



Open Society Foundations

PALESTINIAN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PFDP)

First Quarter FY 2015
Performance Monitoring Report
October 1-December 31, 2014

Funded by:

United States Agency for International Development
Cooperative Agreement No. 294-A-00-05-00234-00

Open Society Foundation

Implemented by: AMIDEAST

Submitted by: John H. Knight, COP, PFDP/Amideast

Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
1. PFDP Program Goals	5
2. Progress in Achieving Program Goals.....	5
3. PFDP Staffing, Program Administration and Reporting	11
4. Looking Ahead to Q2 FY2015.....	12

Executive Summary

First quarter FY 2015 PFDP activities focused primarily on monitoring and assisting the progress of four CTEs, working with the changing conditions at PTUK to try to keep its MOU administrative staff focused on the Kadoorie Center for Learning and Teaching Innovation (KCTLI)'s development and on their operational timeline to staff and equip their new Center, and carrying out the adjusted national roundtable seminar schedule. Unfortunately the KCTLI director hired on 13 July resigned on 13 November. In spite of the COP's repeated promptings, PTUK has not hired a replacement by the end of this quarter. Thus, the KCTLI mission of faculty training has been inert except for that provided by ANU through its MOU with the Kadoorie Center. All PTUK furniture, equipment and engineering simulation software were purchased for the new PTUK Center and delivered in October and November except for a few minor pieces of back-ordered computer equipment to be delivered by mid-January 2015. According to an email from Dr. Samer Najjar, the Dean of Planning, the new PTUK Library building construction with its KCTLI space was finished in December plans an official opening for 3 February 2015.

Because of complications with the J-1 visa application process for five PPU and nine PTUK master trainers to travel to the Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching, Northwestern University, PFDP and the Searle Center negotiated a four-day training workshop in Jericho from 4-7 December with three Searle staff members. Also in lieu of the trip to the Searle Center, PFDP has arranged for a four-day visit to the Lund University Center for the PPU and PTUK master trainers to complete the CTE training mandates in January 2015.



Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching, Northwestern University professors conducted master trainer workshops from 4-7 December at the Oasis Hotel, Jericho for PPU and PTUK CTE master trainers. Front row: Nancy Ruggeri, Denise Drane and Suhair Shumali; rear row: Nedal Alqasem, Husam Qassrawi, Nabil Joulani, Adnan Shehadeh, Greg Light, Muneer Karama, Ghassan, Elayan Gharbyeh and Daoud Abusafieh.

The second and concluding session for the 5th National Roundtable on funding as a strategic tool in West Bank/Gaza universities was conducted on 16 October (first session was on 7

September). Two national experts on the topic of financing higher education in the West Bank/Gaza led the roundtable, which was used as a workshop rather than a conventional presentation-discussion format.

Two more roundtable seminars were conducted in this Quarter: Roundtable #6 (16 November) examined “University Admission Criteria in Palestine: Beyond the Tawjihee”; and Roundtable #7 (7 December) explored “Improving Degree Certification and Recognition Policy”. Policy recommendations from all roundtable seminars were included in summative reports forwarded to the MOEHE, AQAC and USAID. The final roundtable on 18 January will discuss the internationalization of West Bank higher education.

PPU’s required Formative Evaluation report, Project Financial Report-5, and Narrative Report-4 including parts of Milestone reports 5, 6 and 7 (1 September-30 January) were submitted on 30 December 2014. BU’s CETL director, Dr. Rabab Tamish, called on 6 January to request extra time to finish its milestone report since she has reassumed reporting responsibilities for BU; she was given until 26 January to complete the report.

In late September the director of PTUK’s KCTLI, the assistant director of ANU’s CELT, and PFDP’s COP spent five days at the Searle Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning at Northwestern University, the primary training partner for the PFDP university centers.

ANU has submitted and had approved by USAID a contract modification to conduct a “Community Partners Needs Assessment and Data Base” project for three key sectors in the Palestinian economy: education, women empowerment and city service providers for the northern area of the West Bank. The assessment, database and report will be completed by 3 March.

PPU’s request for a no-cost extension of its Agreement from 31 January to 28 February was approved. The additional time allows PPU to collect and submit all invoices and documents from the repairs of the CETL building courtyard’s glass dome that collapsed under the weight of accumulated snow early in 2014.

