



U.S.-Egypt
Higher Education Initiative
Private University Scholarships



USAID | **EGYPT**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Cooperative Agreement AID-263-A-15-00020
Semi-Annual Report
FY2017, October 2016 – March 2017
Local Scholarship Program (LSP) – Private

Table of Contents

***Executive Summary*.....5**

***Staffing and Start-up*7**

***LSP Scholarship Program Recruitment, Selection and Placement*.....7**

Cohort 2 Recruitment and Selection.....7

Cohort 3 Recruitment and Selection.....7

Recruitment/Promotional Video.....9

***LSP Student Academic and Personal Support*.....9**

i) Cohort 1.....9

LSP Cohort 1 Admission and Academic Performance..... 9

LSP Cohort 1 Academic and Personal Support.....10

ii) Cohort 2.....11

LSP Cohort 2 Program Admission and Orientation Sessions.....11

LSP Cohort 2 Bridge Year Program.....12

LSP Cohort 2 Academic and Personal Support.....14

LSP Cohort 2 AUC Admission.....15

***IIE-Led Leadership in Action Activities*..... 16**

i) Cohort 1.....16

Cohort 1: Cultural Trip 1.....16

Cohort 1: Leadership Enrichment Sessions.....16

IIE Mid-Year Leadership Camp 2.....17

Cohort 1: Gender-related Issues Meeting.....17

Service Learning Projects.....18

ii) Cohort 2.....18

Team Building Retreat.....18

Life Skills Sessions.....19

iii) Cohorts 1 and 2.....20

Gender Component.....20

Community Service.....21

LSP Coordination Committee and Scheduling for Upcoming LSP Activities.....21

Sharing Opportunities with Students.....21

***EFE/EGYPT-Led Leadership in Action Activities* 22**

Job Readiness Skills Assessment.....22

Labor Market Assessment.....23

Mentorship.....23

Challenges **24**

Student Academic and Personal Support Challenges24

Leadership in Action Challenges25

EFE|EGYPT-Led Leadership in Action Challenges26

Highlights and Success Stories **27**

Reporting and Monitoring and Evaluation..... **28**

LSP Cohort 2 Baseline Assessment.....**28**

LSP Cohort 2 Comparison Group..... **30**

Evaluating LSP Program Activities.....**30**

Reporting.....**31**

Conclusion **31**

Performance Indicators Progress during October 2016 – March 2017..... **32**

Table of Tables

Table (1): LSP Cohort 1 Students disaggregated by Governorate and Gender6

Table (2): LSP Cohort 2 Students disaggregated by Governorate and Gender6

Table (3): Total Number of all LSP students by Governorate and Gender Breakdown:.....6

Executive Summary

This Semi-Annual progress report covers the period from October 2016 to March 2017 and documents the activities of the Local Scholarship Program during this period. Key sections highlight the major activities under each objective in the M&E Matrix including accomplishments, implementation issues, and actions taken.

USAID awarded the Local Scholarship Program (LSP) – Private Universities to IIE, and on May 11, 2015 the agreement was signed between USAID and IIE.

The goal of Local Scholarship Program is to increase job readiness among disadvantaged students to meet the demands of the Egyptian Labor Market that would successfully contribute to USAID/Egypt Higher Education Sub Purpose 1: A better developed and gender-balanced cadre of skilled professionals who can apply and impart new knowledge and skills in priority areas. IIE's hypothesis is that LSP, through its scholarship and enrichment interventions, will contribute to developing and sustaining this cadre of leaders and problem solvers who are ready for the job market in Egypt. Since the inception of the LSP Scholarship Program in May 2015, 130 students have been successfully recruited, selected, and awarded scholarships. Cohort 1 students have already started their academic studies at their host universities, and Cohort 2 students are in their Bridge Year Program.

LSP Cohort 1 students are now placed with the British University in Egypt (BUE) and the Arab Academy for Sciences, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT). During FY2017 Q2, The American University in Cairo (AUC) became the third partner university for the LSP. LSP Cohort 2 students were informed that they have an opportunity to be enrolled with AUC if they meet the admission requirements.

During the reporting period, the following activities took place:

- **LSP Cohort 2 and 3 Recruitment and Selection**
 - IIE and AFS conducted the final selection camp of LSP Cohort 2 students.
 - USAID approved the list of principal and alternate LSP Cohort 2 students.
 - IIE and AFS started the outreach and selection process of LSP Cohort 3 students.
- **Bridge Year Program**
 - IIE conducted the Cohort 2 Bridge Year Program Orientation.
 - IIE conducted the Academic and Study Abroad Orientations for Cohort 2.
- **LSP Scholar Academic and Personal Support**
 - 92 Individual Meetings for Cohort 1 and 2 students, 32 and 60 respectively.
 - Cohort 2 Academic Orientation - in collaboration with Cohort 1 students.
- **Leadership activities**
 - Cultural Trip 1 for LSP Cohort 1 students.
 - Third gender-related issues meeting for LSP Cohort 1 female students.
 - Mid-year Leadership Camp for LSP Cohort 1 students.
 - Team Building Retreat for LSP Cohort 2 students.
 - 7 Leadership Enrichment Sessions for Cohort 1 and 2 students
 - EFE|Egypt conducted job readiness skills assessment for LSP Cohort 1 and 2 students.
- **University Admission**
 - All LSP Cohort 1 students (65) are enrolled with their universities.

Table (1): LSP Cohort 1 Students disaggregated by Governorate and Gender

COHORT 1 Candidates (gender & governorate)	Alexandria	Assiut	Aswan	Beheira	Beni Sueif	Cairo	Dakahlia	Damietta	Fayoum	Gharbia	Giza	Ismailia	K. El Sheikh	Luxor	Menofeya	Minya	Port Said	Qaliyobia	Qena	Red Sea	Sharkeya	Sohag	Suez	Recruited	Number of Students with Disability
Female representation	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	0	1	4	4	1	1	0	1	0	2	1	34	
Male representation	1	0	1	2	4	1	0	0	2	0	3	0	1	2	1	0	0	2	4	1	3	2	1	31	1

Table (2): LSP Cohort 2 Students disaggregated by Governorate and Gender

COHORT 2 Candidates (gender & governorate)	Alexandria	Assiut	Aswan	Beheira	Beni Sueif	Cairo	Dakahlia	Damietta	Fayoum	Giza	Ismailia	Luxor	Menofeya	Minya	New Valley	N. Sinai	Port Said	Qaliyobia	Qena	Sharkeya	Sohag	South Sinai	Recruited	Number of Students with
Female representation	0	4	2	0	2	0	0	2	2	3	2	5	8	3	1	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	41	0
Male representation	1	1	2	1	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	3	0	24	0

Table (3): Total Number of all LSP students by Governorate and Gender Breakdown:

Governorate	Number of Students	Female	Male
Alex	4	2	2
Assiut	7	6	1
Aswan	7	4	3
Beheira	5	2	3
Beni Sueif	9	4	5
Cairo	5	1	4
Dakahlia	2	1	1
Damietta	4	4	0
Fayoum	6	4	2
Gharbia	1	1	0
Giza	8	4	4
Ismailia	3	3	0
Kafr El Sheikh	1	0	1
Luxor	8	6	2
Menofeya	16	12	4
Minya	10	7	3
New Valley	2	1	1
North Sinai	2	0	2
Port Said	3	2	1
Qaliyobia	4	2	2
Qena	6	2	4
Red Sea	2	1	1
Sharkeya	4	1	3
Sohag	8	3	5
South Sinai	1	1	0
Suez	2	1	1
Total	130	75	55

Staffing and Start-up

The staff hiring is completed. The Leadership and Community Service Assistant position has been filled, the assistant accepted IIE offer and joined IIE on March 30, 2017. Before that she was a LOTUS Student and Alumna who interned with IIE providing support in various data management and mentoring activities and was very helpful in providing mentoring for the students conducting Service Learning Projects.

LSP Scholarship Program Recruitment, Selection and Placement

Cohort 2 Recruitment and Selection

In February 2016, IIE and AFS started the planning for LSP Cohort 2 recruitment.

The initial plan was for the outreach and recruitment processes to be finalized in October with students commencing the Bridge Year Program on October 21, 2016. The timeline was modified due to the delay in announcing the Thanaweya Amma results and the updated timeline was shared with USAID. Accordingly, students signed the terms and conditions and attended the Program Orientation on November 12, 2016.

Selection Camp

AFS and IIE selected 127 applicants representing 23 governorates (72 females – 55 males) - ranked according to the selection cumulative score - to move to the final selection camp phase. Five students withdrew from the scholarship prior to the camp day. The camp took place on October 14 and 15, 2016 at Pyramids Park Resort.

