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PALESTINIAN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PFDP)

Third Quarter
Performance Monitoring Report
April 1 – June 30, 2006



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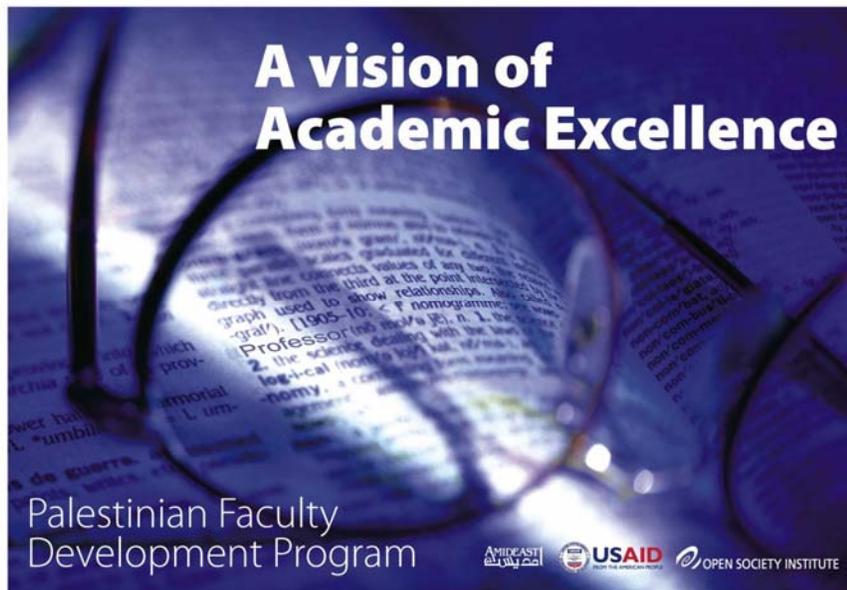


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Executive Summary

The third quarter of implementing PFDP focused on two types of activities, pre-academic training and US university placement. Pre-academic training continued in Gaza, Nablus and Ramallah for all candidates and involved 305 contact hours, bringing the total contact hours to 473. US university placement was completed by OSI for the PhD Fellows. Annex A provides a breakdown of where each finalist is currently placed and US university cost share. Importantly, OSI was able to secure over \$1.6 million in institutional costs share. In addition, AMIDEAST and OSI staff completed writing the PFDP Grantee Handbook in preparation for the Orientation Weekend in July. AMIDEAST is also planning eight days of intensive training for the entire PFDP group, and started the J1 visa application process for the PhD Fellows.

1. Pre-Academic Training

An integral part of the PFDP program is to provide the PFDP participants with a variety of pre-academic professional training to enhance their capabilities and better prepare them for their fellowship. During this quarter a number of courses were given in Nablus, Ramallah and Gaza in an effort to reach out to all candidates as conveniently as possible. The PhD and Short-term finalists were both targeted, and generally took courses together. Evaluations were given after each course and AMIDEAST has consistently received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The biggest difficulty has been tailoring a class that may encompass a range of skills. Attendance at these courses has been required or “highly encouraged.” In some cases, such as with statistical analyses or PowerPoint, AMIDEAST made attendance voluntary, recognizing that some finalists have considerable experience in a certain area and/or will not have a need for a specific course. For example, some of the Short-term finalists have considerable experience in SPSS and are not interested in such a course, while some PhD finalists thoroughly understand PowerPoint.

AMIDEAST has tried to remain flexible in course delivery and yet be cost effective by only delivering a course when it is clear there was going to be attendance of eight or more individuals. Small class size prevailed in all cases which allowed for considerable one-on-one interaction, discussion and small group work. One of the indirect aims of the pre-academic training is for the candidates to get to know each other. Thus, cohort building, particularly among the Short-term Fellows, will hopefully lead to future networking and communication upon completing their PFDP Fellowship.

