



**PALESTINIAN FACULTY
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (PFDP)**

First Quarter
Performance Monitoring Report
October 1 – December 31, 2005



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Executive Summary

AMIDEAST and OSI began the first quarter of PFDP with a sense of immediacy and dedication. The grant was only finalized days before the start date of October 1, 2005 which meant both organizations had to ramp up quickly and meet important short-term objectives. This first quarter was important in laying a foundation of procedures, as well as generating sufficient interest in the program to guarantee our ability to meet targets in subsequent quarters. Fortunately, AMIDEAST's existing resources and on-the-ground presence provided an important advantage in achieving both. Staff were hired, office spaces created, equipment procured, and recruitment efforts begun within the first two weeks. Communication patterns between AMIDEAST, OSI and USAID were quickly established, specific policies reviewed and decided, and results achieved Vis a Vis the PFDP Program Benchmarks for the first quarter. In short, AMIDEAST has ensured all program deliverables in the Cooperative Agreement have been achieved for this period. The following narrative provides a breakdown of activities, issues, and detailed outcomes.

1. Project Start-Up:

AMIDEAST was able to utilize existing office space in both its West Bank and Gaza offices to accommodate staffing needs. Procurement of computers, desks, phones and other office equipment was quickly accomplished in the first two weeks. As per AMIDEAST policy, all procurement for items valued over \$500 meant we solicited at least three quotes. American made products or use of American dealers was utilized whenever possible.

AMIDEAST also depended upon existing staff for a quick start-up, including the following: Chief of Party, Gaza senior program assistant, Gaza office manager, West Bank program assistant, driver, and accountant. Consequently, AMIDEAST was prepared to engage in university outreach and awareness raising activities from the first day.

The only local staff member who had to be recruited was the West Bank Program Officer. AMIDEAST advertised for this position in local newspapers, reviewed 98 resumes, interviewed 10 individuals and chose Nariman Rajab after a second interview and reference check. As designated key personnel, USAID also approved her hire.

OSI's start-up efforts in New York were minimal because they too used existing resources and staff. Given the nature of deliverables, AMIDEAST did not require OSI's significant engagement until the latter half of the quarter which also meant start-up procedures on their part were not as rushed.

2. Outreach and Recruitment:

The primary first quarter programmatic goal of PFDP involved recruiting and starting the selection process for 25 PhD Fellows and 15 Short-Term Fellows. All activities and efforts were focused on meeting this objective. The following deadlines were set in order to structure the outreach and recruitment:

November 7, 2005	Pre-Applications due at AMIDEAST West Bank and Gaza offices.
November 27, 2005	Full Applications due at AMIDEAST West Bank and Gaza offices.
Dec 15 & 16, 2005	Semi-Finalist Selection Committee meets at OSI in New York.

AMIDEAST has worked closely with the Palestinian higher education community for many decades, and has extremely good relationships with the universities and colleges. The new PFDP Chief of Party, Mr. Chris Shinn, was formerly AMIDEAST's Country Director for West Bank and Gaza; hence he personally knew many of the key academic faculty to contact in order to successfully arrange a comprehensive outreach schedule.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education held an initial orientation meeting the first week of October and invited the Dean of Academic Affairs from each West Bank university. Mr. Shinn explained the goals and opportunities of PFDP to this core group and used them as the campus point-person for follow-up meetings. Between October 4 and November 5, 2005 Mr. Shinn visited every university in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as UNRWA's Ramallah Men's Training Center, Ramallah's Women Training Center and the Community College of Applied Science and Technology in Gaza.

During each of these 15 visits the COP spoke with senior academic faculty, which typically included the President, Vice-President, Dean of Academic Affairs and Chairs or Deans of relevant departments. In two cases an open forum of professors was invited for general questions. All attendees were given PFDP Information and Guidelines, as well as a Pre-Application. Applicants were also given contact details for how to inquire further and were informed of the AMIDEAST website for downloading all necessary information: (http://www.amideast.org/programs_services/exchange_programs/PFDP/default.htm) The intent of these meetings and information provided was to leave the impression AMIDEAST were staff available to help, and that the application process was designed to be as inclusive as possible, while remaining within the framework of program objectives. Importantly, AMIDEAST decided early-on to use a simple two-page pre-application which did not require any English proficiency testing. The reason for using a pre-application was to encourage the maximum number of applicants.

A common concern voiced by faculty during the outreach sessions was the strict eligibility requirements, particularly the limitation to five fields of study. The many sub-fields of each of the five disciplines were understandably confusing and vague to applicants. For example, was a professor interested in doing a PhD in TESOL a good fit for the education discipline? Ultimately, how to define the five main fields was largely determined by the types of subfields or specialties represented within American universities. Eligibility criteria were frequently challenged during the campus visits.