Students participated in five activities that were planned to build on each other in order to give the volunteers a complete picture about each applicant with regards to the selection criteria. The activities started from introductory activity till a team work and communication activity.

Evaluators observed the students to assess their essential life skills, such as aptitude for teamwork, leadership potential, creative thinking, self-awareness, communication skills, positive attitude, problem solving, and critical thinking. A rubric for each of the five activities was created by AFS and approved by IIE. The total score of the five activities generated the overall camp score, which was used later as part of the final selection cumulative score.

Final Selection

AFS conducted a ranking of the applicants according to a total weighted cumulative score (392 points).

Upon receiving the initial list from AFS, IIE team reviewed the proposed nomination list (based on cumulative weighted score) and special attention was given to: 1) financial need reflected in the financial application evaluation, home visit financial evaluation and total income; 2) interview and camp comments that might indicate problematic or undesired behavior or characteristics. Accordingly, the list was further refined to identify the final recommended list of 65 principal and 17 alternate students.

Cohort 3 Recruitment and Selection

In January 2017, IIE and AFS started the planning for LSP Cohort 3 outreach and recruitment cycle. Meetings were held to discuss the process drawing on lessons learned from Cohort 1 and 2 cycles. Outreach materials were modified to reflect these lessons learned and best practices that should be followed to reach the

maximum number of applicants nationwide. IIE and AFS developed a new timeline for the outreach and recruitment activities for the new Cohort. Below is the planned timeline:

February - March:	Development of outreach materials Planning meetings with AFS
March 31:	First Ad in Ahram Newspaper
March 31 – April 2:	Announcement and outreach materials available online on IIE website, Facebook Pages, AFS, and other partner websites and Facebook pages
March 31- May 7:	AFS begins nationwide Buy-in Meetings and Info Sessions
April 14:	Second Ad in Ahram Newspaper
May 5:	Third Ad in Ahram Newspaper
May 11:	Deadline for sending applications and supporting documents by mail
April 30 – August 1:	Data entry, Filing & preliminary applications review
July 24:	Thanawaya Amma Exam Results (tentative)
August 24-26:	Conduct individual interviews with applicants
August 31 – Sep 3	Eid El Adha
September 6 – October 10:	Conduct Home Visits
October 27 and 28:	Selection Camp
October 31	Receiving 69 finalists and 15 alternates from AFS
November 5:	List of primary and alternate candidates to USAID

IIE and AFS reviewed the application and brochure and made the necessary changes based on:

- Lessons learned from Cohorts 1 and 2 recruitment and selection cycles.
- The new recommended majors according to the labor market assessment conducted by EFE| Egypt
- Excluding the five-year program majors due to the LSP November 2022 end date.

AFS developed an outreach plan including targeted governorates, strategies to announce the information sessions, different methods used to target males and females in each, plans in targeting syndicates and factories, approach in reaching out to partners/NGOs in governorates where AFS does not have a chapter and the steps that AFS will adopt to engage LSP Cohorts 1 and 2 and LOTUS students to promote the program nationwide. Both LSP and LOTUS volunteers will play an active role in spreading the word about LSP Cohort 3

opportunities to other potential students, especially students from the border governorates. They will be ambassadors of the LSP Program and role models to potential applicants.

The following majors were announced for LSP Cohort 3:

- Business Administration
- Computer Science
- Economics
- International transports and logistics
- Law- *New*
- Mass Communication
- Science (Chemistry and Physics)– *New*

On March 31, 2017, IIE announced the scholarship in Ahran Newspaper. The details about the scholarship is now available on IIE and AFS websites and Facebook pages. It is expected that the info sessions will start immediately to announce the scholarship, with a special focus on targeting and reaching-out to students with disabilities.

During this reported period, AFS conducted 15 buy-in meetings in 7 governorates. Around 188 volunteers attended these meeting.

Recruitment/Promotional Video

A group of five Cohort 3 LOTUS Volunteers finished filming a promotional video to be used during the recruitment phase. IIE worked closely with the LOTUS volunteers in order to finalize the Promotional Video and to secure USAID approval for it to be used in Cohort 3 outreach.

LSP Student Academic and Personal Support

i) Cohort 1

LSP Cohort 1 Admission and Academic Performance

University Admission

- In light of the admission changes that occurred in FY2016 Q4, some university affiliations were changed: 10 students were transferred to AASTMT and three students were transferred to BUE.
- 12 students out of the 13 successfully passed their respective universities' language proficiency examination. One student, at AASTMT, failed to meet this requirement repeatedly. Accordingly, IIE obtained USAID approval for him to be admitted to the Arabic track for one semester; after which he would sit for the exam and an evaluation of his case will be conducted. If he failed to achieve the required score, and depending on his score/progress, he could either be dismissed from the LSP Program or given another chance for the second semester. Failure to achieve the score for two semesters would result in a dismissal from the program. He is scheduled to sit again for the exam by the end of the Fall 2016 semester.

Academic Performance

LSP Cohort 1 students continue to demonstrate very good academic performance. This is indicated in students' Fall 2016 semester GPAs (which reflect midterms and final exams grades, class work and/or projects, and attendance). It is worth noting that 72% of the students got "A" (3.6 – 4) in their first academic semester.

Two BUE media students submitted appeals for grades reevaluation. Appeals are currently under review and depending on appeal results, students' grades may change.

In addition, University Coordinators' reports are positive on the majority of the students. University Coordinators also reported that the majority of students have also been very active in a wide range of extra-curricular activities on and off campus. Activities include but are not limited to community service, students clubs, sports, performances, and competitions. Moreover, during the individual meetings with the students, the majority commented that they found the style of teaching at BUE and AASTMT to be informative and enlightening, and that they are able to cope with the load of work and assignments.

Few students faced academic challenges during their first academic semester, LSP team met the students to discuss their issues and put together plans to support them.

Cohort 1 Second Summer English Program

Based on Cohort 1 students' positive feedback and experience of conducting the Summer English Program at AMIDEAST, the IIE team decided to proceed with AMIDEAST as the provider of the LSP Cohort 1 second Summer English Program. For this program, IIE has identified 55 students with ITP scores below 490 to take the second Summer English Program.

LSP Cohort 1 Academic and Personal Support

Campus Visits

LSP team conducted campus visits to meet students and support them during their period of adaptation/transition to university life. During the visits, the team met with nearly all LSP Cohort 1 students in an informal setting to follow up with them on their academic and social lives updates. Students shared their academic progress and activities involvements with LSP team. Students also communicated some challenges and concerns related to university accommodation which, both the students and the team are working on resolving. In addition, the team met with the university coordinators to get their feedback on the students, their level of involvement in academic and extra-curricular activities, and to receive students' feedback. Having spent a semester now at their universities, students communicated that they felt more comfortable and settled.

During Campus Visits, LSP team also meets with University Coordinators and Assistants to address students' requests as well as discuss any alarming issues related to students' performance and behavior. Furthermore, the team met with the AASTMT Disabilities Support Center Coordinator who informed IIE team about the on-campus facilities available for students with disabilities, and the university future plans to expand these services. During the reporting period, the team conducted a total of six campus visits.

Student with Disability

Based on first academic semester's experience, all parties are currently in a better position to support the student with disability this semester. AASTMT has been working closely with him to deliver the printed materials in a timely manner. He is also becoming more proactive taking initiatives to coordinate the printing process on his own. While LSP team promotes his independence and encourages him to take more initiative, LSP Academic Advising and Partnerships Manager and Academic Advisor meet with him monthly during the campus visits to discuss any issues he may have. The Academic Advising and Partnerships Manager also follows up closely by phone on weekly basis to maintain a strong and trusting bond with him.

Cohort 1 Monthly Stipend Increase

In reference to the request submitted by LSP Cohort 1 students in FY17 Q1, the LSP team reviewed the program realigned budget and communicated with the LOTUS team, as they received a similar request from LOTUS students. Both program teams agreed to offer an increase and to unify the stipends for students at AASTMT and BUE.

ii) Cohort 2

LSP Cohort 2 Program Admission and Orientation Sessions

Upon receiving USAID approval, LSP Cohort 2 applicants list was shared with AFS, who informed the 65 accepted principals of the decision and invited them to attend the program orientation that was scheduled to take place on November 12, 2016. Students were instructed to be accompanied by their legal guardian so they can sign the LSP Program terms and conditions. IIE held the program orientation session at the American University in Cairo (AUC), since it is the contracted Bridge Year Program (BYP) provider. The three-hour session covered LSP and HEI program descriptions, LSP components and benefits, scholarship rules and regulations, student's responsibilities, and scholarship grounds for terminations. The main purpose of the orientation session was to get students and parents acquainted with the program details, build confidence and trust in the program and its administration as well as answer students' and/or parents' questions. Afterwards, all students were admitted to their assigned housing at the AUC housing in New Cairo. Two students did not show up for the session. One student confirmed acceptance and joined the program on November 16, 2016. The other student was awarded the LSP-Public Scholarship, hence she was disqualified and an alternate was upgraded. Upon their arrival, two private orientation sessions for the students and their legal guardians were conducted to make sure they fully understood the program details.