Public Speaking

Ramallah: 18 hours, May 25-27, 16 participants

Nablus: 18, hours, April 26-28, 9 participants

Gaza: 18 hours, April 20-23, 14 participants

The workshop concentrated on three aspects of public speaking: how to construct a speech, how to deliver it, and how to analyze and evaluate different public speeches. The participants were involved in theoretical, as well as practical aspects of making and delivering a speech in public in English. Participant evaluations



Professor Akram Habib delivers a Public Speaking course at AMIDEAST/Gaza

indicated a high degree of interest and motivation. A Gazan participant noted, “The course was audience-centered and gave the chance for everybody to practice giving speeches,” while a Ramallah participant noted, “It was a great experience and very beneficial to practice with a native speaker.”

Communication and Presentation Skills

Nablus: 24 hours, May 25-27, 9 participants
Ramallah: 24 hours, April 20-23, 17 participants

Gaza: 24 hours, April 27-30, 15 participants

The workshops were tailored to cover the main components related to communication and presentation skills while complementing the public speaking course. This included how to prepare an effective presentation and what communication skills are needed, and how to analyze and evaluate different presentations and languages of communication. The participants experienced all phases of preparing an effective presentation. They had to brainstorm, research, and prepare more than one presentation, deliver it, and finally reflect on their effort and incorporate peer evaluation. Participant showed a great deal of enthusiasm during the course as it was a new experience for the majority of them. A Gazan participant noted, “Dealing with real examples and exposing common mistakes was very beneficial. I enjoyed working in groups, sharing ideas, taking feedback and then applying the ideas.” While a Ramallah participant commented, “I was fascinated by the instructor’s comprehension of the material which gave me the ability to organize and implement a presentation.”



SPSS Course

Ramallah: 16 hours, June 22-23
16 participants

Gaza: 30 Hours, June 22-July 6
10 participants

Participants were trained on the concepts of designing survey methodology, including random sampling

according to the variables of interest, and how best to collect data through survey questionnaires for employers and graduates. In addition, participants learned how to enter different types of data sets using the software SPSS, how to make the data ready for analysis, how to describe the data by using tabular, graphical and numerical methods, and how to examine the relationships between two or more variables. Furthermore, the students learned how to analyze the data by using parametric and non-parametric hypothesis testing and analysis of variance. The course was originally designed to cover 15 hours of training. However, participants expressed a serious need to extend the course to cover additional course material in order to meet their academic needs.



Power Point/ Web Search

June 29 and 30

Ramallah: 16 hours, 8 participants (voluntary)
12 hours of Power Point training concentrated on how to produce an effective presentation with slide coordination, animation, theoretical formatting and consistency. Each participant gave a presentation. Four additional hours focused on how to efficiently conduct web research, and provide them with



valuable techniques to use when surfing the internet for information. They were introduced to library search engines, literature extraction, data mining and personal information search tips. Although use of the internet is now common, the group was particularly happy with this portion of the course. A comment from one participant on their evaluation stated, "I had the opportunity to enhance my knowledge in Power Point and I learned about useful websites. "Very practical course with hands on material and direct implementation on computers."

Intensive English Course

Ramallah: April - July, 7 participants

Nablus: April – July, 6 participants

In Ramallah, a 45 hour course focused on conversation skills, proper grammar usage and speaking patterns. The instructor used the textbook *Passages*, as well as daily newspapers and other references to deliver the course. The course meetings and material were very much tailored because of the small class size. In Nablus, the course was taught by two native-English speakers who divided up the delivery with one trainer using *Passages*, and the other complementing the text with general conversation. The instructors and the participants felt there was sufficient need to extend the training to 60 hours.

Online Advanced English Course

West Bank: May – August, 5 participants

Five individuals from Hebron and Tulkarem were not able to easily attend English courses at AMIDEAST in Ramallah or Nablus. Hence, AMIDEAST's online program was utilized to meet their needs. Online Advanced English challenges the learner to pay attention to more discrete points of grammar and vocabulary. It is designed for students who already have a good command of the English language. Already strong skills are enhanced through further practice and coaching exercises. The five individuals completed the designated levels.