Due to scheduling problems, the contract with Creative Enterprises for the development and production of PFDP final documentary was extended from 30 December to 25 January 2015 to allow continued filming, development, completion and submission to AMIDEAST and USAID for approval.

Finally, both PPU from 2-3 December and PTUK from 14-16 December conducted their national conventions on topics focused on innovation in learning and teaching with special components on technology integration. Both universities brought together international, national and regional experts to contribute to the high quality of presentations and discussions.

1. PFDP Program Goals

In the first Quarter of FY15, PFDP continues to have four specific goals:

1. Promote the expansion, retention, and professional development of promising academics teaching in the social sciences and humanities.
2. Revitalize and reform teaching at Palestinian higher education institutions.
3. Promote an institutional culture of teaching and learning.
4. Identify and develop future higher education leaders from among PFDP alumni and participants.

These Program Goals refer to the entire PFDP implementation cycle from its inception in 2005 until its close at the end of March 2015.

In its final 24 months, begun in March 2013, PFDP has been primarily focused on activities and results for Goals 2 and 3. Goals 1 and 4 largely reflect PFDP activities between 2005 and 2012, and the final PhD scholar returned during the summer of 2014 to Palestine (Goal 1). The development of “success stories” to reflect the project’s impact related (Goal 4) is underway through a contract with Al Nasher Enterprises with five stories in their final draft form and two to three more to be completed before 1 March. Work on the PFDP documentary through its contract with Creative, a media production is in its final stages and is due to be submitted to USAID for its review and approval by 12 February.

2. Progress in Achieving Program Goals

Goal 1: Promote the expansion, retention, and professional development of promising academics teaching in the social sciences and humanities.

Expected results from activities supported in relation to this goal:

- The final PhD graduate, Dr. Ayab Saad, completed his degree (University of Michigan) and returned to the West Bank. Four others have not yet completed all degree requirements; however, two have reported their progress toward their degrees. None of these four receive any financial support from PFDP/USAID or OSF.
- Of the remaining unfinished fellows, Alma Azzoni Othman and Abeer Shaheen have emailed their intent to complete their doctorates during this academic year (roughly August 2014-June 2015). Wael Dokhan has not responded to emails, nor has his University of Denver advisor since June 2014 when he emailed to note that Mr. Dokhan had been granted a one-year extension to finish his doctorate. None of these receive any financial or visa assistance from PFDP/USAID or OSF.

PFDP no longer provides PhD scholarships for study in the United States. Thus, all expected results under this goal are complete.

Goal 2: Revitalize and reform teaching at Palestinian higher education institutions.

Expected results from activities supported in relation to this goal:

At the national policy level:

- On 16 October, the second half of a seminar roundtable was conducted on using financing as a strategic tool for quality improvement in higher education. Mr. Hisham Kuhail, Executive Director of the Palestinian Election Commission, and Dr. Mahmoud El-jafari, a professor and dean at Al Quds University, led a five-hour exploration of the presentations and discussions from the 7 September first half of this two-day roundtable reflecting the complexity of this long-discussed and contentious. Mr. Kuhail and Dr. El-jafari developed and delivered policy recommendations and a report that were submitted to the MoEHE, AQAC and USAID.



Roundtable #5 leader Hisham Kuhail listens to the group discussion recommendations from Ahmad Atawneh and Fahoum Shalabi on higher education financing strategies during the 16 October session.

- On 16 November, Roundtable #6 explored how the university admissions' process is complicated by the dominance of the national high-stakes' test, the Tawjihee. Dr. Mohammed Al-Sbou', the head of AQAC, highlighted the central issues facing Palestinian universities under the influence of the Tawjihee as a national policy standard. Then Dr. Anwar Zakaria, Director General of Scholarships and Students Services for the MOEHE, explored the wide use of such a test throughout Arabic countries, presented information on 40 international universities as comparative information, and suggested alternative, affordable models for admitting students to university study. Ms. Sana Itayim, the AMIDEAST Educational Advisor, reviewed alternative admissions' practices in Europe and the United States. Following their

presentations, Dr. Al-Sbou' led a discussion that developed recommendations for a simplified admissions' process that were incorporated into a report that were forwarded to the MOEHE and AQAC.