Based on last BYP feedback, students needed more time to ease their transition and better understand the program's policies and system. Thus, in consultation with IIE, AUC organized a two day orientation on November 16 and 17, 2016. During the first day, AUC coordinator walked the students through the program plan, structure, policies and procedures, and study habits. In addition, the day was used to allow the students to bond with each other and the AUC team and to create a sense of belonging amongst themselves. LSP staff attended the day to provide support and encouragement to all students. On the second day, AUC invited a student from LSP Cohort 1 to talk with the students and to share with them his own experience during the BYP. The students felt that the talk was very interactive and informative and they advised that they felt comfortable and at ease addressing their issues with an older colleague.

During the first week of the program, few students expressed their desire to change their affiliations. For equity purposes, IIE team opened the door for all Cohort 2 students to submit their change of major requests for consideration. Nine students submitted their requests verbally to LSP team. Upon careful consideration, six requests got approved and the new affiliations were communicated to the students. They were then asked to sign new terms and conditions to confirm their acceptance as well as their guardians' of the new placement.

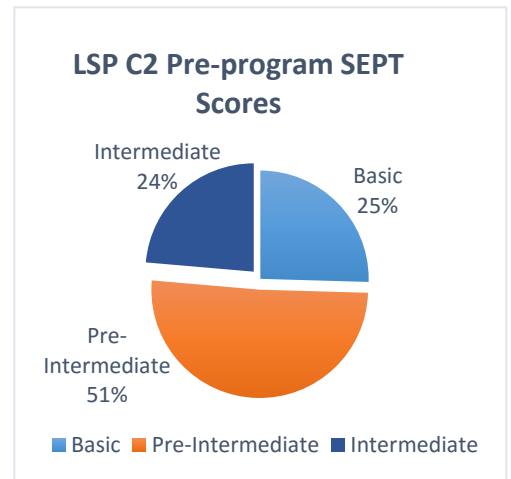
LSP Cohort 2 Bridge Year Program

Based on Cohort 1 positive feedback and experience of conducting the Bridge Year Program (BYP) at AUC, the IIE team decided to proceed with AUC as the provider of the LSP Cohort 2 Bridge Year Program. The BYP commenced on November 20, 2016.

English Proficiency Placement Test

As part of the Bridge Year Program agreement, the program provider is to conduct an English Proficiency Placement Test as a pre-and-post assessment tool. The test helps to better cater for the students' needs. For this purpose, AUC uses the School of Continuing Education (SCE) Standardized English Proficiency Test (SEPT). 63 students were examined on November 13, 2016 and the two students who were admitted at a later date were examined on November 20, 2016.

14 students scored at the basic level, 28 students scored at the pre-intermediate level and 13 students scored at the intermediate level. According to the scores, students were placed in homogeneous groups for their BYP classes. Besides SEPT scores, AUC conducted an anonymous survey to measure students' prior knowledge and skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, critical thinking, life skills, information technology, and research writing skills. A total of 65 students have taken the survey, but one of them did not answer the survey questions.



No. of Students: 65

Course Structure

The BYP offers students a total of 720 instruction hours over the program duration (November 20, 2016 - May 31, 2017). The program takes place in a standardized session's format. Sessions typically run for six hours a day, five days a week. Students are divided to five groups; each group consisting of 12-14 students. The division considers students' various language proficiency levels as well as group characteristics and dynamics. The course is divided into a number of modules that vary in length and intensity over the duration of the program.

Bridge Year Program Performance Monitoring

IIE collaborates with AUC to maintain accurate performance monitoring. Both institutions agreed to implement various methods to continuously identify students' challenges and needs and fine-tune the program, so it accommodates their newly-emerged needs as much as possible. Monitoring is accomplished through the following various channels:

- Attendance Record

As an integral component of the Local Scholarship Program, students are aware that it is mandatory to regularly attend classes and fully participate in all program related events/sessions. To ensure that, starting November 16, 2016, students have abided to an attendance policy. The policy aims at reinforcing a sense of personal responsibility of their roles within the scholarship program and to guarantee their commitment to the program attendance requirement. It states that each student has only one unexcused absence, and any other absences like a medical situation or an emergency should be approved by the AUC University Coordinator or IIE Academic Advisors.

- **Class Visits**

LSP program team conducted class visits on monthly basis to observe the classes and ensure the quality of the program. Upon returning from the visits, staff filled observation sheets to document and address any observed issues. Main observations were as follows:

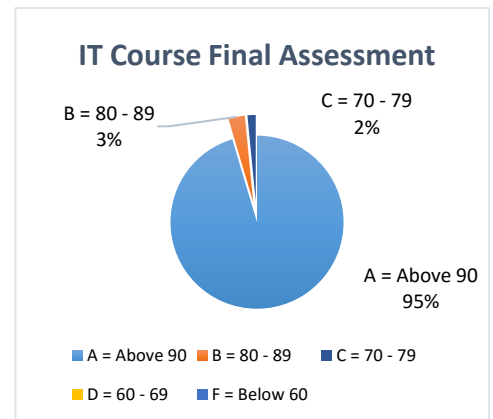
- Students are engaged and eager to learn. However, some are still intimidated and refrain from participating in class.
- Students in classes 1 and 2 struggle more with English language and require further support.
- IT instructor uses a mix between Arabic and English languages in class.
- Students in class 5 are very competitive rather than supportive and cooperative.
- Students in class 1 approached the team with a concern regarding life skills module

These comments were shared with the AUC Program Coordinator and the Assistant Director of Programs and Partnerships Department for their attention and action.

- **Students' performance evaluation**

Instructors provide a monthly evaluation for students' overall performance. This evaluation is based on six main areas: punctuality, interaction in class, quality of independent work, working in groups, learner autonomy/ initiative, and behavior and attitude in class. LSP team utilizes this evaluation to give more personalized academic advice to students as needed.

Students successfully completed the IT module in Feb, 2017. 62 students scored above 90% and three students score between 70-89%.



No. of Students: 65

- **Student Satisfaction Survey**

AUC conducted an anonymous student satisfaction survey. The survey examined areas such as instruction, time allocation, class atmosphere, course materials, and facilities. The survey gave the students the chance to give feedback on the overall program academic and logistical components in order to improve the quality in the future. The main issues raised by the students were related to bus departure time from AUC Tahrir Campus to AUC dorms. Accordingly, the BYP coordinator agreed with the students on a modified bus schedule to meet their needs.

LSP Cohort 2 Academic and Personal Support

Academic Orientation

Based on LSP Cohort 1 experience, LSP program team has organized a Student-Led Academic Orientation for LSP Cohort 2 students. The orientation took place on Saturday, March 18, 2017 at the American University in Cairo. The main objective was to get cohort 2 students acquainted with university life they are about to start in Fall 2017. Speakers from LSP Cohort 1 students, LOTUS students and alumni were invited to share insights about their universities, majors, extra-curricular activities and community service. Speakers also shared some tips on how to balance academic and personal lives. The orientation also included a study abroad session to explain the opportunity offered by IIE. The session was delivered by The Academic Advising and Partnerships Manager and a LOTUS alumnus.

The orientation was prepared and carried out by a committee of LSP Cohort 1 students who took the responsibility to pass on the knowledge to their newly admitted colleagues. It is worth noting that almost 79% of Cohort 2 students were satisfied with the orientation (rating it 4 or 5 out of 5) and 21% were neutral (rating it 3 out of 5). Approximately 50% of the students mentioned that Study Abroad Session was the most valuable session during the event. Students reported that it was a unique event and that they were grateful for the guidance and support they gained from LOTUS and LSP Cohort 1 students.

Four students did not attend the academic orientation, two of whom were excused due to family or medical reasons. LSP Academic Advisor contacted the other two to understand the reasons behind their absence. Excuses were not accepted, hence the team applied the LSP absence policy accordingly.