2. Open Society Institute US-based Placement

PhD Placement: In April and May OSI staff continued negotiating finalist placements and tuition waivers with host universities. OSI completed placements for 24 finalists by early June. Out of 27 finalists whose files were circulated to host universities, one finalist declined the fellowship. Two finalists did not receive placement offers, despite targeted OSI staff efforts. A list of PhD Finalist placements can be found in Annex A. A total of \$1.6 million in institutional cost share has been pledged by 14 institutions.

Placements were facilitated by Mr. Patrick Hynes, OSI's new PFDP Program Coordinator. Throughout the quarter, Mr. Hynes and PFDP Program Manager Joseph Glicksberg were in constant contact with admissions offices and host departments in order to facilitate the formal admissions process, respond to inquiries about the authenticity of finalist documents, and answer general questions about PFDP. Many universities required that OSI fill out online applications and handwrite admissions and other forms. In addition, OSI staff members were frequently in contact with finalists who had questions about the programs and requirements at their host universities. Such inquiries usually necessitated that OSI make arrangements for finalists to speak or correspond directly with host university contacts and advisers. As preparations for grantee arrivals beginning in August, Mr. Hynes will assume an increasingly important role as he becomes the grantees' first point of contact with OSI upon their arrival in the US.

Overall, placements occurred during a collapsed time frame and involved a late start. Lessons learned should include an earlier start to the placement process, which also implies earlier deadlines to recruitment and selection. Universities tended to review the PFDP dossiers at the departmental level, and in many cases, while GRE scores were often sub-par, were still willing to accept our candidates based on the strength of the application and other supporting elements of the program, such as pre-academic training. When candidates were informed of their placements most were very pleased. In a handful of cases there have been concerns about the

appropriateness of the department or the flexibility of the sub-specialties. In all cases this was resolved through further communication with the finalist and the institution, often mediated through AMIDEAST and/or OSI staff.

PFDP Documents: In June, OSI PFDP staff drafted PFDP Grant Award and Terms and Conditions letters. OSI's Legal Department and PFDP COP Chris Shinn at AMIDEAST reviewed and commented on the documents. In addition, OSI staff reviewed and jointly edited the PFDP Grantee Handbook with AMIDEAST staff.

3. J1 Visa Processing

AMIDEAST began the J1 visa processing for the PhD finalists in June. This involved initially gathering the necessary medical clearance form from each prospective grantee, as well as submitting the DS-156 online, and processing the DS-157 (detailing work experience) and DS-158 (detailing family background). Each of these forms, as well as the requisite photos were submitted to the U.S. Consulate. The Consular division of the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem has been particularly flexible and supportive of PFDP. They started a case file for each grantee and initiated background checks in order to expedite the process, even in the absence of the DS-2019 or a university admission letter. Importantly, the US Consulate also did this with the 9 PFDP finalists from Gaza, even though we expected them to have their J1 visa interviews in Cairo. This effort may well make the difference between the Gaza finalists actually getting to their institutions on time. The ongoing total closure of Gaza since June 25, 2006 has put in jeopardy the possibility of getting the Gazans to their institutions on time.

At the same time, the PFDP Program Officer, officially the VCS Initiator, entered all the necessary data on TraiNet in order to begin the process of creating the DS-2019 form for each participant. In sum, the J1 visa processing is on target and unfolding as well as can be expected given the situation.

In May, DEVIS confirmed Patrick Hynes as OSI's TraiNet Initiator (R1) and Joseph Glicksberg as its Verifier (R2). OSI is therefore prepared to validate grantees' arrivals in TraiNet within three days of their entrance into the US.

4. PFDP Grantee Handbook

The COP convened a teleconference between OSI, USAID and AMIDEAST on June 8 to discuss a variety of policies and procedures associated with the future implementation of the program. For example, the specifics of issuing and granting living stipends and other allowances, administration of health insurance, J1 visa regulations and SEVIS protocol, as well as grantee work permission rules vis a vis ADS 253 regulations were some of the issues discussed. This conversation, and a succeeding meeting a week later, was very productive in laying down the framework for how to implement US-based elements of PFDP.

