



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



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**Cooperative Agreement AID-263-A-15-00020
Semi-Annual Report
FY2018, April – September 2018
Local Scholarship Program (LSP) – Private**

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Executive Summary

This Semi-Annual progress report covers the period from April 1, to September 30, 2018 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, 210 students have been successfully recruited, selected, and awarded scholarships. All three cohorts’ students have already started their academic studies at their host universities - the American University in Cairo (AUC), the Arab Academy for Sciences, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT), and the British University in Egypt (BUE).

IIE was able to increase the number of Cohort 3 students from 65 to 80 students, including 11 students with disabilities. The total number of LSP-Private awardees are now 210 instead of 195 for all the three cohorts including 12 students with disabilities (*3 females and 9 males*). IIE successfully exceeded its targets in the below two indicators:

- **Indicator 1.1a:** Number of individuals attending tertiary education institutions with USG scholarship or financial assistance (Target 195 – Achieved 210).
- **Indicator 1.1b:** Number of scholarships awarded to persons with disabilities (Target 10 – Achieved 12).

The following table illustrates the students’ university placements and fields of study disaggregated by gender;

Table (1): Cohort 1 Students’ students disaggregated by University, Field of Study and Cohort.

Universities & Fields of Study	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	All Cohorts
BUE – Communication and Mass Media	5	10	11	26
BUE – Economics	1	4	4	9
BUE – Nursing	6	6		12
Total BUE	12	20	15	47

Local Scholarship Program in Numbers

- **210 Students currently enrolled in the Local Scholarship Program. (113 females and 97 males)**
- **12 students with Disability (3 females and 9 males)**
- **26 Governorates represented**
- **65 Cohort 1 students are currently enrolled in their fifth academic semester at AASTMT and BUE**
- **65 Cohort 2 students are currently enrolled in their third semester at AASTMT, AUC and BUE**
- **80 Cohort 3 students are currently in their first semester at AASTMT, AUC and BUE.**

Universities & Fields of Study	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3	All Cohorts
AASTMT - Computing and Information Technology	3	4	10	17
AASTMT - Engineering and Technology	15	11		26
AASTMT - International Transport and Logistics	10	7	15	32
AASTMT - Management and Business Technology	25	13	22	60
Total AASTMT	53	35	47	135
AUC - Engineering		4		4
AUC – Computer Science		1	6	7
AUC – Mass Media and Communication		3		3
AUC - Sciences			6	6
AUC – Business Administration		2	6	8
Total AUC		10	18	28

LSP Scholar Academic and Personal Support

Academic Progress

Summer term requests

Three Cohort 1 AASTMT students requested to take a summer term to be able to graduate on time for their scholarship grant. For two students, the delay was caused by failed courses. As for the third student, it was due to missing an academic semester for being in detention. The three requests have been approved.

Four Cohort 2 AUC students requested to take a summer term. One was rejected, two were approved to support Engineering students to graduate on time and the fourth was approved to support the student's transfer and his new graduation plan¹.

Cohort 1 - Academic Year Three and Cohort 2 - Academic Year Two

The academic year for LSP cohorts 1 and 2 students commenced on September 2 for AUC students, on September 15 for AASTMT students, and on September 22 for BUE students. Several AASTMT students requested to change their specializations under the same field of study. Students provided IIE team with justification for their change and confirmed they will

Academics Highlights

- **210 Cohort 1, 2 and 3 students are currently in their fifth, third and first academic semesters respectively.**
- **72 individual support meetings conducted with LSP Students**
- **One group support meeting conducted for Cohort 3 students with visual impairment.**
- **33 Cohort 2 students and 80 Cohort 3 students attended the Intensive Summer English Program at AMIDEAST.**

¹ One AUC Engineering student requested to change his field of study to Business Administration. The university confirmed that the transfer will not result in any wasted credits and that all earned credits will be successfully transferred towards his new field of study. The summer requested was approved to support his new graduation plan.

not do further changes in the future. Requests were assessed in collaboration with AASTMT university coordinator and approvals were granted accordingly.