- On 7 December, Roundtable #7 examined “Improving Foreign Degree Certification and Recognition” with nearly 40 participants and presenters Dr. John Clark and Dr. Anwar Dudin, MD. With her Excellency Professor Kwawlah Sakhshsheer, Minister of Education and Higher Education in attendance for her first PFDP Roundtable, and Dr. Al-Sbou' chairing the session, Drs. Clark and Dudin discussed international systems of degree recognition in Europe, the US, and the Russian Confederation. The participants recommended simplifying the existing MOEHE processes and policy in order to improve the recognition of foreign degrees for returning Palestinian students. The recommendations were forwarded to the MOEHE and AQAC.



At the 7 December National Roundtable, Dr. John Clark stresses his point about the standards for the methods of degree recognition/certification in European and Russian Federation universities.

At the institutional level:

- In varying approaches the Centers for Teaching Excellence continue to revitalize and reform higher education policy and practice. **On 8 December the staff of ANU's CELT staff delivered a two-hour public presentation on the internal university and external community impact of its growing Community Based Learning (CBL) program.** Dr. Denise Drane, the assistant executive director of the Searle Center, Dr. Abdelkarim Daragmeh and Dr. Zaher Nazzal used PowerPoint presentations to show how they had designed and implemented their impact study. They then shared their research evidence to prove that the CBL program was changing how the ANU faculty taught, interacted directly with the public and private sector community, and changed their teaching to more learner-centered pedagogies. Their presentations demonstrated how the public sector (public education, healthcare, the Nablus municipality agencies and officials) and the private sector (telecommunications, healthcare, marketing) have

interacted with and been affected by the CBL approach. Finally, they showed evidence about how ANU students have enhanced their employability and work skills through their direct interactions with public and private sector employees and officials— teachers, municipal workers, healthcare providers, and the telecommunications industry.

- As noted in the Fourth Quarter report of FY14, PPU has institutionalized its Center mission by incorporating learner-centered training into the promotions and tenure process. Since 16 September to the end of this Quarter, PPU has conducted five workshops on different aspects of teaching and learning for 188 faculty members (38 female, 20.2%) and four roundtables on topics as wide ranging as “The Language of Instruction at PPU”, “Evaluation of Faculty Members”, “The English Language Program at PPU”, and the Lund University educational development program for 90 faculty (10 female, 11.1%).
- With the staffing, training and equipping the PTUK center, the effects in this sector of the project continue to grow. Ms Maha Iraqi, the KCTLI director, and website director, Fadi Nairat, developed a Beta-site web page with on-going content development.
- On 21 October, then KCTLI director Maha Iraqi submitted a report on the Center’s “Priorities and Challenges” that itemized critical issues needing PTUK-institutional attention in order to assure the Center’s viability and sustainability of the learning center, such as developing an incentive system, capacity building for Center staff and trainers, how to build a cadre of master trainers from each faculty, and integrating the KCTLI governance into the PTUK organizational structure. Sent by email to all concerned PTUK Planning Department administrators Dr. Samer Najjar and Mr. Husam Qaswari, President Marwan Awartani and other top-level administrators, to date the university has not indicated any activity or progress on these concerns.
- On 29 December as the final responsibility of the ANU-PTUK MOU, Drs. Saida Affounh and Abdelkarim Daragmeh completed two sets of trainings to design e-Learning courses for PTUK’s Drs. Shumali and Anaya.
- From 4-7 December, the Searle Center’s Drs. Greg Light, Denise Drane and Nancy Ruggeri conducted train-the-trainer workshops for 5-8 PTUK and 5 PPU trainers in part to compensate for the failure of those trainers to be able to visit the Searle Center at Northwestern University due to US visa problems complicated by Israeli permit difficulties. PTUK and PPU trainers engaged in intensive interactive workshops that taught them how to design student-centered learning modules, courses and workshops. On the fourth day of the training, these trainers were required teach a workshop of their own design to their colleagues.

At the learner level:

- The 30 December PPU milestone report and the 8 December ANU impact reports confirm the continuing integration of the CTE mission into those institution’s learning-teaching capabilities. The determination of both PPU and PTUK trainers to reconfigure the Searle Center trip as a trip to the Lund University learning center under its director Dr. Torgny Roxå demonstrates the continuing commitment to pedagogical change at both universities.

