First Quarter FY 2010
Performance Monitoring Report
October 1-December 30, 2009

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Palestinian Faculty Development Program

AMIDEAST partners with the Open Society Institute (OSI)/Soros Foundation, and varying university partners. PhD and MA graduates and short- term fellows were mobilized to share the knowledge and skills gained with their peers and colleagues. The ultimate goal of the program is to improve the quality of higher education, and support the emergence of a new generation of academic leaders.

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USAID West Bank/Gaza, Samer Saad, AOR

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PALESTINIAN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PFDP)

First Quarter
Performance Monitoring Report
October 1 – December 30, 2010

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Executive Summary

One of the most important activities that took place this quarter was the modification to PFDP's cooperative agreement. The process of preparing the proposal for modification took much of the previous quarter. Therefore, many PFDP activities for this quarter involved implementing the staffing arrangements and project planning for the new or expanded program elements.

The preliminary findings of the *National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practice* have been completed and are now being reviewed by USAID's AOTR in order to finalize and distribute the study after the necessary amendments have been made.

During this quarter a number of activities related to on-going PFDP components were completed. For example, the two Fiscal Year 2009 Collaborative Projects in Teaching held their concluding activities and the five Fiscal Year 2009 Faculty Grant projects moved towards completion with only one now yet to complete. In addition, a call for new CPT proposals was held and adjudicated with two new proposals being finalized during the quarter. Meetings were held with senior university officials and a new round of Faculty Grants announced in December.

PFDP also started the implementation of new program elements. In Gaza, arrangements were started for providing Al Azhar students with scholarships. PFDP worked extensively with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to complete the selection process for applicants for MA scholarships in education. Funding arrangements for scholarships to the Bard/Al Quds Master of Arts in Teaching Program were initiated along with arrangements for procurement of IT equipment and furniture.

PFDP's partnership with OSI continued with joint management of the PhD, Short-Term Fellow, and MA in Education programs. The Short-Term Fellow program continued this quarter with some Fellows departing, some returning, and preparations completed for the fourth cohort. This year, 13 fellows have been selected, 10 of which will be traveling to the U.S. during the spring semester of this year, while the rest will follow in the following semester. PhD Fellows made progress toward completing their programs with many Fellows returning to Palestine to conduct research once their proposals had been accepted. A total of four PhD fellows have now graduated and returned home, while an additional three will graduate this spring semester and return home.

The PFDP staff continued the daily administrative tasks of dealing with visa and permit issues, attending training, planning for expansion, reporting on progress, monitoring grants, and communicating successes to clients and partners.

PFDP Program Activities

As part of the modification of the Cooperative Agreement, PFDP was requested to prepare a Performance Measurement Plan that included a logical framework. This provided an opportunity to revisit the major aims of the project and to ensure that there was logical consistency among the various program components. The resulting list of Objectives and Activities ensures that PFDP activities are related specifically to a stated program objective in a way that can be measured and reported on. This quarterly report and all subsequent program documents will refer to the ordering and numbering system below.

Objectives and Activities

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

   1.1 PhD Scholarships to U.S.
   1.2 MA Scholarships to U.S.
   1.3 Short-Term Fellowships to U.S.
   1.4 Academic Colloquium in West Bank and Gaza
   1.5 Fellows Conference in the U.S.
   1.6 Pre-Academic Training

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

   2.1 Seminar for Excellence in Teaching (SET)
   2.2 SET Master Trainers
   2.3 English Training for Academics
   2.4 Faculty Development Series
   2.5 Administrative Seminars

3. Promote an institutional culture of teaching and learning.

   3.1 US Palestinian Partnership Grants
   3.2 Collaborative Projects in Teaching
   3.3 Faculty Grants for Teaching and Learning
   3.4 Teaching Excellence Awards
   3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation in Teaching and Learning
   3.6 Scholarships to Local Universities
   3.7 Bard – Al Quds MAT program

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

1.1 PhD Scholarships to U.S.: News and Achievements

PhD Fellow Mohammad Zayyad recently completed his PhD studies at Boston College, Lynch School of Education. Dr. Zayyad successfully passed his exams and coursework, and completed a high quality dissertation entitled: "*The impact of mediated cognitive strategies on the reading comprehension performance and self-efficacy of Palestinian Arab Middle School Students with LD*". Dr. Zayyad used a mixed-method research methodology and completed the requirements for a doctorate in philosophy from Boston College.