Cohort 3 University Admission

All 80 students sat for the TPO during the last week of May to determine their readiness to take academic IELTS/iBT and accordingly compete for AUC admission. A cut-off point of 60 was set for sighted students. LSP team agreed to lower the cut-off point for students with visual impairment to 40 in order to give them an opportunity to compete. Based on the TPO scores, a total of 32 students, including four students with visual impairment, were deemed ready to take the exam.

Out of the 32 students, twelve students, including 3 with visual impairment, were able to get the AUC required English admission requirement score and gain full admission status. Some students who got the general score requirement but failed to get the writing score requested to be reconsidered for AUC based on submission of a modified graduation plan that would include a semester of English Language Intensive (ELI) courses and overloads and summers or winters if needed in order to graduate by June 2022. For equity reasons IIE gave the opportunity to all students to submit a graduation plan² for AUC.

Ten students' submitted plans and IIE reviewed the students' plans and consulted with AUC and USAID before providing students with final decision. Six were approved, two were rejected for very low attendance during the bridge year warranting several warning letters, one failed to get the required writing score and needed a full year of English, while one failed to provide the required English score certification required by the university.

For the remaining 48 students, the Academic Team collected the survey³ results to identify any requests to change the field of study and 23 students had submitted requests. The Academic Team reviewed and approved their requests. New Terms and Conditions documents were issued for all 23 students to obtain their guardians' signatures.

The final placements per university for cohort three are as follows: 47 students were placed at AASTMT, 18 students were placed at AUC and 15 students were placed at BUE. For AASTMT, all 47 students were placed in the English language track, either through passing the English admission test or being exempt for having an IELTS score of 5 or above or iBT score of 65 or above. For BUE, initially 18 students attended the BUE admission test but 3 failed to get the required score for admission even after a second retake and were moved to AASTMT.

English Language Support

Bridge Year Program (BYP) - Cohort 3

Course Progression

The instructional and extra assistance hours proceeded as agreed with AUC. The program came to an end on June 12. All students sat for post SEPT exam on June 1-2, 2018.

² AUC study plans are modified study and graduation plans prepared by the students after consultation with their department of study at AUC. They were prepared to ensure students graduate on time by taking necessary overload courses or summer sessions to make up for subjects they will not study in their first semester to take English Language Intensive courses. Students agreed to pursue these modified study plans at their own risk, since they will need to graduate before June 2022

³ Survey submitted by students in March 2018, please refer to FY2018 Q2 report for more information

Special and Follow-up Cases

- Two students with visual impairment have been struggling academically and have repeatedly expressed their desire to leave the program. However, their legal guardians were not supportive of their decision. The LSP Program Director and academic team met with the students - and the legal guardian in one case and on the phone with the other student's legal guardian since he is visually impaired himself and has difficulty travelling to Cairo - to discuss their concerns and to encourage them to continue in the program if this is deemed in their best interest. AUC BYP coordinator and LSP Academic Team have been giving them extra attention to support them academically and to increase their chances of continuing in the program. They decided to continue in the program.
- Some students showed poor attendance behavior. AUC BYP coordinator, LSP Program Director and LSP Academic Team met with them and their guardians in some cases and issued verbal/written warnings based on the case.

Intensive Summer English Program – Cohorts 2 and 3

AMIDEAST conducted the first round of the Intensive Summer English Program for all 80 Cohort 3 students (38 females and 42 males) and the second round for 33 Cohort 2 students (21 females and 12 males). Cohort 3 students started their Summer English program on July 1, while Cohort 2 students started on July 29.

Academic and Personal Support

Campus Visits and Individual Meetings

LSP Academic Advising and Partnerships Manager and Academic Advisor continue to conduct regular campus visits to meet with university coordinators, follow up on students and get informed with their academic and social lives updates. Over this reporting period, two visits were conducted and a meeting with AASTMT University Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator. In addition, ten campus visits were conducted at AUC for the Cohort 3 Bridge Year Program students.

During these visits, the Academic Team used different tools to provide support for students:

- Individual Meetings

A total of 62 individual meetings were conducted during this reporting period for students from all three cohorts. Five meetings were conducted for Cohort 1 students and one meeting for a Cohort 2 student in response to students' requests to address specific academic and personal challenges. LSP Academic Team continued conducting individual meetings for Cohort 3 students and completed 56 individual meetings.