Goal 3: Promote an institutional culture of teaching and learning

Activities intended to ensure the success of this goal was a major area of PFDP's attention during the project extension. The results of these efforts will be ascertained by the final M&E process to run from 21 January-7 February with Drs. Christopher Knapper and Robert Cannon during their final visit to all four campuses. Among other summative evaluation targets, they will be examining the effectiveness of PFDP efforts in these three areas:

- Supporting established Centers for Teaching Excellence (CTEs) through formative monitoring by PDFP staff.
- Supporting the partnerships between ANU and PTUK.
- Supporting the two new CTEs.
- Organizing National Conferences on Teaching and Learning Excellence.

Continuing support for established Centers for Teaching Excellence

Expected results:

- Existing CTEs continue core activities, continue their work on established training activity, and explore new training needs in order to develop new training.
- CTEs undertake a new range of activities leading to improved teaching and administrative practices and an improved culture of teaching and learning.

The grants to An-Najah National University and Bethlehem University for their Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) continue to demonstrate strong support from university leaders and increasingly from faculty and staff. Both universities demonstrate steady interest among faculty and staff in their Centers' efforts in CBL, learning/teaching research, community and private-sector outreach, adding to their students' ability to connect study and learning with their external communities and thereby better prepare themselves for the job market,

National Conferences on Excellence in Teaching and Learning

National conferences on teaching and learning organized by the CTEs have concluded with the PTUK and PPU conferences.

In December PFDP's staff and AMIDEAST's finance officer, Hani Bakri, extended exceptional organizational and logistics' support to PTUK in order to enhance the quality of its public outreach for its theme of learning-teaching innovation during its annual national conference. With barely two weeks to go before its conference, PTUK appealed to the PFDP COP to secure international presenter commitments and contracts, airline flights, hotel and ground transportation. Up to two days before the conference, the PFDP staff exerted extraordinary efforts to confirm the travel and participation of seven international experts from as far away as Brisbane, Australia, Paris and British Columbia, Canada as well as Cairo and Amman.

- The conference, “Innovation in 21st Century Education, Policy and Practice” (14-16 December) focused on the effective ways of connecting learner-centered pedagogy with technological education developments—e-Learning, information access that de-emphasizes rote learning/teaching, and the need to focus on problem-solving and critical thinking approaches to the classroom. The result was 399 attendees, 109 of them female (27.3%). As observed by the COP during the first-day’s sessions, many PTUK students attended sessions, giving them international perspectives on effective learning styles and many new ideas on learning effectiveness.

PPU’s National Conference with the theme of “Toward Creative Initiatives on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education” (2-3 December) required no PFDP assistance and reflected the experienced leadership and organizational planning of the CETL director Dr. Adnan Shehadeh and his staff. With an attendance of 220 persons, 43 female (19.5%), the conference merged a concurrent-sessions’ format with periodic keynote speakers, such as the Lund Center’s Torgny Roxå and the Searle Center’s Greg Light, both with prior long-term connections and training contributions to the PPU CETL.



The Searle Center’s Dr. Greg Light discusses learning/teaching center development at PPU’s National Conference.

To ensure the continuing consideration of various points of view about how to build excellence into a learner-teaching center, Dr. Adnan Shehadeh, and the PPU director of the quality assurance unit, Dr. Elayan Abu Gharbiah, participated in the 6th Annual Conference of the Arab Organization for Quality Assurance in Muscat, Oman on 10-11 December.

Supporting partnerships between established CTEs and other Palestinian universities

Expected results:

- Partnerships will lead to improved teaching and administrative practices and improved culture of teaching and learning.

PFDP continues to support the MOU between An-Najah National University and PTUK as the former assists the later in training, as noted. To continue that commitment, on 10 December

ANU and PTUK signed and had approved an MOU modification to use a slight budget surplus to do the e-course training, noted above.

11

Goal 4: Identification and development of future higher education leaders from among PFDP alumni and participants.

Expected results:

- Documentation of PFDP alumni success stories and their impact on the higher education sector in Palestine and internationally
- A documentary video of PFDP and its impact on the people and institutions involved since its inception.