Individual meetings

LSP academic team has been conducting individual meetings in which each student gets the chance to express his/her thoughts, ideas, and feelings in a private and confidential atmosphere. These meetings give the program staff the opportunity to bond with the students and connect with each one of them to give the guidance and support they need.

The meetings tackle topics related to student's background, culture, academic life, challenges, adaptation style, and future aspirations. A major portion is usually dedicated to discussing academic progress/challenges and giving individualized tips to support their studies. Furthermore, the meetings usually open the door for personal stories, which helps the program team identify any personal or behavioral concerns and to discuss future plans to address them.

Although it is common that students face social and academic challenges at this point, one student from Sohag, came across as having more obvious personality issues that sometimes affect his interactions with some instructors. IIE is working with BYP Coordinator to get a consultation from AUC Student Support Office to evaluate the student and decide how to identify and address his needs.

During the reporting period, Academic Advising and Partnerships Manager and Academic Advisor conducted 60 individual meetings (Females: 38 and Males: 22) with Cohort 2 students.

Cohort 2 Monthly Stipend Increase

In the light of the stipend increase for cohort 1 students, LSP team evaluated LSP cohort 2 stipend and agreed to a 10% increase. The new stipend will be effective April 2017.

Cohort 2 Summer English Program

IIE took the decision to proceed with AMIDEAST as the provider of the LSP Cohort 1 and 2 Summer English Program. IIE is currently working with AMIDEAST on refining the proposal and starting the agreement process.

LSP Cohort 2 AUC Admission

On March 18, 2017, LSP team announced the new partnership between IIE and the American University in Cairo (AUC) to place approximately ten LSP Cohort 2 students at AUC to pursue their undergraduate degrees. Program team clarified that the selection will heavily depend on achieving the iBT / Academic IELTS score required to be admitted to ENGL 0210, AUC's Academic English for Freshman. LSP team is currently preparing a comprehensive document as a guide for the selection and admission process. The students were very excited and felt inspired to work harder on their English and overall performance to win the opportunity.

IIE-Led Leadership in Action Activities

i) Cohort 1

Cohort 1: Cultural Trip 1

The first Cohort 1 cultural trip was organized by Dunes travel to Fayoum for three days. The trip started on September 30 and was concluded on October 2. "Tracing Egyptian History through layers of Civilization and Art Products" was the name given for the trip by the organizers.

Throughout the trip, students were divided to two groups each accompanied by an English-speaking guide, a chaperone, and a general organizer. The trip consisted of several activities and visits including the following:

- A visit to Kom Oshim ancient Egyptian site, where students had a tour with explanation of the different important parts of the historical site and why it is considered an important ancient Egyptian Greco Roman site
- A visit to the Art Center at Tunis Village, where trip participants met with the founder Mrs. Evelyne Porret and different members of the community and pottery school. Students were introduced to the art of pottery and learned from Mrs. Evelyne how it became such an important industry in the village. They also discussed the challenges she faced through her years of experience working in the village and how she overcame them.
- A visit to the Mohamed Abla Caricature Museum where students had the chance to meet with Mr. Mohamed Abla and learn about the history and importance of caricature art.
- Visits to Wadi El Rayan and Wadi El Hitan protected areas, where the trip participants hiked to see the preserved whale skeletons, visited Wadi EL Hitan Fossil and Climate Change Museum, and sand boarded on the sand dunes. Lectures were given by Egyptologists on Egyptian history , and students were introduced to information on Egyptian civilization and arts history in Egypt.

The students provided positive feedback on the trip and mentioned a few new gained skills and knowledge including time management, risk-taking, , communication, flexibility, active listening in addition to discovering new places. 89% of Cohort 1 students who attended the trip were satisfied with the trip rating it as 5 or 4 out of 5, while 11% rated it 3 out of 5.

Cohort 1: Leadership Enrichment Sessions

Leadership Enrichment Session 1: Project Planning and Management

While working with cohort 1 students on their service learning projects, IIE noticed several recurring issues and thus identified the need to provide them with a session on project planning and management so they could successfully lead their teams and projects' activities. IIE delivered the session to all Cohort 1 students on December 16, 2016 at AASTMT. Participants were first introduced to the fundamentals of project management and then they worked together in their project teams to apply certain concepts and tools they learned. The Program director attended the session.

The overall satisfaction ratings were as follows:

- 82% of students provided a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating;
- 13% of students gave a 3 out of 5 rating; and

- 5 % indicated a 2 out of 5 rating

Per the evaluations, the students gained skills such as proposal writing, how to write job descriptions, how to build a budget, and how to create and stick to a timeline.

The session will be followed by additional more advanced project management sessions as students' progress through their service learning projects and start working on their student-led workshop.

Leadership Enrichment Session 2: Conflict Resolution

IIE identified conflict resolution as a topic because it is important for students to understand that conflict is normal, to learn why conflicts happen, and how to manage them. Through the session, students gained a deeper understanding of the different elements of conflict: attitude, behavior and contradiction. Students also identified about their own conflict styles and assessed how their conflict style impacts their ability to achieve their objectives and impacted the quality of their relationships. Moreover, students learned that conflict could be an opportunity for personal learning and growth, and for addressing unfulfilled needs.

The overall satisfaction ratings were as follows:

- 100 % of BUE students provided a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating for Day 1 and Day 2, 92 % of AATMT students provided a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating for Day 1 and 70 % for Day 2.
- 8 % of AASTMT students gave a 3 out of 5 rating for Day 1 and 30 % for Day 2.

IIE Mid-Year Leadership Camp 2

IIE held the Mid-Year Leadership Camp at the Cataract Pyramids Hotel in Cairo between January 28 and February 3, 2017. The camp focused on topics of inclusive leadership, communication, collaborative teams and project management in order to help students with their service learning projects and student-led conference in addition to help increase students' self-awareness and enable them to make well-informed decisions in their lives. The camp's format included sessions during the day, evening activities, and time for students to work on service learning projects and student-led conference. The sessions and activities were delivered by IIE and a team of external consultants.

Students expressed positive feedback about the camp, and the skills they gained through the experiential sessions and activities.

The overall satisfaction ratings were as follows:

- 91 % of students provided a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating;
- 9 % of students gave a 3 out of 5 rating; and

Cohort 1: Gender-related Issues Meeting

On December 16, 2016, the LSP team conducted the third Cohort 1 gender-related issues meeting at AASTMT on the same day of the Leadership Enrichment Session to make use of the opportunity that both BUE and AASTMT students were all together. The third meeting addressed the issue of setting priorities through university life; one of the topics that the female students had identified during the initial needs assessment session. The topic was chosen since students were going through a lot during this period; being in their first

academic semester, working with their male peers on service learning projects, participating in student activities on campus in addition to having their family obligations and social life.

The overall satisfaction ratings for the meeting were as follows:

- 66% of students gave a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating,
- 19% provided a 3 out of 5 rating, and
- 15% rated the meeting a 2 out of 5.

In their evaluations, students shared how they benefited from the speaker's experience and learned about the need to be able to express themselves and be self-aware. Some students expressed that the meeting should have been longer for them to be able to reflect more and benefit from the discussions, while others felt that they did not gain new information from the meeting.

IIE will take the above feedback into consideration in future planning to ensure that students do not feel rushed and that speakers would have enough time to address all points and questions.

Service Learning Projects

Cohort 1 students implemented their service learning projects in five governorates. IIE supported the students through follow up calls, meetings and mentoring visits. All six teams finished the implementation activities of their projects and submitted their final reports in March 2017. Students reflected on their experiences and mentioned how the opportunity helped them grow and learn. IIE will hold a closing event for teams to present and reflect on their learning journeys. IIE is working with the students to identify a date for the event which will most likely be after final exams are over.

It was planned that students will finalize their projects during FY2018 and FY2019, but the students were really active and willing to implement their projects early so they can make use of it in their preparation for the student-led conference.

IIE-Led Specialized sessions/meetings with specific purposes

IIE held 18 specialized sessions and meetings for various purposes to support and mentor students through the planning process for the Cohort 1 students' service learning projects and community service activities.

ii) Cohort 2

Team Building Retreat

IIE organized a two-day Team Building Retreat on November 14 and 15, 2016 at AUC for Cohort 2 students.

The purpose of the Team Building Retreat was to enable the students create a sense of a community among themselves, to develop respect and trust, be introduced to leadership concepts, and to learn more about the different components of the program.