- BUE Nursing Students' Meeting

Based on the representation committee's request, LSP Program Director and Academic Team conducted a meeting with the 12 nursing students from cohorts 1 and 2. During the meeting, students expressed several concerns and requests. LSP team recorded all their concerns and shared them with the University Coordinator at BUE. Next year, the Academic Team will follow up with the coordinator and university on the action plan.

Students with disability

IIE identified a consultant with counselling for students with disabilities experience who performed group and individual sessions with cohort 3 students with visual impairment to guide and help them identify the challenges they are facing and ways to deal with them through the coming years in the program. In July 2018, one group

meeting and eleven individual support meetings were performed for cohort 3 students with visual impairment by IIE consultant.

During the group session, it was a good start to help all the students realize how to approach their problems, and develop an awareness that the bridge year is a simple start to a long trail of hard work expected of them to accommodate to, and develop their knowledge, as well as contribute and engage in the newly introduced academic life they are all expected to move through in the following months. The second phase was to meet with the students with visual impairment on an individual basis for personalized assessment and a career advising session. A comprehensive report was shared with IIE team with details on the assessment for each student and recommendations on how to support each student through the challenges he/she may face.

Study Abroad Program

FY2018 Study Abroad terms

Summer 2018

During this reporting period three LSP BUE Cohort 1 students were placed at U.S. universities for the summer term where they would take courses relevant to their fields of study and take part in a one-month long internship.

The Study Abroad Officer worked with the students to finalize their visas and conducted a pre-departure orientation on May 27, 2018 before the travel.

The three BUE Cohort 1 students returned from the U.S. after having completed their study abroad programs. They attended a re-entry session on September 22, 2018. The session was conducted by Dr. George Marquis, IIE Consultant and Dean of Students at the American University in Cairo. IIE staff members attended the sessions to observe the progress of the students who passed through different stages of development.

Fall 2018

Twelve AASTMT Cohort 1 students received the required English score of 70 or above to be considered for the Fall 2018 term. IIE placement team in NY reviewed and sent the 12 students' common applications to universities that offer courses relevant to the students' fields of study, offer cost share, offer housing and meal plans for the whole duration and are willing to sign a host form stating they will not offer continued admission to the students after they complete their term abroad.

The Study Abroad Officer conducted an initial meeting with the students on June 24, 2018. During the meeting, the students were introduced to the program objectives, the stakeholder's responsibilities and the conditions of sponsorship.

Study Abroad Program Highlights

- **Two Pre-departure Orientation sessions took place for 3 Cohort 1 BUE students and 12 Cohort 1 AASTMT students.**
- **Three Cohort 1 BUE students returned from U.S. after completing their Study Abroad program.**
- **Eleven Cohort 1 AASTMT students started their Fall term at U.S. universities.**
- **One re-entry session conducted for the three BUE returnees.**
- **Cohort 2 students attended Study Abroad Orientation.**
- **122 applications received and reviewed for the Study Abroad Program**
- **72 interviews conducted for Cohort 1 and 2 students.**

To finalize the placement, students were instructed to complete the course mapping with their departments at the Arab Academy for Science Technology & Maritime Transport and obtain approval to transfer credits. Engineering students faced some challenges matching courses with the U.S. universities.

All twelve AASTMT Cohort 1 students were placed at U.S. universities for the fall term where they would take courses relevant to their fields of study. The Study Abroad Officer worked with the students to finalize their visas and conducted a pre-departure orientation (PDO) on July 18, 2018.

On travel day students received their passports, visas, DS2019 forms, allowances and signed a contract stating their commitment to the LSP program upon return.

Eleven of the twelve students received their visas in time for travel, while one student did not get the visa on time and his travel was deferred to the Spring 2019 semester.

Study Abroad Program Criteria Revision

An annual revision of the study abroad program criteria has been conducted before opening the application round for Cohort 2 students. The GPA has been adjusted to be sensitive to the different grading systems for BUE students. The minimum cumulative GPA is now B- for BUE students, and 3.0 for AASTMT and AUC students.