Wael Ramadan is another PhD fellow who recently graduated from the University of Denver with a degree in Political Science. Dr. Ramadan successfully defended his dissertation which discussed the different roles of organizational culture in increasing the sustainable competitive advantage of SMEs. Dr. Ramadan hopes to return to Palestine soon in order to transfer the education he has received to Palestinian faculty and students.

Abdrabu Abu Alyan also successfully completed his comprehensive exams and defended his dissertation proposal at the School of Education in the University of Massachusetts.

Mrs. Ola Khalili and Mr. Ayman Khalifah will both graduate this coming spring from the University of Massachusetts – Amherst. Mrs. Khalili has already collected the data for her dissertation on teaching professional development programs in Palestine, which she will defend in April, while Mr. Khalifah will defend his dissertation this summer on epistemologies of educational research within the social and cultural context in Palestine.

Gaza fellow Maysoon Abu El Noor is working on the final draft of her dissertation proposal. She will have defended her proposal before she starts the data collection phase. Nasser Abul El Noor completed gathering data for his dissertation entitled: "*Quality of life and barriers to health care for prostate cancer survivors residing in Gaza Strip*," which he will defend in April of this year at the University of Akron. Sadek Firwana is drafting the last two chapters of his dissertation and is expected to finish in two months

1.2 MA Scholarships to U.S.

This program has been initiated as a result of the recent program modification. The MA Scholarship program targets school principals, mid-level MOEHE administrators, supervisors, and teachers who will receive a M.Ed. in educational administration, educational leadership, curriculum design, and education policy, education technology, school counseling or special education. The MA scholarships will commence in September 2010 with the first cohort leaving for an eleven-month

program of study in the U.S. The program aims to have individuals return to Ministry positions and build capacity in the Ministry in support of the National Teacher Education Strategy.

During this quarter, PFDP worked closely with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, to conduct advertising for the scholarship opportunities and to ensure that application forms went to all schools and muderiya offices and were posted on the Ministry's website. MOEHE received a total of 48 applications from employees in the Ministry who work in various fields. Of these applicants, 15 individuals have been selected as semi-finalists. Arrangements have been made with OSI staff to hold interviews at the end of January 2010. The MA applicants are scheduled to take the TOEFL exam on January 16, 2010. In the meantime, the applicants have engaged in a series of training courses in preparation for the exam, provided by AMIDEAST. The training consisted of 3-hour training for writing CVs and essays, in addition to completing an English level testing exam.

First English training session for potential MA students – December 16, 2009/AMIDEAST Ramallah

1.3 Short-Term Fellowships (STF) to the U.S.

The final STF cohort group has been selected and an initial orientation meeting was held at AMIDEAST on November 1. Ten of the 13 fellows will travel to the United States in the second quarter, and tickets will be purchased for them during the month of January. All health insurance and DS forms have been prepared and completed.

Information meeting for Short Term Fellows – November 1, 2009 / Ramallah

The fourth cohort includes a variety of professors from different fields such as Dr. AbdulHakeem Eideh, a professor of statistics as Al Quds University in Jerusalem, Dr. Nadia Najjab, an assistant professor of philosophy at Birzeit University, Dr. Nabil Al Joulani, assistant professor at the college of engineering and technology at the Palestine Polytechnic University, and Miss Nadera Al Araj, a lecturer in the faculty of business administration at Bethlehem University. We will be in close contact with these fellows as they begin their journeys in order to continuously highlight their achievements. All fellows were vetted before finalizing travel plans.

1.4 Academic Colloquium in the West Bank and Gaza

Preparations are currently being undertaken in preparation for the fourth Academic Colloquium, which will take place during the month of July in Ramallah. This year, PFDP is seeking to have papers jointly presented by Palestinian PhD fellows and the American professors that they have worked closely with during their studies in the U.S. The aim of this approach is to provide well rounded presentations that are interesting for the audience, since it will entail a joint endeavor from two different backgrounds. This approach will further encourage American faculty to visit Palestine and learn more about the education system here. This approach has garnered considerable interest on the part of the PhD and Short-Term Fellows. For example, Akram Ijla, a recent graduate of Cleveland University, would like to cooperate with Professor Mark S. Rosentraub of Michigan University in order to present a study on how Palestinian universities can gain from American universities' experience in order to enhance their performance in terms of education quality and efficiency. Ayman Khalifeh, and three other PhD fellows have also expressed interest in presenting joint papers at the Academic Colloquium on the topic of teaching and learning. They are currently working with different U.S.-based professors in order to prepare a draft for the potential paper, to be approved and discussed during the Fellows Conference that will take place in March at the University of Texas in Austin.