The timing of this meeting coincided with the writing of the PFDP Grantee Handbook. In order to properly explain the program in text and for the PFDP Orientation Weekend, the specifics of each of the above topics needed to be fully understood and agreed upon by all parties. Decisions from this meeting were, in turn, spelled out in the PFDP Grantee Handbook. This was a significant step because it involved reconciling and clarifying USAID West Bank/Gaza participant training policy with OSI and AMIDEAST's different policies. The Handbook was finalized at the end of June and went to the printer. Special binders were produced using the poster graphic (see the cover page of this report) to hold the material.

5. Administration and Reporting

Financial: AMIDEAST submitted its third quarter financial pipeline report on June 15, 2006. This report included estimations for the month of June. The total cumulative expenditures reported in the pipeline report was \$547,225. This does not include a total of \$109,084 of cash OSI has spent on US-based activity as of June 31, 2006. Overall, project expenditures are lower than expected for the fiscal year.

AMIDEAST Personnel:

The COP concluded six month performance evaluations of the three, new, full-time PFDP staff: Program Officer Nariman Rajab; Program Assistant Saba Shami; and Senior Program Assistant in Gaza, Ahmed Tannira. All three evaluations were positive. All three employees have demonstrated exemplar efforts and performance.

Amendments: AMIDEAST submitted a letter to the USAID Agreement Officer on October 30, 2005 requesting several amendments pertaining mostly to financial reporting deadlines. AMIDEAST is still waiting on USAID's review of these requested changes.

Annual Implementation Plan: As per the Contracting Technical Officer's request, AMIDEAST submitted the 2005-2006 Annual Implementation Plan on November 30, 2005. AMIDEAST has not yet received approval of its Implementation Plan.

GIS: As per the Cooperative Agreement, an initial GIS report will be submitted within 30 days of approval of the Annual Implementation Plan.

Annex A
PhD University Placements and Tuition Allocation

No.	Name	University	Total Tuition / AY 06-2010	Estimated USAID Costs	Estimated University & OSI Cost Share
1	Khalili	UMass-Amherst	91,625	84,744	100,536
2	Khalifah	UMass-Amherst	91,625	84,744	100,536
3	Abu-Awad	Columbia University	104,542	92,184	113,453
4	Zayyad	Boston College	95,892	102,264	104,803
5	Firwana	Boston College	95,892	102,264	104,803
6	Adawi	Brandeis University	143,415	84,744	152,326
7	Shaar	Rutgers University	81,918	86,904	90,829
8	AlDwaki	Brandeis University	124,156	84,744	133,067
9	Zaghrou	University of Washington- Seattle	82,627	69,384	91,538
10	Al-Habil	Cleveland State University	36,199	64,824	45,110
11	Abu El-Noor	University of Akron	55,748	64,824	64,659
12	Abu-Elnour	University of Akron	55,748	64,824	64,659
13	Abu Hamad	Brandeis University	124,156	84,744	133,067
14	Shahin	University of Pennsylvania	126,070	83,064	134,981
15	Shaheen	Columbia University	145,152	92,184	154,063
16	Nakhla	University of Texas-Austin	49,967	63,624	58,878
17	Dokhan	University of Denver	141,316	69,864	150,227
18	Dawwas	University of Washington- Seattle	83,650	69,384	92,561
19	Awad	Florida State University	96,633	61,944	105,544
20	Yaseen	University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign	118,451	64,104	127,362
21	Al Noubani	University of Washington- Seattle	83,651	69,384	92,562
22	Ijla	Cleveland State University	38,916	64,824	47,827
23	Dakkak	Columbia University	154,462	92,184	163,373
24	Al Hajjar	Boston College	73,881	102,264	82,792
Total Tuition 4 years			2,295,690	1,904,016	2,509,554