Finally, in order to reach out to "practitioners" or relevant professionals for the PhD Fellow awards, AMIDEAST also paid for two newspaper ads in *Al Quds* and *Al Ayyam* on two separate occasions. The results of the ads were limited if one is to judge the number of practitioners who submitted pre-applications. Indeed, the point of including practitioners in the application process is worth reviewing during the next recruitment cycle because of questions about a practitioner's commitment to academia and teaching.

3. Application Review Process

The success of AMIDEAST's approach toward outreach and recruitment is evident in the Summary Data Sheet of Applications (see Annex A below). 218 pre-applications were received during 4 weeks of recruitment. This was a very short period to raise awareness of a new program with 2 separate streams, 5 supporting components and no less than 7 restricting eligibility criteria.

Pre-applications were reviewed by the COP and Program Officer to ensure eligibility. 43 were found ineligible. Many people completed a pre-application and did not focus on eligibility issues or left some "check boxes" blank. Upon following up by telephone it

became clear they were not eligible. Eligible candidates were telephoned and invited to complete a full PFDP application. Separate full-applications for PhD Fellows and Short Term Fellow applicants were designed by AMIDEAST and OSI. The format and information was approved by USAID before being disseminated in hardcopy and via the web. The full application required the following information:

- ITP Test (for English proficiency)
- Statement of Purpose Essay (Maximum of 2 typed, double-spaced pages)
- Future Plans Essay (Maximum of 2 typed, double-spaced pages)
- 3 Letters of Recommendation
- Undergraduate transcript in English & Arabic
- Undergraduate diploma/certificate in English & Arabic
- Graduate transcript in English & Arabic
- Graduate diploma/certificate in English & Arabic
- 1 passport size photo
- Copy of Identification (“hawiyya”)
- Photocopy of Information Page of Passport
- C.V. or Resume
- University Nomination Form (Required of part-time faculty only)

By November 27, 2005 AMIDEAST had received 130 full applications. However, approximately 25 of them required further scrutiny in terms of eligibility. The COP and OSI’s two lead representatives then discussed details of the 25 applications to determine if they were allied closely enough to one of the five main fields or subfields to be worth sending to the Semi-Finalist Review Committee. Upon review of biographical information, the statement of purpose and CV, 10 of the 25 were considered eligible. In total 115 full applications were sent to the Semi-Finalist Review Committee. Importantly, both AMIDEAST and OSI took a very liberal view of English proficiency requirements. Some applicants who did not meet the stated ITP cut-off score (480 for Short Term/530 for PhD applications), yet who otherwise had very solid applications were considered eligible.

Semi-Finalist Review Committee

The Semi-Finalist Review Committee met at OSI’s headquarters in New York City on December 15 and 16, 2005. The committee was composed of the following:

Public Policy/Public Administration

1. Professor Sandra Archibald
Dean of the Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington Seattle
2. Professor Bob Kramer
School of Public Affairs, American University.
3. Professor Natalia Mirovitskaya
Center for International Development, Duke University.

Education

1. Professor Lou Cristillo
Columbia University Teachers College.
2. Professor Gretchen Rossman
Center for International Education, University of Massachusetts at Amherst
3. Professor David Muschinske
Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University.

Urban Planning

1. Professor Christopher Silver, Department Head

- Urban and Regional Planning, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
2. Professor Mark Purcell
Urban Planning and Design, University of Washington, Seattle

Social Work

1. Professor Nabila El-Bassel
School of Social Work, Columbia University.
2. Alex Irwin, Open Society Institute, Deputy Director
Network Scholarship Programs and Social Work Fellowship Program.

Political Science

1. Professor Denis Sullivan, Director of the International Affairs Program and
Director of the Middle East Center for Peace, Culture & Development,
Northeastern University
2. Professor Yehuda Lukacs
Associate Provost for Global Education and Director
Center for Global Education, George Mason University

In addition, the following people assumed an observer status and/or organizational role:

- Chris Shinn, COP of PFDP
Martha Loerke, OSI, Director of Network Scholarship Programs
Joe Glicksberg, Program Manager of PFDP
Susan Foster, USAID representative from Washington, DC.

The review committee initially received an orientation about PFDP and the context of higher education in Palestine. This was delivered by the Chris Shinn and Martha Loerke. Then the discipline specific sub-committees broke-out into groups and began reading and discussing each dossier. Each reviewer used a standardized rating sheet. The Semi-Finalist Review Committee ultimately drew up a list of 71 applicants that they felt were worth interviewing based on intellectual promise, leadership potential, written English skills, academic record, and future goals.