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

2.1 Seminar for Excellence in Teaching (SET)

Preparations were completed for the second round of SET training for PFDP's third Cohort that will take place in the middle of January 2010.

2.2 SET Master Trainers

Planning and logistics were completed for SET Master Training in the next quarter. Following the training conducted for PFDP SET Master Trainers held in the last quarter of FY2009, a Master Trainers course for potential SET trainers will take place on January 16 in Jericho. The Trainees will get a chance to shadow the main CEU trainers during the second training session of Cohort III that is set to take place the following day in Jericho.

2.3 English Training for Academics

Planning and implementation of this new activity added to PFDP as a result of the CA modification began in this quarter. Selected faculty will receive specialized English instruction for academic activities including web searches, proposal writing, academic journal reading and writing, and international web conferencing in English. Six 100-hour courses will be offered each year to faculty in various universities in the West Bank and Gaza. Current preparations are being undertaken to hold five training courses in February at Hebron, Nablus, and Gaza. During this quarter, notices were sent to all academic VPs to inform them of the opportunity along with requests for applicants. Selected applicants will complete English testing in January to determine whether they meet the minimum level for entering the program and to determine their current levels of skill. Teachers for the program were selected and curriculum and materials development begun.

2.5 CEU Administrative Seminars

Notice of the spring round of administrative seminars to be held at the Central European University in Budapest in the spring of 2010 was circulated to all universities along with a request for applications. Topics for the spring series include Quality Enhancement in Higher Education: The New Quality Processes in Europe, Fundraising Challenges and Opportunities for Universities, Internationalizing Your University, Policy Tools and Practices in Faculty Development in Teaching and Learning, and Enhancing the Student Experience in Higher Education: Innovation in Institutional Practices. Applications were received in December and sent to CEU for processing.

3. Promote an institutional culture of teaching and learning.

3.1 US Palestinian Partnership Grants

In accordance with the aims of the National Teacher Education Strategy, and as a result of the recent modification to the cooperative agreement, PFDP will offer University Partnership Grants to at least two Palestinian universities with the aim of restructuring and enhancing their teacher education program based upon major support and cooperation from at least one US university. The long term aim is to support critical capacity building to Palestinian universities through US university assistance that results in sustainable, higher quality teacher education programs. During this quarter, a number of meetings were held in order to determine the most appropriate way to proceed with these grants given that other donors are providing grants for similar purposes including UNESCO, the European Commission, and the World Bank. On November 18, 2009, PFDP organized an information session for academic vice-presidents and deans and directors of education of all Palestinian universities in the West Bank with the aim of discussing the grants component of the program and addressing the means of using this program in a way that serves the needs of Palestinian universities. During the meeting, Mr. Basri Saleh of the Ministry of Education addressed the university faculty present and discussed the Ministry's strategic plan to reform the entire education system in Palestine.

November 18 Grants information meeting-Left: COP John FitzGibbon addressing the participants. Center: Senior university administrators attended the meeting. Right: Mr. Basri Saleh of the MOEHE addressing the group

In order to introduce PFDP and encourage donor coordination in support of the National Teacher Education Strategy, another meeting was held on December 9 at the AMIDEAST office in Ramallah. The meeting was attended by a number of individuals from AMIDEAST, USAID, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the European Commission, and UNESCO. During the meeting, Mr. Bassam Kort stressed USAID's support for the National Teacher Education Strategy, and the need for more direct interaction with the Ministry. During the meeting, the participants identified a list of needs of the Palestinian education system, which included capacity building, practical training, networking, adequate facilities, and an advocacy strategy. Other donors and Palestinian agencies participated including the Commission for Development of Teaching Practice, the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission, and the Quality Implementation Fund

3.2 Collaborative Projects in Teaching (CPT)

At the end of the last quarter, two potential CPT grant projects were identified and negotiations began in order to prepare contracts for approval by USAID. By the end of the quarter a full proposal for continuation of the Special Needs CPT lead by Dr Sami Basha was prepared and submitted to USAID for approval. The contract for this grant is in the final stages of preparation and the project is preparing for the first set of meetings at the end of January. All of the participants were vetted during this quarter.