The minimum score for the Toefl exam has been adjusted to 65 or above and 6.0 or above on the IELTS exam. Students who take the English test for a second time and achieve the required score will be reimbursed for the cost of the exam.

An additional criterion was announced to the students that they must have excellent attendance and participation in Leadership in Action and Academic activities.

LSP Cohort 2 Study Abroad Program Orientation

LSP Study Abroad Officer held an interactive orientation session for LSP Cohort 2 students on August 30, 2018. The orientation explained the study abroad component, highlighted the updated eligibility criteria, the requirements and the application process. LOTUS study abroad returnees held an interactive Q&A session. The first students to travel will go in the Summer 2019 term.

New rounds of applications

The second round of applications for Cohort 1 students applying for the Spring and Summer 2019 terms closed on April 2, 2018. Out of the 36 that applied, 28 were invited for an interview of whom 20 had been interviewed earlier during the Fall 2018 round but were not ranked high enough to be considered for travel in Fall 2018. The interviews took place on three days in April, May and June and were conducted by the LSP Program Director, the Academic Advising and Partnerships Manager, the Leadership and Enrichment Programs Manager and the Study Abroad Program Officer. Out of the 28 students interviewed, 13 were deemed ready to study abroad.

During FY18 Q4, a new round of applications opened for Cohort 1 students to travel in Spring and Summer 2019⁴ (round 3) and Cohort 2 students to start traveling in Summer 2019 (round 1). The applications closed on September 9, 2018 for Cohort 1 and on September 19, 2018 for Cohort 2. A total of 86 applications were received; 25 from Cohort 1 students and 61 from Cohort 2 students.

⁴ Some of AASTMT students who should originally travel in the Spring are now traveling in the Summer because they did not register for an English exam before the deadline in October.

Out of the 25 Cohort 1 students that applied, 21⁵ were invited for an interview for Spring 2019 term. For Cohort 2, the application review of AASTMT students was finalized during the reporting period, and 24 students were invited for interviews.

The interviews took place during September 26-30 at IIE office in Cairo for BUE students and at AASTMT in Alexandria for the rest of the students. The interviews were conducted by the LSP Program Director, the Academic Advising Manager, the Leadership and Community Service Officer and the Academic Advisor⁶. The selection will be finalized in the next reporting period.

FY2019 Study Abroad Program terms

Spring 2019

During FY2018 Q3, 10 Cohort 1 AASTMT students passed the interviews phase and are scheduled to travel in the Spring 2019 semester.

Seven out of the ten AASTMT students got the score and are currently filling out the common applications to be placed for the Spring semester. Two are taking the exam in October and will be placed in the Spring and the third will take the exam to travel in the Summer.

Summer 2019

After the adjustment of the IBT cutoff score, two BUE Cohort 1 students from round 1 application are now ready to be placed for the summer term. From round two, three are taking the IBT exam in October, 2018.

⁵ Including; one -AASTMT Cohort 1 student – that was invited for the interview after the second round of application, but she was sick and didn't attend her interview. And another AASTMT Cohort 1 student – who achieved the score to be invited for an interview but was put on hold due to his pending court case and number of course overload he has.

⁶ The Academic Advisor was observing most of the interviews and sat on the panel for couple of interviews.

IIE-Led Leadership in Action Activities

Student-Led Leadership Conferences

Cohort 1 Student-Led Conference: The Entrepreneurs League

Cohort 1 students held the first student-led leadership conference on April 14, 2018 at the Arab Academy for Science Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT) in Alexandria. The students chose entrepreneurship as this year’s conference theme.

On April 12, 2018, cohort 1 students held a conference rehearsal meeting at the Arab Academy for Science Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT) in Alexandria. During the rehearsal, IIE offered support to the students and helped them go through all their tasks and reviewed the event’s agenda prior to the conference day. Students had the chance to organize their tasks and the division among several committees and made sure everything at the hall was in place.