The committee was aware of the significant pre-academic training component and put forward applicants who had not met the minimum ITP or TOEFL requirement. Importantly, the USAID, AMIDEAST and OSI representatives did not play a direct role in reviewing and deciding upon applications. This process was driven by the discipline-specific academic experts. The COP's role was, nevertheless, very busy moving between sub-committees and answering questions from the reviewers about the nature of the disciplines in Palestine, questions about candidates' credentials, program aims, as well as providing geographic and socio-economic background information. Overall the process was very collaborative and consensus building.

4. Pre-Academic Training

All applicants who were selected by the Semi Selection Committee were informed of their status the last week of December by telephone and email. Applicants who were not selected were sent a regret letter via email.

Pre-Academic training includes funds to provide intensive training in GRE and TOEFL preparation. In an effort for each Semi-Finalist candidate to be able to present stronger GRE and TOEFL scores to the interview committee, and not to delay the placement process (by waiting to administer these tests only to finalist after interviews), AMIDEAST decided to provide all semi-finalists with an intensive TOEFL course, and PhD applicants with a GRE preparation course. A TOEFL preparation course took place in AMIDEAST's offices in El Bireh and Nablus the last week of December (other courses followed and will be reported in

the second quarter). The course was voluntary, although highly encouraged. Thirty-six semi-finalists attended. Course evaluations by the attendees were very positive.

5. Placement

Although placement of the candidates will not officially begin until after final interview selection, OSI has already started approaching US host universities. OSI has started notifying universities across the United States, informing them about the program and responding to inquiries. Institutions interested in the program have responded directly to OSI and completed an initial form. OSI will follow-up with institutions in the second quarter. This process has also been aided by the COP's suggestions and affiliations with various US universities.

6. Public Relations

AMIDEAST published a press Release about PFDP in mid-October. The content of the press release was approved by the CTO. AMIDEAST also featured a lead story about PFDP in its *AMIDEAST Today* newsletter.

After soliciting bids from three local advertising firms, AMIDEAST engaged V&V Marketing and Communications to design and print a brochure, folder, business cards and poster for PFDP. V&V have presented various designs and continue to explore other ideas. V&V have been made aware of USAID's new branding guidelines.

An official launch date has been set for February 7, 2006. This date has been agreed upon by all principal partners and hopes to take advantage of an existing higher education conference to be organized by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

7. Reporting

Financial: AMIDEAST submitted its first quarter financial pipeline report on December 15, 2005. This report included estimations for the month of December. The total expenditure reported in the pipeline report was \$195,446, whereas actual expenditures were \$193,126. The 1.12% discrepancy is because some costs associated with the Semi-Selection interviews were not invoiced until after the quarter closed. First quarter actual expenditures are 6.5% lower than the \$206,604 projected in the Annual Implementation Plan. This is because: a) a number of procured items for office setup were somewhat less expensive than expected, b) labor was not at 100% capacity because we lacked a program officer; c) some equipment and supplies in Gaza have yet to be invoiced to the project.

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 awaiting 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.

TraiNet: Reporting for TraiNet has not yet occurred because the program has not yet selected final candidates. However, OSI representatives visited USAID in Washington DC in late-October and received an orientation on how to successfully utilize the TraiNet system.

8. Communications

The initial weeks of the PFDP recruitment and outreach required clarification of details in terms of how to actually implement aspects of the program. AMIDEAST embarked upon these decisions using a participatory process involved a series of Planning Meetings. Three meetings were held at AMIDEAST El Bireh using its digital video communications (DVC) system linked to OSI's DVC system in New York. USAID's CTO for PFDP attended, as did AMIDEAST's relevant staff for PFDP, as well as the Deputy Minister for Higher Education and his assistant. Two or three staff from OSI always attended the Planning Meetings. These meetings were critical to deciding key eligibility and procedural issues in the early days of the project. The meetings also helped establish a level of rapport and trust among all partners.

Finally, communication and reporting of all program related information for recruitment, selection and general outreach has largely occurred through the creation of many different forms and other documents. Some of these forms have been posted on AMIDEAST's West Bank/Gaza website; many others were created for internal use only. This ever increasing collection of documents represents the systemization of PFDP and will slowly become the backbone for successful implementation in future years. A list of these forms and other documents can be found in Annex B.