A proposal for a CPT in English for Specific Purposes was approved by the Grants Committee and work proceeded this quarter in finalizing the details for the grant.

3.3 Faculty Grants for Teaching and Learning

A number of Faculty Grants continued with individual faculty members completing the deliverables for their grants.

Dr. Yazid Annani of Birzeit University successfully concluded a series of workshops with an exhibition that was attended by more than 80 people. The exhibition profiled the work completed by his students, who noted that the workshops were of great importance to them in using photography to understand space.

Photos from Dr. Yazid Annani's exhibition: December 9, 2009 – Ottoman Courthouse / Ramallah

The faculty grant supporting a case-based approach to teaching education psychology was also concluded this quarter. Dr. Maher Hashweh completed the two remaining workshops in which he gave a brief overview of the entire course that is now being taught at Birzeit University for the third year. The techniques used in the course are both innovative and creative, and have received significant positive feedback from students.

Dr. Maher Hashweh's second workshop- November 19, 2009 – Birzeit University

Dr. Hashweh's third and final workshop – December 16, 2009 – National Training Institute / Al Bireh

The final Faculty Grant to be completed is Dr Salem Thawaba's text book prepared for teaching courses in the Departments of Architecture and Geography. This deliverable, submitted to USAID for approval is still being reviewed and is the subject of a request for waiver of USAID branding in order for the book to be printed and distributed.

During December, PFDP circulated a call for proposals for Faculty Grants with a deadline of January 15 for submission of two-page concept papers.

Summary of Current Faculty Grants

	Title & Description of Activity	Principal Contact	Lead University
1	Standards and codes for transformation of lost space to more vivid green places in Palestine The objective of this project is to redefine two main courses taught in Department of Architecture and Department of Geography. A text book will be published in English and Arabic to ensure the benefit for various schools in and outside of Palestine."	Salem Thawaba Urban Planning	Birzeit University

2	Training and Development of Pedagogical Multimedia Based Materials for Teaching The project will train faculty in the Bethlehem Faculty of Arts on ways to produce multimedia-based materials for teaching and for use in and outside of the classroom by conducting two workshops.	Qustandi M Shomali Arts/ Journalism	Bethlehem University
3	Photographic Perception of Spaces This project will involve a two-week student workshop within the Advanced Urban Design course with the goal of using photography as a means of evaluating physical, social, and economic processes in the use of urban spaces.	Yazid N Anani Urban Planning	Birzeit University
4	A case-based approach in pre-service teacher education: Teaching Education Psychology The project aims to develop an Educational Psychology course as part of the Education Diploma of BZU. BZU is currently in the process of reviewing and enhancing their education diploma program as part of the National Teacher Education Strategy of Palestine.	Maher Hashweh Education and Psychology	Birzeit University
5	Developing civic education, democracy, and human rights curriculum. This project will develop a curriculum for civic education, democracy and human rights as part of the humanities and social science departments.	Riad El Eilah	Al Azhar University, Gaza

3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation in Teaching and Learning

National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practice

The PFDP continued work on the *National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practice*. The study will provide the higher education community with valuable information on questions such as: What is the state of teaching practice among Palestinian institutions? What are teachers and students doing in a typical university or college classroom? What materials and pedagogical approaches are commonly used? How are teachers assessing student learning?

Preliminary results have already been concluded and presented at the PFDP's 2009 Academic Colloquium. It is expected that the final study will be finalized and distributed during the next quarter. In November PFDP's COP met with Dr. Lou Cristillo, lead research on the study in order to discuss the date of finalization of the results. The final draft of the study was submitted to USAID for approval at the end of December.

3.6 Scholarships to Local Universities

Al Azhar University has been selected as the first recipient of this support in Gaza. PFDP will provide partial scholarships to years two and three students whose academic achievement is 75% or higher. The estimated number of scholarships will be roughly 2000 students. During this quarter, the project plan for this activity was completed and approved and data gathering started. Gaza PFDP staff worked with the university to verify elements of the student database and reach agreement on the criteria for selection of scholarship recipients. Student records were submitted to PFDP for review and verification.

