in Beta Gamma Sigma is the highest recognition a business student anywhere in the world can receive in a business program accredited by AACSB International. On April 18, 2012, he attended the induction ceremony to receive his membership and logo pin.

Return:

University of Portland has only one graduation ceremony; Ahmed's took place on May 5. Following that, he segued into summer term, taking *Strategic Management in Business*, the capstone course that synthesized his learning during the program. With no project work, classes consisted largely of group discussions and debate regarding business strategies and business ethics for different business cases.

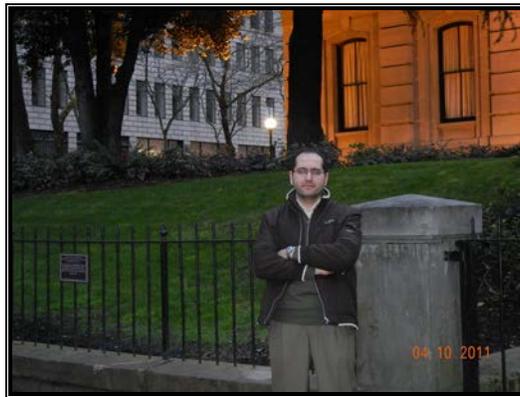
Ahmed departed the US on August 14, 2012; his safe return to Egypt was reported by IIE.

"It's a very rich and multidimensional experience. Not only did I learn a lot on the academic side, but interaction with the USA culture and the American way of thinking have given me a new perspective of how to work things out on the ground. As I mentioned before, it was not only an education or academic experience. It's a journey to one of the most advanced countries. Dealing with the people of this country was the most important part of this experience. I personally have learned a lot from this experience and I am very glad I have taken the step into this program."

"They have to be well prepared to be in a different culture for a couple of years. They should not think of the culture shock as a bad thing, it's just their brain and heart adjusting them to have 2 homes instead of one. It's a very rich experience, but they just need to open their eyes and heart for it. The experience is not there in the class only they should go everywhere that their feet can take them to. The experience is right there, in the people, not only in the books."

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“[Future participants] have to be well prepared to be in a different culture for a couple of years. They should not think of the culture shock as a bad thing, it’s just their brain and heart adjusting them to have two homes instead of one. It’s a very rich experience, but they just need to open their eyes and heart for it. The experience is not there in the class only, they should go everywhere that their feet can take them to. The experience is right there, in the people, not only in the books.”



Ahmed at the University of Portland

SECTION III: OBSERVATIONS

Outcomes

All monthly progress reports and quarterly reports (narrative and financial) were submitted to USAID, and all returns were duly reported into the TraiNet Database.

Highlights of Wave III Training

Successes:

According to returned academic evaluation questionnaires, the participants cited numerous benefits of training:

- Enhanced management skills
- In-depth introduction to the U.S. healthcare system
- High GPAs and Honors
- President of Graduate School of Business International Club and applying tools learned during the program, e.g., conflict management and leadership
- Successfully completed dual-concentration degree programs

- Provided consulting services for local non-profit organizations via university-organized collaborative consulting community project team

Challenges:

- Expressing oneself in writing
- Class participation
- Use of slang in everyday use (outside the classroom)
- Teamwork
- Time management

Plans for the Future:

- Seek additional degrees, e.g., additional master's degrees or doctoral degrees in Global Healthcare
- Work to develop a drug registration system in Egypt that will advance the pharmaceutical industry
- Register an NGO for community services in Egypt that will focus on education and awareness
- Start a new venture that provides e-commerce solutions for small-medium sized businesses in Egypt

The participants found that there were many elements to living and studying in the U.S. that surprised them, or for which they were not entirely prepared, some of which presented difficulties or barriers, yet they found solutions to most of the impediments. For instance, one student noted how big a role writing plays in communicating in the U.S. Since this was her weakest skill upon arrival, and one she needed to improve, she took a *Business Writing* course at school, which helped her a great deal. In addition, one talked about the difficulty that the continual use of slang posed initially. Even if not used extensively in academia, it is everywhere; the student not only set aside time each day to practice it, he invested in a dictionary of slang, which helped enormously.

Other students noted the difficulties presented in coping with a different type of educational system, i.e., one which class participation is required, a stark contrast to the Egyptian system. One student recommended taking part in seminars where discussion is particularly encouraged in order to gain the experience.

Another student mentioned being the only international student in her MBA program, and the additional pressure on her to live up to the expectations of her colleagues. Her way of dealing with it was to work harder to obtain an A or at least a B+, something that eventually resulted in being singled out for praise at the school graduation dinner.

In general, the participants were grateful not only for the skills acquired and enhanced during training. These skills will not only contribute to their personal and professional growth, they will help the participants lead the change they would like to see in improving health care in Egypt. A plus was the fortunate timing of the training, i.e., while the debates over healthcare reform were

taking place in the U.S. Several students commented that degrees from the institutions they attended were well-recognized and respected in Egypt, something that can only serve as an enhancement that will prove to potential employers that they are capable of carrying significant responsibilities and lead to advancement, particularly to more strategic positions in the Ministry that will maximize their training.

The coursework undertaken during training can also have specific impact on their work, e.g., one student mentioned that the work she did during her course of study on projects regarding the drug registration system in Egypt will help develop the pharmaceutical industry as a whole. The feedback from her professors on those projects and what she learned in developing them will give her something to introduce to various stakeholders in the Ministry of Health.