The objectives of the two days were to:

- Explore Program components;
- Build a sense of team;
- Get to know each other more and work together effectively;
- Appreciate and utilize diversity;
- Develop respect and trust;
- Open a channel of communication;
- Create a base of support along with building a sense of community; and
- See each other as resources.

During the retreat, the IIE facilitation team provided a space for the students to discover more about themselves and their LSP community. On the first day, the concepts of comfort zone and group norms were introduced and the IIE facilitator walked them through a process of developing their Cohort 2 community norms. Other topics addressed were confidentiality and respect, as well as internet and social media ethics and how they should honor and respect each other's privacy. Students were encouraged to share their ideas and speak without fear of being criticized or judged. The second day focused on building strong teams, developing clear communication and supporting one another in their community. The team also took the opportunity to explain and answer questions on the different components of the leadership program, students' responsibilities towards the program, and program policy.

The overall satisfaction rating for the retreat was as follows:

- 81% of students provided a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating;
- 17% of students indicated a 3 out of 5 rating; and
- 2 % gave a 2 out of 5 rating.

In addition, 100% of students provided a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating for the facilitator.

In the evaluations, the students mentioned that they enjoyed and benefited from the retreat and from the IIE's team guidance. They wrote about skills they learned and their eagerness to apply what they learned. To illustrate, one student indicated: *"Working in a team, many times in my life I used to be the leader of my team, but now I'm a leader, follower and sometimes objecting. And in every case I should rise my team up"*.

Some students shared that they felt a few of the students dominated the conversations and did not respect others' opinions, especially when they were divided into groups. Moving forward, IIE will work on ways to ensure that all students have a chance to share their thoughts and discuss topics such as the value of competition, diversity, and tolerance.

Life Skills Sessions

Leadership Life Skills Session 1: Diversity and Tolerance

A lesson learned from the LOTUS Program was the importance of exposing students to the concepts of diversity and tolerance, particularly as they are set to become leaders in their communities and fields. IIE, in turn, felt it was valuable to introduce LSP students to these concepts so that they can appreciate and embrace the diversity that exists in the LSP student body and in the country at large. The aim of the sessions was to help

students develop their capacity to deal with diversity more constructively, either in the context of LSP program activities, their universities or in their lives in general. Diversity can sometimes lead to challenges so the sessions work to encourage students to see that being exposed to and accepting differences can actually provide opportunities for learning and growth. Many meaningful discussions emerged especially when some participants opened up and shared personal experiences where they were treated in a certain way because they were different. Some students expressed that this was the first time for them to discuss topics related to diversity candidly. Participants became more aware of how diverse our society is and also became aware of their own attitudes, challenges and biases towards individuals who are different than them. Some participants stated that the workshop triggered their critical thinking and made them question things that they previously took for granted and how they treated others in the past. IIE is planning to deliver more sessions on the topic in the future.

The overall satisfaction ratings were as follows:

- 88 % of students provided a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating for Day 1 and 70 % for Day 2
- 13 % of students gave a 3 out of 5 rating for Day 1 and 26 % for Day 2
- 2 % indicated a 2 out of 5 rating for Day 2

iii) Cohorts 1 and 2

Gender Component

Cohort 1: Gender-related Issues Meeting

On December 16, 2016, the LSP team conducted the third Cohort 1 gender-related issues meeting at AASTMT on the same day of the Leadership Enrichment Session to make use of the opportunity that both BUE and AASTMT students were all together. The third meeting addressed the issue of setting priorities through university life; one of the topics that the female students had identified during the initial needs assessment session. The topic was chosen since students were going through a lot during this period: being in their first academic semester, working with their male peers on service learning projects, participating in student activities on campus in addition to having their family obligations and social life.

The overall satisfaction ratings for the meeting were as follows:

- 66% of students gave a 4 or 5 out of 5 rating,
- 19% provided a 3 out of 5 rating, and
- 15% rated the meeting a 2 out of 5.

Gender Forum and meetings planning

During this reporting period, IIE continued to work on developing a plan for the gender component. In order to do so, IIE met with two experts with a background and/or experience in gender-related issues. The first meeting was with an Associate Professor of History at the American University in Cairo. She provided the LSP team with the history of how the concept of gender came into existence, the different theories and schools of thought that exist, and the significance of gender. She suggested that IIE meets with a consultant who is a development programs independent consultant, in order to brainstorm ideas on how to implement the component. She has worked on gender issues mainly through her international development work on health,

provided IIE with recommendations based on the outcomes of previous LSP gender component activities, general observations on the students, gender-related issues that exist in Egypt, and program objectives.

Based on these two meetings, IIE decided to treat the upcoming gender forum as a relaunch of the gender component as it will provide students with the background and context for what gender is, why it is important, and how it impacts them. The Forum will serve as a foundation for the future gender component activities. The Gender Forum will take place on May 12, 2017 at AUC with both cohorts 1 and 2 students attending it. IIE team is currently working on designing the format and confirming speakers and facilitators.

Community Service

Although students were busy with their studies and fulfilling other scholarship responsibilities such as service learning projects, many were able to do community service work this quarter according to an online survey IIE disseminated to students. IIE validated the data received to ensure that students recognize the meaning of community service and recorded the volunteering hours correctly on the survey and in their logs. Students collectively were able to achieve approximately **4350 hours** of community service and to assume **86 leadership roles** through these accomplished volunteering hours.

LSP Coordination Committee and Scheduling for Upcoming LSP Activities

At the start of the Program, IIE shared with students a road map to inform them about all the leadership and enrichment activities and commitments they will be expected to participate in/meet during their scholarship.

IIE established the “LSP Coordination Committee” to involve students in the scheduling process to ensure that activities are scheduled at the most suitable time for them and to establish strong communication between students and IIE. IIE hopes that engaging students in the scheduling process will also encourage them to abide by the attendance policy. Students were asked to choose a female and male student from each university and representing different faculties to gather information about all students’ schedules and to also communicate concerns in a timely manner to IIE.

During FY2017 Q1, IIE shared the dates for the upcoming activities for the mid-year break and spring semester so that the students can plan in advance and manage their schedules well. It is important to note that given that university schedules for the spring semester have not yet been confirmed or shared, the session dates may change because of university scheduling changes.

IIE was able to successfully hold all sessions and activities as scheduled and attributes part of this success to the coordination with the student volunteers. IIE will continue consulting with the coordination committee members in future planning.

Sharing Opportunities with Students

In order to help and encourage LSP students in finding different volunteering, internships and other opportunities, IIE team started tracking and categorizing the opportunities shared with students starting from FY2017 Q1. IIE team shared 19 opportunities with students during the reporting period, of which:

- **Seven** were internship opportunities
- **Six** were community service and volunteering opportunities
- **Four** professional development opportunity

- **One** English language proficiency opportunity, and
- **One** personal development opportunity. *Please see Annex (20) for the Opportunities Tracker.*

EFE|EGYPT-Led Leadership in Action Activities

During the reporting period, Education for Employment Egypt (EFE|Egypt) worked with IIE to establish the foundation for all career related activities under the Local Scholarship Program (LSP). Upon successfully processing the grant agreement in October 2017, EFE|Egypt submitted the project file for implementation approval from the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS). As a locally registered organization, EFE|Egypt is obliged to obtain formal written approval from MoSS for any new grant or project. Fortunately, EFE|Egypt obtained approval in December 2016, thereby allowing it to commence with all project activities.

The main activities conducted throughout this period were finalizing the job readiness assessment for Cohorts 1 and 2 students with a total of 130 students, conducting the rapid analysis of the current growth trends in the private sector to identify which fields and sectors in Egypt are projected to grow long-term and to inform the preferred fields of study for cohort 3, and finally developing the mentorship component of the LSP project.

Job Readiness Skills Assessment

Cohort 2

EFE|Egypt completed the job readiness skills assessment for 65 Cohort 2 students. The job readiness skills assessment is a tool developed and used by EFE|Egypt to determine the extent to which students are personally and professionally prepared to join and succeed in the local labor market.

In October 2016, the team worked on developing the assessment tool. It consists of a personalized one-on-one twenty-minute interview where the interviewer asks the participant various personal and professional questions. EFE|Egypt envisions that students will undergo the same assessment upon completing the LSP, using the same questions and scoring matrix. Accordingly, their scores will be compared to measure the increase and improvement in participant's job readiness capacity.