3.7 Bard – Al Quds MAT program

The Bard – Al Quds University Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Program is a new program component. The program will be the first in Palestine and the first in the region. It focuses on the application of contemporary pedagogy to specific disciplines and features a close integration of theory and practice. The first class of 50 was drawn from in-service teachers at cooperating "pioneer schools." Initially, the subjects covered are Biology, Mathematics, Science, Arabic Studies, and English Language and Literature. PFDP staff are currently cooperating with Al Quds University, Bard College, and USAID officials in order to locate an appropriate date to launch a ceremony for handing scholarship certificates to the students who enrolled in the Bard Al Quds Masters program. The expected date of the event is the end of March.

IT and furniture procurement arrangements were completed during this quarter and waiver requests for purchase submitted to USAID for approval.

Open Society Institute US-Based Activity

Ongoing Contact with Grantees and Host Universities

Throughout the quarter OSI staff:

- Responded to grantee questions about programmatic issues;
- Answered questions from host universities about issues such as grantee health insurance coverage and grantee tuition / fees billing;
- Facilitated grantee travel by obtaining USAID approval on DS-2019s (four grantees returned to Palestine during the quarter for winter break visits, and one traveled to Canada);
- Conducted outreach to current and potential new host universities by e-mail and phone;
- Processed grantee living stipends and requests for professional development funds.

Cohort V Short-Term Fellow (STF) First Visit Arrangements

In October OSI sent placement packets for 16 Cohort V Short-Term Fellows to potential host universities.
The documents in the packets included: a) a cover letter; finalist files with interview comment summaries; c) a program and Short-Term Visiting Fellow component overview; d) instructions for notifying OSI of interest; and f) a host university application. Approximately 100 packets were mailed to departmental chairs, graduate studies deans, and selected faculty members at 80 universities.

Mailings followed preparatory work OSI conducted earlier in order to identify strong potential host departments and mentors. This research was challenging, as many of the Cohort V STFs are in fields that were not initially eligible for the Short-Term Fellows component, such as English / Literature, Environmental Studies, and English / TESOL. Others were in the original PFDP fields.

Follow up by phone and e-mail continued through mid-November. Final placements for 11 Short-Term Visiting Fellows were completed by early December. The placements are as follows:

1. Nadia Najjab – *Georgetown University*, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies

2. Jehad El-Hissi – *Harvard University*, Depts. of Nutrition and Epidemiology

3. Abdulhakeem Eideh -- *University of Michigan*, Institute for Social Survey Research (Summer 2010)

4. Nabil Al-Joulani – *New Jersey Institute of Technology*, Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering

5. Hani Mahdi -- *University of Illinois at Chicago's* School of Public Health

6. Salah Eddin Juneidi -- *Columbia University*, Teachers College

7. Khader Juma -- *Indiana State University's* Department of Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics.

8. Nadira Al-Araj -- *Lewis University,* College of Business (January 2010 and May-July 2010)

9. Tariq Serhan -- *University of South Florida*, Dept. of Adult, Career, and Higher Education

10. Samir Said Hanna -- *University of Hartford*, College of Engineering, Technology, and Architecture

11. Akram Miqdadi -- *City University of New York*, Program in Urban Education

Two finalists, *Mohammad Abu Saqer* and *Ayoub Dalou*, were from Al Aqsa University. The PFDP informed their placements (Columbia University Teacher's College and Iowa State University, respectively) that they would not be able to visit due to PFDP's restriction on working with Al Aqsa University as a result of a USAID decision following the firing of the president by Hamas.

One finalist, *Noha Nijm*, withdrew from the program for personal considerations and therefore did not accept her any of her placement offers (Claremont McKenna College, Wellesley College, or Rutgers University). A second finalist, *Ayesha Al-Rifai Abu Hwajj* postponed her placement at Brandeis University until spring 2011 due to work staffing concerns at UNRWA, where she is the dean of the Faculty of Education Sciences at Ramallah Women's Training Center.

Throughout the quarter OSI staff members were in contact with host university contacts to answer questions about the STF program's structure, timing, and requirements. In December, Patrick Hynes and Joe Glicksberg were in close communication with host university contacts and grantee mentors to update them about expected arrival times of grantees, changes in travel times, arrival hotel information, and to inquire about airport meeting arrangements. OSI relayed arrival information to grantees directly and through AMIDEAST and facilitated grantee-mentor contact by e-mail and phone. OSI also coordinated with the AMIDEAST staff members making grantee travel arrangements. OSI staff sent host university contacts and grantee mentors detailed information about the Short-Term Visiting Fellowship component. In addition, OSI staff updated the standardized "Short-Term Visit Plans" form that mentors will fill out in conjunction with grantees to inform the PFDP of the specific activities grantees will take towards fulfilling the program's goals during their visits.