Culturally, since many felt that Americans lacked a good understanding of the Middle East and Islam, at the same time, they felt a certain burden as representatives of that culture and a responsibility to inform and educate Americans about what it means to be of the Arab region. Having said that, they also felt that Americans were often warm and friendly, and they were glad to be able to see how different cultures fit into the society, while still maintaining the essence of their individual cultures. The participants felt being in the U.S. was a rich experience, and were grateful that the country offered the highest level of technology, science, and services. The value of their experience was not only measured in the classroom, but in their interactions with the culture and the American way of thinking, which have provided a new perspective on how to solve problems.

Finally, additional political turmoil in Egypt continued to occasionally distract students from time to time, but they coped and did uniformly well in their studies. In general, they felt this was an exciting if unsettled time in Egypt.

Summary of Debriefing

On December 12, 2012, a debriefing for Wave III participants was conducted at USAID. The day included a comparison of initial expectations from the pre-departure to the post-training perspective; a discussion of the pre-debriefing Survey Monkey results; the intangibles of the program's value; and recommendations for future programs.

Since the debriefing took place anywhere from four months to a full year after the return of the students, depending on the student, they had some time to sift through their collective experiences to re-evaluate and update their views.

The participants found it interesting that they experienced more culture shock upon their return to Egypt, primarily due to the political changes that had taken place during their absence. Some of their concerns were alleviated by occasional visits home. Nevertheless, they have had to "check" themselves upon their return, especially with regard to use of language and expectations of their colleagues.

While the participants enjoyed being introduced to a different, more participative approach to learning requiring more critical thinking skills and ability to work in teams, it took time to adjust

to – generally at least a semester. Now, however, they hope to introduce these ideas more into their work in Egypt. They were tested fully and felt gratified to be able to maximize their experience, yet there is some frustration that those intellectual challenges have not continued upon their return. It is a slow process, and they are anxious to be able to effect reform, something that is not yet possible in their position. This is also hindered by the Egyptian culture, where people tend to work reactively, not pro-actively, and resources are often lacking. They have also run into resentment and resistance on the part of superiors, who may be threatened by the students' U.S. training experience. There is the added issue of the political changes, which have made it unclear as to who is in charge.

Student Recommendations:

- The students felt that, while the experience and the opportunities in the classroom were valuable, most of the curriculum focused on the U.S. health care system, and, for that reason, they suggested more research into the selection of schools with regard to degree programs. They also felt there was unevenness in the academic rigor – some were significantly challenged, others not so much so. They preferred challenges.
- Counsel participants on the importance of absorbing the total cultural experience, i.e., convey that the program is not just about the academic aspects. Participants should be encouraged to interact as much as possible with Americans.
- Sign up for classes beyond the scope of your required curriculum.
- Draw on the experience of program alumni prior to departure; get as much information as possible from them on the program in its entirety.
- Ensure that more senior officials can participate in similar programs so they will be able to understand the experience and be more willing to accept new ideas.
- Work more in concert with MOHP and other ministries so that participants are selected to be able to materially affect the organization and systems, identifying skill gaps and positions to fill them and train people to serve in them. If possible, pre-training skills building in country will prepare managers for innovations in leadership and management. In addition, issues relating to systemic problems such as entrenched hierarchies, lack of acceptance of new ideas, bias against age and other things need to be addressed first.

IV. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

A concern expressed by participants at the debriefing was that the MOHP needs to think more strategically about its goals for participants of long-term academic training programs, and how the participants will contribute to the achievement of Ministry objectives upon return. Given the students' concerns about being able to utilize and implement their skills and experience upon return to their positions, and the static nature of Ministry hierarchy, which they perceive has

somewhat stifled their ability to effect change, World Learning recommends the following in advance of future such interventions:

- Conduct needs assessments, working with the Ministry to identify what challenges or deficits it has in terms of knowledge and skills, target what they are trying to achieve, and identify how degree programming can address those needs effectively. Recruitment and/or nomination can be tailored according to what the assessment uncovers, and will help to identify the right people. This process should include the development of a rationale for investing in a specific person to enhance the Ministry's long-term capacity to close capacity gaps and meet objectives.
- The objectives for training and ultimate utilization of skills should be thoroughly detailed and clearly spelled out in Stakeholder Compacts.
- In order to keep Stakeholder Compact objectives on track, students should be required to maintain contact with their supervisors while they are studying in the US so they can finetune and revise them if needed. The Ministry must be reminded that it has dispatched these staff for training and maintain an active interest in them that includes an ongoing dialogue about their ideas for the trainee's role upon return.
- USAID or a local project office should meet periodically with the appropriate Ministry personnel, e.g., supervisors, to ensure accountability and commitment while the student is in the US.
- Follow-up events, such as workshops that target how to implement skills, bring change into work settings, and effectively put their leadership skills into effect. Any such event should involve Ministry buy-in, input, and cooperation.

World Learning is able and prepared to conduct all of the above, working with technical officers and partners to identify performance gaps and how to respond to them if contracted to do so.

In addition, World Learning also recommends the following:

- Participants need ongoing opportunities to network with one another, through alumni events or an achievement recognition ceremony;
- Use social networking as a means to create more ties for the students prior to departure, e.g. setting up a Facebook page for participants to stay in touch, post news and links to articles of interest; in addition, World Learning offers the Online Global Community on its website, where World Learning can connect students with important program information, offer a place for students to share experiences through blogs, download documents, link with alumni, etc.;

- Utilize the proximity of the American University of Cairo to provide preparatory academic skills training, guidance in online research, and how to find inexpensive textbooks prior to participants' departure for the US;
- Ensure that MBA returnees have opportunities to be mentored upon return into the MOHP environment;
- MOHP should provide continued professional growth opportunities (courses and trainings to upgrade their skills, mini-courses, additional degrees)



Wave III at USAID