Upon developing the job readiness assessment, EFE|Egypt developed a schedule for the assessments for Cohort 2 participants, seeing as they are all currently enrolled in the Bridge Year Program at the American University in Cairo (AUC). This facilitated the process of administering the assessments since all participants followed a similar schedule and were staying in Cairo. Accordingly, the EFE|Egypt team administered the assessments for a total of three days on December 15, 18, and 19. Although the initial plan was to have private sector volunteers or EFE|Egypt trainers conduct the assessments, the team was mindful of the current time constraints and delays that have resulted from contracting delays and government approvals. As such, to remedy this challenge, both EFE|Egypt and IIE teams brainstormed the different options and opted to have the training and program teams directly administer them.

Cohort 1

EFE|Egypt completed the job readiness skills assessment for 65 Cohort 1 students. In implementing the job readiness skills assessment for cohort 1, the team built on the efforts of the previous quarter.

Assessments for cohort 1 were implemented on January 10, 11, and 12, 2017 in various locations. EFE|Egypt conducted a pre-assessment briefing with trainers who were conducting the assessment to ensure contextualization and alignment on the approach. Accordingly, trainers conducted assessments in Cairo and Alexandria. BUE students had their assessments at the EFE|Egypt training facility. AASTMT students had their assessments in Alexandria, through the support of Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport (AASTMT).

Throughout the administration process, EFE|Egypt team was overwhelmingly impressed of the outcome of the assessments. The majority of students demonstrated moderate potential of career advancement and planning. Similarly, to the previous job readiness assessments with Cohort 2, English proficiency varied heavily in Cohort 1, with many participants scoring low in spoken English, but demonstrating a relatively better level of written English. Assessors identified body language and interviewing skills as two main areas heavily in need of capacity building. Finally, EFE|Egypt was proud to see an extremely high level of passion and determination across the vast majority of participants. EFE|Egypt has scored all the job readiness assessment scores and can confirm that the assessments had a wide variety of scores, which will be stored and compared with the score obtained at the completion of LSP.

Labor Market Assessment

EFE|Egypt completed the first labor market assessment for LSP. This market assessment aimed to determine the fields of the study with the highest potential in the Egyptian labor market. It draws on the fields of study proposed in the program RFP examining each to see the ones that hold the highest potential. The purpose is to support the third cohort of LSP students choose and enroll in the fields of study with the highest potential for growth and employment moving forward. In order to include the relevant findings in the outreach materials for cohort 3, the assessment was a rapid assessment based on secondary sources.

In January 2017, EFE|Egypt identified a local market researcher, to conduct this research. The researcher has previously worked with EFE|Egypt on various large and small research projects, and comes with a solid background in secondary desk research and qualitative research on a range of topics in corporate sustainability, management, social businesses, and employment. EFE|Egypt held two briefing sessions with the consultant to ensure clarity on the scope of work, contextualize the research in the context of LSP, and align on the main outputs and expectations of this research.

Mentorship

EFE|Egypt started preparing for the launch of the mentorship component of LSP for Cohort 1 participants. The mentorship component will consist of a combination of periodic group and individual sessions with participants. As per the LSP scope of work, mentorship is defined as on-going support on interpersonal and soft skills capacity building. Mentorship sessions will adopt a participant-centric approach, focusing on the experiences, needs, and challenges of each participant. Additionally, EFE|Egypt will integrate group mentorship sessions that will cover topics such as stress management and time management. Each mentorship session will be an opportunity for participants to reflect on their experiences while linking their experience in the program to their psychosocial and personal growth.

EFE|Egypt conducted rapid assessments with 30 students - randomly selected - to gain a better understanding of the skills needed, and is currently in the process of designing the mentorship training material and will be sharing with IIE for approval upon completion. Moving forward EFE|Egypt, will also identify mentors, design

and implement a training of mentors' session, design the mentorship sessions schedule, and disseminate it with participants for implementation in the upcoming quarter.

Challenges

Student Academic and Personal Support Challenges

- **LSP Cohort 1 students' requests to change their field of study**

Few students requested to change their field of study or faculty. Requests were and are still being considered by the program team on a case by case basis. Many factors contribute to the decision, such as the rationale behind the request, extra credits needed, if any, slots availability, and graduation plans. Decisions are also made in close consultation with the university coordinators. So far, four requests to change field of study have been declined and one request to change specialization within the same department is still being reviewed in consultation with the department.

- **LSP Cohort 1 student with disability**

Catering for LSP Cohort 1 student with disability has been very challenging and a learning experience. Initially, he was reluctant about transferring to AASTMT for proximity reasons. In addition, the several changes that occurred and lack/inaccuracy of information provided by partner universities regarding his academic and social integration led to tension between the student and LSP team. Furthermore, due to his late admission to AASTMT, the university needed time to understand his exact needs and cater accordingly. The major challenges were:

1. Providing Braille printed books.
2. Facilitating communication with professors, tutors and University Coordinators to understand his case.
3. Taking notes during lectures.

LSP team and AASTMT University coordinators managed to address these three challenges and are currently working on the future plans as well. University coordinators are in regular communication with all student's professors and teaching assistants to make sure they fully understand and address any special needs. This cooperation was also beneficial while addressing the student request to get Braille printed books. In respect to copyrights, the university was not allowed to print the entire books in Braille. Instead, they communicated with each professor to provide important materials, such as summaries, notes, and/or presentations to be printed in Braille. Exams also followed the materials the student was given. In addition, the University Coordinator managed to arrange his courses' tutorials individually so the student has sufficient time and space to fully understand the material and ask questions. For notetaking, IIE team is currently in the process of purchasing a digital recorder to support him in notetaking.

Throughout the process, LSP team and AASTMT University Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator were very understanding and flexible in accommodating the student's needs. Recently, the student and the team started to build stronger and more trusting relations, communication became more streamlined, which is positively affecting his overall performance and wellbeing. In addition, LSP team kept student's parents involved to gain their support and endorsement.

- **BUE LSP Cohort 1 students complaints about University Housing**

IIE team received two complaints from BUE LSP Cohort 1 students about Madinaty housing:

1. The size of some double rooms is inconvenient: Upon receiving the complaint, LSP Academic Advising and Partnerships Manager and Academic Advisor requested a meeting with BUE newly appointed coordinator. On December 7, 2016, the meeting took place and afterwards, he accompanied them to visit the housing to explore the situation. During the visit, LSP team agreed that the size of some rooms is indeed limiting and inconvenient. Accordingly, LSP team is currently discussing with BUE the possibility of housing the LSP students at another convenient university housing.
2. Poor internet connection: Once students communicated the very poor internet service in the entire housing, IIE team worked with the contracted provider, Etisalat Egypt, to assess the situation and provide a solution. In light of the complaint, Etisalat provided technical devices in some students' apartments to strengthen the signal coverage. More devices are still to be installed in the rest of the apartments.

- **Medical Insurance**

Since the commencement of Cohort 1 Bridge Year Program in 2015, LSP team has been receiving several complaints about the quality of the services provided by the students' initial medical insurance provider. Over the past year, IIE team communicated with the chosen provider repeatedly to address these issues. Yet, none of the major issues were resolved. Accordingly, LSP team worked closely with IIE Procurement Officer to seek a new provider through bidding process. IIE managed to contract a new provider, which started their term on November 20, 2016 for both LSP Cohorts 1 and 2. So far, the new cooperation has been positive and smooth for the students.

Leadership in Action Challenges

- **Selecting suitable dates to hold Leadership sessions and mid-year camp**

Finding a common date between AASTMT, BUE and bridge year schedules to hold the gender forum and meetings is a big challenge, given that the students' exam schedules keep changing and do not follow the initial university calendars shared with IIE. As a way to address this challenge, IIE sent students the schedule for activities in advance and established the LSP coordination committee so that students immediately update IIE with scheduling changes. IIE is working with students on finding the most suitable date for the majority of them, but there will always be a risk that some students will have exams and will not be able to attend some sessions.

- **Limitation of time to hold short activities**

The limitation of time available to hold certain short activities, which requires students from different universities to be grouped together, like the gender issues meetings. To overcome this issue, IIE will make sure that when holding activities at the same day, each activity is given the needed and enough time allocation.

- **Conducting EFE|EGYPT's CDCE program¹ given the different mid-year breaks for universities**

BUE and AASTMT have different mid-year breaks except for a few overlapping days. This overlapping time is not enough to hold both components of EFE|Egypt's CDCE program. In addition, students would like to use the mid-year break to implement service learning projects and to also spend time with their families. To take advantage of the overlapping time, to balance all the students' commitments, and to meet deliverables, IIE shortened the length of the mid-year leadership camp from seven days to six days and will compensate the seventh day with four half day sessions in the evenings of the first four camp days and an additional leadership enrichment session during the spring semester. In addition, IIE and EFE|EGYPT agreed to move the CDCE program to June so that it happens after the students' exams and it takes place over the course of 10 days instead of five.