OSI staff updated the Short-Term Fellow Grant and Terms and Conditions letters in early December. Originals will be kept on file after having been countersigned by grantees. In mid-December OSI set up electronic files for all Cohort III Short-Term Visiting Fellows in its grants database / monitoring software program, GrantSQL.

Cohort IV Gazan STF Returns

In December OSI arranged for five STFs from Cohort IV who conducted their first visits in the US in fall 2009 to return to Gaza. These STFs were: *Ala' Al-Ghoul* and *Shawqi Ghannam* (Indiana University at Bloomington, Dept. of English), *Mohammed El-Sahhar* (University of Illinois at Chicago's School of Public Health), *Khaled El-Sousi* (Iowa State University, Department of Civil, Construction and Environmental Engineering), and *Ahed Helles* (University of Florida, College of Design, Construction, and Planning). Their first visits were originally scheduled for spring 2009 but were delayed due to the hostilities in Gaza in winter 2008-2009.

PFDP Palestinian Education Professionals (Masters in Education): Program Planning

Throughout the quarter OSI was in touch with and met with potential host university representatives regarding the PEP program. All current PFDP hosts in Education are interested in potentially hosting PEP fellows staring in fall 2010. The universities with the strongest interest are Columbia University's Teachers College, Boston College's Lynch School of Education, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst's Center for International Education.

In addition, OSI began making arrangements for PEP host faculty interviewers to participate in upcoming finalist interviews in Ramallah in late January 2010. It is likely that Jacqueline Mosselson of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst will be joining the interview team.

PFDP Grantee Conference Planning

In November OSI finalized arrangements with the University of Texas at Austin to host the fourth annual PFDP Grantee Fellows' Conference. The conference will be held from March 12-14, 2010.

OSI is looking to engage a keynote speaker from USAID, who would reinforce the support of the US government for the PFDP, or elsewhere. Conference planning remains ongoing.

PFDP Administration and Reporting

Financial

In December, USAID conducted a compliance review led by Nidal Abdelghafour. PFDP received notification in early January to the effect that three of the four areas were in compliance and noted non-compliance in the fourth area, that of monthly reporting.

Administrative

Staffing

In order to effectively implement the new and expanded activities requested by USAID, PFDP requested approval to increase staffing in the cooperative agreement modification process. This was approved and, during this quarter, concluded the process for three new staff members that had been started in the previous quarter. AMIDEAST placed ads for the three new positions of Grants Manager, Communications Coordinator, and Program Assistant. After reviewing 46 qualified applications for the position, creating a shortlist, and conducting interviews, PFDP successfully hired Ms. Jumana Dabis for the position of Communications Coordinator. Jumana holds a BA degree in politics from Earlham College in Indiana, and has accumulated two years of experience while working in public relations offices in different organizations in Ramallah. Jumana is currently working closely with PFDP's COP in order to develop a communications strategy for PFDP, as well as ensuring all PFDP activities are documented, highlighted, and distributed widely to different parties.

Following the standard process for hiring, Ms. Haneen Khairi, was hired as Program Assistant. Haneen is a recent graduate from the American University of Sharjah where she obtained a BA in Mass Communications with a focus on Public Relations. Haneen's past work with Al Jazeera has equipped her with a variety of skills and tools that have enabled her to assist PFDP staff in a variety of tasks. Haneen works closely with the Senior Program Officer to complete different logistical tasks for PFDP fellows, and cooperates with the Communications Coordinator in order to gather live footage of PFDP events and activities. Her excellent computer skills have also been highly utilized by all PFDP staff.

PFDP received a total of 25 applications for the position of Grants Manager after advertising in the local newspapers during the previous quarter. Five individuals were interviewed and the successful candidate, Mr. Islam Hijawi was appointed to the new position. Mr. Hijawi worked with AMIDEAST for the first two months of his trial period but it was determined that his skill set did not match those of the position. As a result, Mr. Hijawi resigned and the position was reclassified to Grants Officer and advertised in the local media during December. Short listing, interviewing, and hiring for the position will take place in January.