PFDP's contract with Al Nasher Enterprises, a public communications' company, has resulted in five draft success stories and another 2-3 to come focused on PFDP scholars and CTE successes, especially ANU's CBL program and BU's institutionalization of Center benefits in the promotion of female faculty to administrative roles. The final newsletter will be ready for the 18 January and final Roundtable. Al Nasher will continue to work with PFDP to March 2015, has provided media coverage for the Roundtables 6 & 7, and will do so for the final 18 January Roundtable on internationalization in West Bank higher education as well as for the Alumni gathering on 19 February 2015.

Creative, the media company hired to produce PFDP's final video documentary, has a "rough-cut" of the documentary that it will refine for submission to USAID for review and approval before the end of January. Due to delays caused by the Gaza conflict, the Creative contract was extended from 30 December 2014 to 12 February 2015.

3. PFDP Staffing, Program Administration and Reporting

Staffing

The intern hired on 17 September for 20 hours per week with PFDP to assist staff clerical responsibilities, Arabic-English document translations, and other assigned duties has been hired as a full-time intern.

Program administration: USAID

1. The October resignation of the Contracts and Compliance Officer, among other complications, left behind a considerable body of unorganized, unidentified and misfiled, misidentified electronic and paper documents that eventually need to be organized and properly identified for auditing purposes. After consideration of alternatives, AMIDEAST decided to hire Linda Knight to resolve this considerable filing dilemma. Beginning in mid-November she has been identifying and filing/organizing the financial and contractual documents with the assistance and advice of Mr. Hani Bakri, AMIDEAST's local finance manager, and other projects' contracts' staff. This process continues but has made great progress.

Program audits

Bethlehem University: An auditing process by Suleiman and Co. was completed for the CTE, and no significant findings were reported by the auditors. A meeting to report and consider two minor issues with branding resolved those concerns to the auditor's concurrence.

Program administration: PFDP documentation and site visits

- *Site visits and stakeholder meetings:* Visits by the COP to An-Najah National University's, Bethlehem University's, PPU's and PTUK's CTE continue as part of the program development and monitoring process. Since the FY14 4th Quarterly Report, the COP has made three visits to ANU, one to BU, one to PPU and five to PTUK. The health concerns of the director's mother interfered with a second intended visit to BU.
- The COP has visited with PTUK's Mr. Husam Qasrawi and Dr. Samer Najjar Resolve a variety of KCTLI issues about faculty program development, the on-going inability of the director, Ms. Maha Iraqi, to develop a cooperative working relationship with PTUK staff and administrators culminated in her 13 November resignation. Since then, in spite of a 30 November interview with another candidate by the COP for the KCTLI director's job, no progress has been reported to PFDP.
- COP continues regular contact with Dr. Chris Knapper and Robert Cannon, the PDFP M&E consultants on M&E issues and processes. Upon their requests, the COP sent them milestone reports and periodic reports on CTE activities. They arrive on 20 January and stay until 7 February for the final M&E process. The COP has been in regular contact with all Centers to coordinate the M&E visits.

4. Looking Ahead to Q2 FY2015

The second quarter of FY 2015 will focus on the following:

- Completing the PFDP documentary with Creative for USAID acceptance.
- Completing the success stories with Al Nasher for USAID acceptance.
- Managing the visits to and final self-study reports of each CTE as part of the M&E process in from 20 January-8 February 2015.
- Monitoring the completion of the PTUK and BU agreements as of 31 January 2015.
- Planning and carrying out the 19 February PFDP Alumni reunion and close-out event.
- Organizing and carrying out a 1 March CTE best-practices forum.
- Monitoring the finalizing of the PPU agreement until 28 February as it finishes and collects all financial documents, in accordance with its approved agreement extension.

- Monitoring the ANU modified agreement for a community based learning assessment through 3 March in accordance with its approved Agreement Modification 5 of 19 January 2015.
- Submitting by 15 February 2015 to Mr, Samer Saad, AOR, USAID a PFDP close-out plan for review, modification and approval.
- Submitting to Mr. Samer Saad a PFDP inventory redistribution proposal with recommendation for all PFDP goods/materials.
- Researching and writing a close-out report within 90 days of the conclusion of the program.