- **Applying LIA absence policy**

There is a need to enforce the absence policy so that all students attend all sessions yet also be flexible and empathetic to their requests for absences to attend family occasions or extracurricular activities they are involved in. IIE is trying to ensure high attendance rates by providing the students with clear attendance policy from the beginning and providing the dates of activities in advance. Whenever IIE receives a request for excuse, students are reminded of the absence policy and the importance of the leadership component of the Scholarship. This approach seems to be working well thus far as the absence rate is low especially unexcused absences which have consequences as outlined in the policy document.

- **Observing and monitoring all service learning projects in person**

Ideally IIE would like to observe some or all service learning projects. This could be a challenge due to scheduling issues and last minute confirmations/changes. IIE was able to observe and monitor five teams in-person out of the six teams implementing their projects in Beni Sueif, Menofeya, Alexandria and Damietta. IIE was unable to monitor one team's activities held in Aswan because they did not receive confirmation from the venue until last minute. Students work with local organizations, schools, libraries and clubs, so in some cases, such as this one, scheduling can be a challenge. Students were able to record videos, take pictures and provide sign in sheets for their final report to document their efforts.

EFE|EGYPT-Led Leadership in Action Challenges

- **Job Readiness Skills Assessment Preparations**

Preparation for the job readiness skills assessments proved to be challenging. For both cohorts, EFE|Egypt scheduled to conduct the assessments during working hours – approximately between 9am to 5pm. However, many students notified the team of the conflict between their studies and the assessments, and therefore many of them were not available. To remedy this, EFE|Egypt sought alternative assessment times for those who were not available.

¹ The Career Directions and Civic Engagement Program (CDCE) will introduce participants to building their career map, basic job search skills, and explain how civic engagement and leadership skills are equally important activities for the development of their academic and professional careers. One day will be dedicated to a service learning assignment in which participants will volunteer at a nonprofit organization.

- **Conducting Job Readiness Skills Assessment at Alexandria for AASTMT students**

Cohort 1 in particular was more challenging, given that the students had completed their Bridge Year Program at AUC and were at their respective universities. This necessitated that the team travels to Alexandria to conduct the assessments, which was not possible without having the MoSS approval. EFE|Egypt decided to conduct the assessments for AASTMT students online via Skype while conducting face to face interviews for BUE students. IIE suggested that it was best to align the strategy for all the students within the same cohort, as opposed to using a different strategy for the Cairo-based students and the Alexandria-based students. However, due to technical difficulties and limited Internet connectivity, the team could not successfully conduct the assessments online. As a result, the team decided to postpone to assessments to once they obtained approval. As such, EFE|Egypt completed the cohort 1 job readiness skills assessments at the beginning of FY2017 Q2.

- **Finalizing of EFE|Egypt's scope of work**

The finalization of EFE|Egypt's scope of work under LSP experienced several challenges as well given the multi-faceted activities planned for students under this program, and the need to coordinate between all the different IIE-led, EFE|EGYPT-led activities and students' changing university schedules. As a result, there was a need to update and coordinate the plan and scope of work with IIE representatives various times. This took place to ensure that when it comes time to implement the activities moving forward, maximum number possible of participants would be available with no conflicts.

- **Designing the mentorship training material by EFE|Egypt training department**

Although EFE|Egypt team built their work off the findings and results of the job readiness skills assessment, the results revealed that there was a need to re-connect with the students and gain a better understanding of their needs and challenges. Accordingly, EFE|Egypt conducted a rapid assessment by contacting 30 participants in Cohort 1 by telephone and conducting telephone interviews with them to dig deeper into the topics raised in the job readiness skills assessment. This was done to ensure that the content designed is not redundant and is responsive to their needs.

Highlights and Success Stories

A Female Student from Damietta Participates in Innovation Theatre Competition

A Cohort 1 female student from Damietta, has participated in the Fifth EbdAA' Competition. EbdAA' (Innovation) is an annual theatre competition, sponsored and administrated by the Ministry of Youth and Sport, that invites participation from all Egyptian universities. From writing to acting, students from all over the country come together to present original theatrical performances.

Pursuing her passion for acting and theatre, she joined AASTMT Theatre Club right after her admission. As part of the acting team in the club, she was selected for the leading role in the play. The play aimed at tackling social and cultural taboos by narrateing a story of a young couple challenging marriage traditions in Upper Egypt. Although she is not from Upper Egypt, she comes from a culture that adopts the same social constrains. To her, it touched her personally to participate in such a story and critically expose her background.

Participating in the competition, the student encoutered social disapprovals, which faces lots of Egyptian females pursuing any artisitic passion. Family and friends were doubting her ability to excel as an engineering

student while participating in the performance. Finishing the semester with GPA of 3.5, the student proved that she is fully capable of achieving academic excellence while training for six months, three times a week for three or four hours a day. The student believes that through the scholarship, she polished her time management and team work skills which enabled her to achieve such balance.

When asked about how she felt regarding her achievement, She said: *“If success means that you have all the reasons to give up, but you decide to fight for your dreams; if it means that you have a lot of tasks and you think that your capacity is not enough and then you discover that you can do more than you thought; if this is the success, then you can consider my story a success story.”*

Reporting and Monitoring and Evaluation

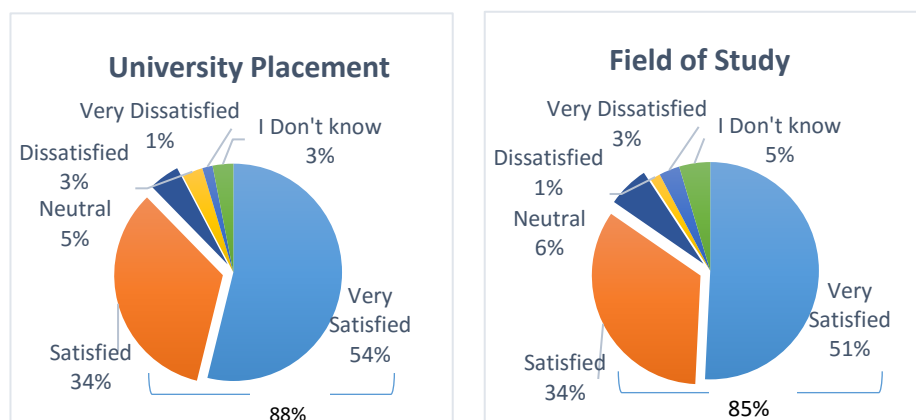
LSP Cohort 2 Baseline Assessment

A survey was designed as a baseline assessment of LSP Cohort 2 students. The main examined areas of the survey are students’ academic standing, social and leadership skills. The survey also collects data about the students’ global competencies, career goals and desired areas of employment. The same survey will be used to assess the skills of a comparison group that IIE will select from the not selected and/or declined students. IIE held an orientation session on November 16, 2016 at the AUC Falaki campus to explain the purpose of the survey to the students and to give the students the chance to fill out the survey while the IIE team was attending and guiding. The assessment was conducted with 65 students.

Academic Standing

In order to assess the students’ studying patterns and learning style, a survey was designed and sent to the Cohort 2 students. The baseline survey is meant to assist the academic team to better understand students’ strengths and weaknesses and mentor them accordingly throughout the program.

In this survey, students were asked about their satisfaction with the placement at the universities and fields of study. Most of them (88%) indicated they were satisfied with the university placements and 85% were satisfied with their fields of study².



² Some students requested to change their affiliation and six of them their requests accepted after they took this survey.

No. of Students: 65

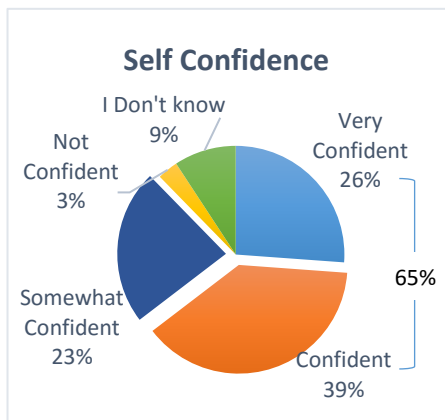
No. of Students: 65

Leadership Skills and Global Competencies

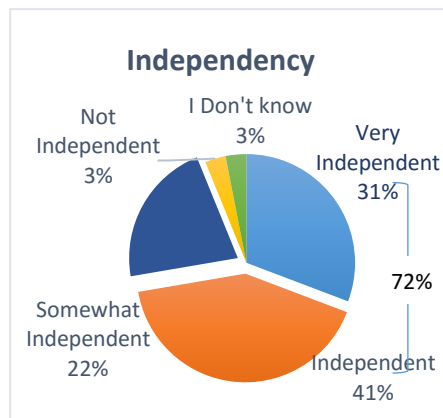
LSP students will develop leadership attributes and competencies through the program. IIE will evaluate the success of Program in creating an actively engaged cohort of future leaders by measuring their ability to continually develop these attributes and competencies.