Annex A
Summary Data Sheet of Applications
2005-2006 Recruitment

Category	Pre Applications Received	Full Applications Requested	Full Applications Reviewed	Semi-Selection Results
Total Applications (WB &Gaza)	218	175	115	71
WB Applications	168	127	78	47
Gaza Applications	50	48	37	24
PhD Fellowship Applications	128	110	80	55
Short-term Fellow Applications	88	65	35	16
Full-time Faculty (Employees)	151	115	88	53
Part-time Faculty (Contracts/ Adjuncts)	36	39	24	17
Practitioners	33	14	3	1
Male Applicants	181	36	97	54
Female Applicants	37	8	18	17
Ineligible/ Rejected		43	60	44
Applicants who graduated from Non-Arabic Speaking Countries (BA, MA and/or PhD)			81	
West Bank Universities and Colleges				
Birzeit University	26	22	18	12
An Najah University	26	24	18	10
Al Quds University	15	12	10	8
Al Quds Open University (WB locations)	27	19	8	4
Arab American University	3	3	2	1
Hebron University	5	5	5	2
Bethlehem University	4	4	1	1
Palestine Polytechnic University	23	9	3	2
RWTC and RMTC (UNRWA)	5	2	6	4
Palestine Technical College (MOE), Tiera College, Ibn Sina College	6	4	2	2
Gaza Universities and Colleges				
Al-Aqsa University (PA-MOE)	8	8	4	2
Al-Azhar University	16	15	17	11
Al-Quds Open University	4	4	4	2
Islamic University	13	12	7	6
Gaza Community Mental Health Program	1	1	1	0
Community College of Applied Sciences	6	6	4	3

Discipline/ Sub Field	Full Applications Requested	Full Applications Received	Semi Selection Results
Education			
Educational Policy	0	1	0
Higher Education Administration	9	7	5
International and Comparative Education	1	2	2
Primary School Administration	1	0	0
Primary School Teaching and Curriculum	4	5	2
Secondary School Teaching and Curriculum	8	5	4
Special/Disabled Student Education	8	2	2
Foundations and Philosophy of Education	3	4	1
Educational Evaluation and Measurement	9	8	4
Public Administration/ Public Policy			
Health Administration	4	7	6
Local Government Administration	2	3	1
Nonprofit Management	3	2	2
Public Finance and Budgeting	17	8	6
Public Services Management	0	2	2
Energy and Environmental Policy	1	0	0
Health Policy	5	5	2
Policy Analysis and Evaluation	2	1	0
Social Policy	1	1	0
Fiscal Policy	1	1	1
“Other” or Unspecified Sub field	11	3	2
Total	47 applications 27 % of total	33 applications 28.5% of total	22 applications 31% of total
Urban Planning			
Land Use Planning	1	2	1
Urban Design	3	4	1
Urban Growth Management	1	2	2
Infrastructure and Transportation Planning	3	1	1
Environmental Planning	8	6	5
“Other” or Unspecified Sub field	7	2	2
Total	23 applications 13% of total	17 applications 15% of total	12 applications 17% of total
Political Science/International Relations			
American Politics	0	2	1
Comparative Politics/Regional Politics	6	4	3

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International Relations Theory	3	2	0
Political Theory/Political Philosophy	2	2	2
Public Law	2	1	1
Identity and Conflict	0	1	0
Political Economy/Political Development	1	0	0
“Other” or Unspecified Sub field	3	0	0
Total	17 applications 10% of total	12 applications 10% of total	7 applications %11 of total
Social Work			
Advanced Clinical	0	0	0
Social Policy & Policy Analysis	1	1	1
Social Policy & Administration	1	1	1
Child and Family Development	2	2	2
Social Development/Poverty Alleviation in the Developing World	1	3	0
Gerontology (Aging)	0	0	0
Mental Health	7	2	1
Social Health Issues (Substance Abuse, HIV AIDS)	4	2	0
“Other” or Unspecified Sub field	2	0	0
Total	21 applications 12% of total	11 applications 9.5 % of total	5 applications 7% of total

Notes:

- Not all pre applicants invited to complete full applications actually submitted one.
- Some applicants who completed a full application did not submit a pre application.
- Around 13 full applications were found ineligible and are not included in the numbers above.
- One of the semi selected short term applicants is from the Red Cross and therefore is not accounted for in the university list

1. PFDP Information and Guidelines
2. PFDP Fields and Sub Fields
3. PFDP Pre Application Form
4. Checklist When Calling Pre Applicants to Complete Full Application
5. PhD Full Application
6. Short-term Fellowship Full Application
7. Checklist for Dossiers
8. University Nomination Form (for STF and Part-time Faculty)
9. Guidelines on How to Write a Statement of Purpose
10. WB University Contact Information List
11. Summary Data Sheet (constantly updated)
12. Regret Letters
13. Call for US Host Universities
14. List of Possible US Host Universities
15. Pre-Selection Guidelines
16. Pre-Selection Rating Sheet
17. Semi Finalists Rating Sheet
18. Finalists Interview Rating Sheet
19. Interview Guidelines
20. Pre-Academic Training Course Evaluation

Other Documents for PFDP

1. List of applicants with contact information (constantly updated at each phase)
2. List of Graduates from Non-Arabic Speaking Countries
3. Interview Schedule Matrix
4. Semi Finalist Ratings After Interviews
5. PFDP Pipeline Report
6. PFDP Implementation Plan
7. PFDP Brochure Insert in AMIDEAST Brochure