The conference day began with a competition in which youth presented their start-up ideas to a panel of entrepreneurs and business leaders for a chance to be incubated as part of the “Sherketak Fekretak” initiative. The competing teams were selected during a five-day entrepreneurial camp that the conference organizers held in February. For the remainder of the day, influential entrepreneurs gave inspirational and informative talks during which they shared their experiences and lessons learned with the audience.

Cohorts 2 and 3 students were invited to attend the event, The LSP Program Director and LSP team members, AASTMT coordinator and Assistant Coordinator, AUC coordinator in addition to participants from the entrepreneurial camp which was organized by cohort 1 students before the conference also attended the conference.

Cohort 2 Student-Led Conference

Cohort 2 students are working on finalizing their budget, event summary and the conference agenda. They agreed on the conference theme which is “Sustainable Development” and are expected to submit the documents that explains their idea for feedback and approval during October 2018.

Gender-Related Issues Meetings and Forum

Gender Forum 3: Sexual Harassment

On April 13, 2018, IIE held the third annual gender forum for Cohorts 1, 2 and 3 students at Alexandria. IIE held several meetings to discuss the most suitable topic for this year’s forum since it is the first forum attended by cohort 3 students. The sexual harassment topic was chosen to raise students’ awareness about such an important

Leadership in Action Highlights

- 1 Student-Led Conference
- 1 Gender Forum conducted for the three Cohorts
- 2 Gender-related issues meetings conducted for Cohort 3 female students
- 1 Cultural trip to Minia for 79 Cohort 3 students and 10 Cohort 2 AUC students
- 6 Specialized Sessions and Meetings
- 62 Individual Mentorship Sessions
- 1 Career Guidance Session
- 1 Career Directions and Civic Engagement training.

issue. IIE LIA team invited HarassMap team to deliver the topic as they have extensive experience in introducing and discussing the topic with Egyptian youth⁷.

The day started with a discussion about the definition of sexual harassment followed by outlining the different types of sexual harassment, the Egyptian law's articles that relate to the topic, in addition to what to do in case of experiencing harassment without the fear of being stigmatized. The facilitators offered a chance for questions and answers at the end of the forum and students shared their questions anonymously in order to feel more comfortable sharing their questions and/or thoughts.

Cohort 3 female students Gender-Related Issues Meeting 1

The first gender-related meeting for Cohort 3 female students was led by IIE female staff member on July 26, 2018 with the purpose of assessing the students' needs and introducing them to the gender component. The main purpose of the first meeting was to build trust and create a safe space for all students to help them share their thoughts and any challenges they are facing during different activities and discussions. It is believed that the first meeting's goal was achieved based on the majority of students' feedback. One of the students shared the following in her evaluation: *"Existence of a meeting like that for girls gives a great opportunity to find that we as girls are not facing some problems alone which makes me personally be over the moon."*

Cohort 3 female students Gender-Related Issues Meeting 2

During the second gender meeting, a guest speaker was invited. On July 29, 2018, a LOTUS alumna, shared her success story with cohort 3 female students, obstacles and challenges she encountered and how she was able to face them. She set a real-life example for the younger students and inspired them to always be self-motivated and to chase their passion to achieve their goals.

Cultural and Community Service Trip 1

Seventy-nine Cohort 3 students in addition to ten Cohort 2 students attended their first cultural and community service trip to Minya Governorate from July 21-to July 24, 2018⁸. The activities held during the trip were not limited to visiting historical sites, but they also included community service and sessions about NGOs in Minya and the national heritage of Tahtib (traditional stick-fighting martial art).

IIE Leadership Camp 1

IIE held the first Leadership Camp for Cohort 3 students for six days, from July 25- July 30, 2018, at the Cataract Pyramids Resort. The main goal of the camp was introducing students to basic leadership concepts and teamwork to prepare them for their Service Learning Project journey. The six-day camp was aimed at developing and building upon students' soft skills and teamwork. The activities held were redesigned to accommodate the needs of students with visual impairment, in addition to group discussions and reflection.

As part of building an internal support system and a sense of community, it is worth mentioning that IIE sent out a call for volunteers from Cohorts 1 and 2 to help and support their colleagues during this Leadership Camp.