In addition to students’ responses to the baseline survey, the change in leadership skills will be measured through pre-and-post training assessment, and the leadership roles students will assume through their community service activities. The survey was asking students to assess some leadership attributes, the main attributes are self-confidence, independency, team work, problem Solving, critical Thinking and leadership abilities.

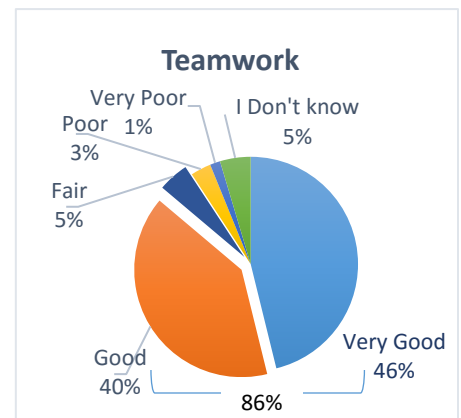
Approximately 65% of students rated themselves either as confident or very confident, while 72% of students rated themselves as independent or very independent. Most of students (86%) rated their teamwork skills as good or very good and 83% rated their problem solving skills as good or very good.



No. of Students: 65



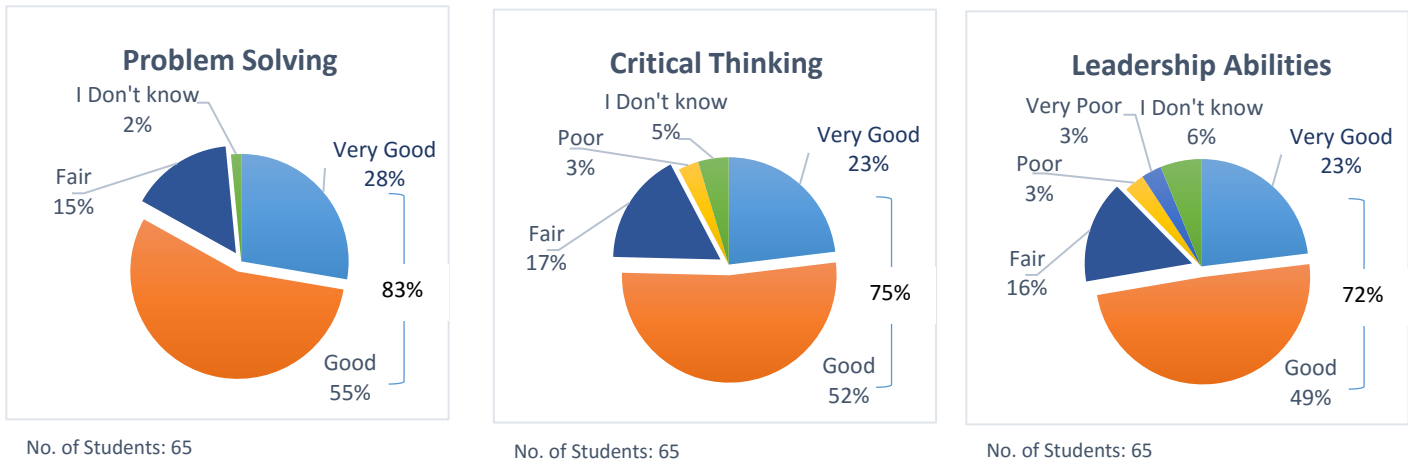
No. of Students: 65



No. of Students: 65

Career Goals and Desired Areas of Employment

This section is designed to identify students’ career goals and their desired areas of employment. In addition to the baseline survey, our partner will assist in developing students’ employability skills through training programs and mentoring sessions during the scholarship.



LSP Cohort 2 Comparison Group

LSP Monitoring and Evaluation Officer communicated with LSP Cohort 2 potential comparison group students to invite them to be part of the comparison group. Students who were nominated for the selection camp and not selected for the scholarship are invited to be in the comparison group except for:

- Students with lower financial need compared with LSP students. This is in an attempt to ensure that both groups are similar in their level of financial need and that the comparison group students will not have other opportunities to be exposed to different types of education and trainings because of their higher financial abilities.
- Students who declined the camp.

The original list consisted of 35 students. Out of them;

- 27 students received the phone calls; three refused to be part of the comparison group and 24 were interested to join.
- 13 out of 24 students submitted the baseline survey.

Communication is ongoing with the remaining students to encourage them to submit the survey and to join the Facebook group created to share different opportunities with them.

Evaluating LSP Program Activities

IIE is keen to continuously evaluate the program’s activities, drawing on lessons learned, reflecting on best practices to identify what needs to be improved to increase the efficacy of the activities and to enhance the learning experience of the LSP students.

During this reporting period, the Mid-Year Leadership Camp took place for Cohort 1 students and they were asked to evaluate each day including the facilitators, the materials and the content of the sessions. LSP Monitoring and Evaluation Officer observed from students’ comments that some of them did not appreciate

the evening sessions in the camp. Accordingly, an anonymous survey was designed to evaluate the evening sessions and to provide recommendations on how to improve future sessions.

IIE also distributes at the end of each training activity an evaluation form whereby the students get the chance to assess anonymously the value of the training and subject matter. The students also provide feedback on the things they liked most or least about the training in addition to a separate section on where the session could be improved. The students' feedback is shared with the team for future planning and modifications of the sessions design.

Reporting

IIE submitted quarterly and semiannual progress reports as scheduled in the annual work plan.

Conclusion

The second half of FY2017 was marked by major successes and achievements:

- Cohort 1 students completed their first academic semester.
- Cohort 2 students were selected and started their Bridge Year Program at AUC.
- Leadership in Action activities continued: LSP Cohort 1 students participated in their second leadership camp, attended Leadership Enrichments sessions and implemented their service learning projects. Cohort 2 students participated in the team building retreat and life skills sessions.
- Cohort 1 and 2 students are engaged in a variety of extracurricular activities and community service activities in different organizations/NGOs.

Performance Indicators Progress during October 2016 – March 2017

Performance Indicator	Planned (FY2017)	FY2017 - Q1					FY2017 - Q2					FY2017 - Q3					FY2017 - Q4					Total (FY2017)			
		Planned	Actual	Female	Male	%	Planned	Actual	Female	Male	%	Planned	Actual	Female	Male	%	Planned	Actual	Female	Male	%	Actual	Female	Male	End of Year Progress %
SO Indicator: Number of students showing a positive change in their job-readiness skills	0	0	0																			0			
Indicator 1a: Number of scholarship applications received	800	0	0								80	0										0	0	0	0%
Indicator 1.1a: Number of individuals attending tertiary education institutions with USG scholarship or financial assistance	130	130	130	75	55	100%																130	75	55	100%
Indicator 1.1b: Number of scholarships awarded to persons with disabilities	3	3	0	0	0	0%																0	0	0	0%
Indicator 1.2a: Number of scholarship recipients who complete their undergraduate academic program	0		0																			0			
Indicator 2a: Number of students who report a change in their leadership skills as a result of training	118		0													118					0%	0	0	0	0%
Indicator 2.1a: Number of scholarship students who complete service learning project	0		0				0	65	34	31	100%											65	34	31	100%

Local Scholarship Program FY2017 Semi-Annual Progress Report (October 2016 – March 2016)

Performance Indicator	Planned (FY2017)	FY2017 - Q1					FY2017 - Q2					FY2017 - Q3					FY2017 - Q4					Total (FY2017)			
		Planned	Actual	Female	Male	%	Planned	Actual	Female	Male	%	Planned	Actual	Female	Male	%	Planned	Actual	Female	Male	%	Actual	Female	Male	End of Year Progress %
Indicator 2.2a: Number of students who study abroad at U.S host universities	0		0																			0			
Indicator 3a: Percentage of graduates from USG-supported tertiary education programs reporting themselves as employed.	0		0																			0%			
Indicator 3.1a: Number of internships supported in Egypt under the Higher Education Initiative	0		0																			0			
Indicator 3.2a: Number of students scoring ≥ 68 on AUC SEPT Test (equiv.503 Paper Based TOEFL) upon graduation	0		0																			0			