In order to effectively implement the US Palestinian Grant program and to manage the expanded CPT and Faculty Grants, AMIDEAST advertised for a Senior Technical Advisor. However, this process and word of mouth solicitations to selected high quality candidates for the Senior Technical Advisor position did not garner any suitable candidates. The position of Senior Technical Advisor was advertised in the local media and a shortlist and interview process conducted. The position was advertised in October and eighteen applications for the position were received and, of those, four were shortlisted as fully meeting the basic criteria in the job description and called for interviews. However, none of the interviewed candidates were considered qualified to fulfill the position as described in the job description and advertised. The Review Committee consisted of Bassam Kort, USAID AOTR, Steven Keller, AMIDEAST West Bank/Gaza Country Director, and John FitzGibbon, PFDP COP. Since this process did not end with the identification of a qualified candidate, AMIDEAST eliminated the position of Senior Technical Advisor and replaced it with that of Education Programs Manager. Approval was sought for this change through a cooperative agreement modification.

USAID

During this quarter, PFDP staff continued to work closely with USAID WB/G Mission personnel in the Education, Contracts, Measurement and Evaluation, and Media/PR offices. In October, the PFDP Year Five Implementation Plan was submitted to USAID for review and approval. During her visit to the West Bank, the AMIDEAST Program Vice President, Leslie Nucho met with Mission officials in Tel Aviv including AOTRs and the Education Director. The PFDP staff also met independently with the new Education Director and AOTR and briefed them on progress and issues to date. The COP and Communications Coordinator met with USAID Media/PR to discuss PFDP Communications and PR strategy. Staff from the Mission conducted a mini-workshop at the PFDP office on Geo-MIS reporting including providing guidance that will help PFDP staff to verify Geo-MIS data entry/reporting. A number of meetings regarding the preparation of a PFDP Project Management Plan (PMP) were also held in order to prepare the first PFDP PMP. During this quarter USAID conducted a compliance review of sub-awards.

In December AMIDEAST submitted a request for modification of the PFDP Cooperative Agreement in order to change the job title of PFDP key staff member. PFDP also submitted a request for waiver of source, nationality, and origin for IT equipment to be

purchased for the Bard/Al Quds Master of Arts in Teaching program as well as a request to purchase locally made furniture for the same program.

As part of planning for alumni activities for PFDP alumni, the COP attended a USG Alumni meeting in Ramallah.

Visas and Permits

The various issues, logistical arrangements, and procedural questions regarding the granting of permits to travel by Israeli authorities and visas for entrance to the US take an inordinate amount of staff time. Discussions often include PFDP, OSI, USAID, and US state department staff. Ongoing issues include:

- Renewal of J-1 visas for PhD staff that have returned to Gaza or the West Bank for research, wish to visit relatives or attend conferences or do research in other countries after the term of their J-1 visa has expired.

- Permits for Palestinians to travel to Jerusalem from either the West Bank or Gaza for their visa interviews.

- Permits for Gazans. PFDP and USAID continue to face challenges in gaining permits for travel to Jerusalem and then to depart to the US to enroll in their fellowships.

- Dependents for Short-Term Fellows: PFDP submitted a request for one of the Short-Term Fellows to bring her children on her fellowship. Approval of this request to bring dependents was based on USAID's ongoing effort to support female academics who may not be able to travel if forced to leave young children behind.

University Outreach/Communications

The PFDP Communications Coordinator began outreach visits to West Bank universities promoting this year's PFDP components and distributing the newsletter. The PFDP Program Officer in Gaza also conducted outreach visits to Gaza universities also promoting the year's PFDP components and the COP visited Gaza on a regular basis, generally every month or six weeks. During this quarter, the COP visited Gaza as part of the hiring process for the Program Assistant, to review office expansion for the new staff, finalize Al Azhar scholarship process, visit Palestine University, and bring much needed computer supplies and testing materials to the AMIDEAST office for PFDP activities.

Much correspondence and discussion occurred between PFDP staff and university administration during the information session for the grants component that took place November 18. A series of visits to the universities are set to take place next quarter once

PFDP staffing is complete. During these visits, specific meetings will be held with the public relations departments of each university in order to introduce PFDP staff and ensure future cooperation in promoting PFDP activities on university campuses. The visits will include a lengthy introductory visit to the newly established Palestine Ahliyye University in Ramallah, whose staff have learned about PFDP and are eager to begin participating in the various available activities.

In an effort to ensure complete coverage of PFDP events, a meeting was coordinated on December 9 with Anna Majia Litvak from the public relations office at USAID in order to discuss the different approaches PFDP is adopting in this regard.

PFDP's Communications Coordinator is currently preparing a draft for the upcoming newsletter, which will feature interviews with grant recipients, as well as an interview with Dr. Lou Cristillo, lead researcher of the *National Study of Undergraduate Teaching Practice*. It is anticipated that the fourth newsletter will be published and distributed widely in the following quarter.

With the aim of reaching the largest pool of people possible, PFDP has established a Media contact list and a wide ranging master mailing list through which PFDP may circulate upcoming events and announcements, as well as encouraging the largest media coverage possible.

To highlight the effect of PFDP on the Palestinian higher education, PFDP's Communications Coordinator and Program Assistant are in close contact with the RUWWAD USAID project that will be hired to assist PFDP in the production of a promotional movie to include interviews and footage of past PFDP activities as well as current fellows.

The COP has begun regular efforts to link to the donor community. He attended the monthly Education Cluster meeting held at MOEHE during this quarter and convened a donor meeting to discuss the US Palestinian Partnership grant process.

The new Communications Coordinator took on the responsibility of ensuring that the Geo-MIS system is updated with PFDP data including success stories, photographs, and data for the program indicators.

Annex A

PFDP Detailed Activity Plan: Year 5: Activities Planned for Year 5,

Quarter Two

	Activity/Task	Jan	Feb	March
1.1	**PhD Scholarships to U.S.**	OSI monitors progress	OSI monitors progress	Attendance at Fellows Conference March 12-14 Austen Texas
1.2	**MA Scholarships to U.S.**	Conduct finalist interviews in West Bank; Test all finalists	Work with Civil Service Bureau to release scholars; Place finalists in U.S. universities; Conduct TOEFL, GRE, tests, for all candidates	Provide pre-academic training for finalists; Place finalists in U.S. universities;
1.3	**Short-Term Fellowships to U.S.**	Fellows depart to US for first semester visit.	OSI monitors progress	Attendance at Fellows Conference March 12-14 Austen Texas; OSI monitors progress
1.4	**Academic Colloquium in West Bank and Gaza**	Begin scoping program and themes; Gaza option finalized	Contact with STF PhD Fellows and alumni regarding joint presentations; confirm hotel booking.	Trial run for AC presentations and training on presentation skills.
1.5	**Fellows Conference**	Finalize conference themes and presentations	Travel arrangements and logistics finalized	Attendance at Fellows Conference March 12-14 Austen Texas
1.6	**Pre-academic Training**	Review of STF participant evaluations	Needs assessment of MA students conducted and training plan finalized.	Training for MA students begins

	Activity/Task	Jan	Feb	Mar
2.1	**Seminar for Excellence in Teaching (SET)**	SET Part 2 training in West Bank	Website applications and advertising for next round of SET	SET Refresher Course; vetting for SET candidates
2.2	**SET Master Trainers**	Master Trainer supported training		
2.3	**English Training for Academics**	Advertise delivery and select participants for first delivery	Deliver first round of courses	Deliver first round of courses
2.4	**Faculty Development Series**			
2.5	**Administrative Seminars**	Vetting and finalizing participants	CEU Administrative Seminars offered	CEU Administrative Seminars offered

	Activity/Task	Jan	Feb	March
3.1	**US Palestinian Partnership Grants**	Prepare contracts	Implement Planning Grants	Implement Planning Grants
3.2	**Collaborative Projects in Teaching**	First institute for Year 5 grants;	Inter-institute activities; grant monitoring.	on-going monitoring and activities
3.3	**Faculty Grants for Teaching and Learning**	Adjudication of short proposals	Preparation of full-proposals for Planning grants to cover one full year of planning in partnership with a U.S. university.	Adjudication of full proposals and preparation of contracts.
3.4	**Teaching Excellence Awards**	Universities requested to nominate faculty	Faculty nominations open	
3.5	**Studies in Teaching and Learning**			
3.6	**Scholarships to Local Universities**		Receive invoice from Al Azhar and transfer first payment; Receive updated student files, tuition fees, and transcripts	
3.7	**Bard – Al Quds MAT program**	Receive goods	Transfer funding for scholarship students; Deliver goods to Bard-Al Quds	Complete reporting for USAID.