⁷ HarassMap is an award winning volunteer-based initiative founded in December, 2010. HarassMap team is working to engage all of Egyptian society to create an environment that does not tolerate sexual harassment and their vision is "To build a society that guarantees the safety of all people from sexual and gender based violence.

⁸ The ten Cohort 2 students attended the trip with Cohort 3 students as they missed their trip with their colleagues from the same cohort last year due to the early start of their academic semester at the American University in Cairo.

Twelve older students were selected to participate in the camp where they had the chance to give back to their community. They offered help to all of their younger colleagues especially the students with visual impairment, in addition to carrying out different logistical tasks throughout the camp days.

Service Learning Projects

Since the start of the program, 130 Cohort one and two students (*75 females and 55 males*) finished their Service Learning Projects and submitted their final reports.

Cohort 2 projects

During FY2018 Q3, Cohort 2 students completed their service learning projects, sent their final reports and currently are settling the cash advances they received. IIE LIA team reviewed final documents for all teams and sent detailed feedback on all documents submitted by the teams. According to final reports, the teams were able to serve their community in the following governorates: Cairo, Alexandria, Menofeya, Fayoum, Damietta, Luxor, Assiut and Dakahlia.

Cohort 3 projects

During IIE Leadership Camp 1, Cohort 3 students were divided into six teams based on their individual interests and areas they prefer to work on to serve their community. The students had the chance to discuss within their teams and brainstorm ideas to start writing their proposals and preparing their budgets.

In addition to receiving overview sessions and guidance from IIE about the Service Learning Projects cycle, the camp volunteers supported the Service Learning Projects teams by holding evening meetings with their younger colleagues and answering their questions based on their experience with their implemented projects.

Three Cohort 3 teams already got feedback and approval on their planning sheets and budget which means that they will start implementation during the next couple of months. The other three teams are working on the feedback received from IIE on their documents. All projects' implementation is expected to finish by the end of March 2019.

Specialized Sessions and Meetings with Specific Purposes

During the reporting period, IIE LIA team held six specialized sessions and meeting with specific purposes. On April 1, 2018, IIE LIA team held a meeting at AASTMT in Alexandria with the Cohort 1 Student Led Leadership Conference management team and committee heads to provide guidance on the pending conference tasks, finalizing reservations and supporting their work on planning for the student-led leadership conference.

During FY18 Q4, IIE held one meeting with Cohort 2 Student-Led Conference management team to discuss updates, challenges the team is facing and the timeline for the next few months. The remaining four meetings were held with different Cohort 3 Service Learning Projects teams to follow up on their progress and facilitate conflict resolution discussions with team members.

Community Service

As reported Cohorts 1, 2 and 3 students were able to do a total of 9161 community service hours in the reporting period⁹. Students' community service data was collected by an online survey tool. IIE is in the process of

⁹ The number of hours could be slightly different after the validation and verification process from IIE.

validating the data received to ensure that students understand the definition of what activities qualify as community service and that they recorded the volunteering hours correctly.

Partners' Capacity Building

As part of IIE efforts to build the capacity of our implementing partners, LSP team is always keen to give a proper and documented feedback to our implementing partners and consultants on the activities conducting and its reporting. During the reporting period, the IIE team conducted meetings with service providers and consultants before most activities to discuss relevant information including content, student and programmatic needs, and to ensure that both parties share the same objective and vision of the planned activity. This quarter, the Leadership in Action team conducted the following capacity building activities:

- A planning meeting was held on June 24, 2018 with the consultants who lead the Life Skills sessions to discuss new themes for the enrichment sessions and gender meetings for FY2019.
- A planning meeting was held on August 7, 2018 with Dunes Egypt, the Community Service and Cultural Trips service provider, to discuss the trip's agenda and visits' plan.

EFE|EGYPT-Led Leadership in Action Activities

During the reporting period, Education for Employment Egypt (EFE|Egypt) continued to implement and modify its career-focused scope of work under the Local Scholarship Program (LSP).

Mentorship

The structure of the mentoring component was changed with Cohort 2 to include two group sessions and two individual sessions instead of the structure used with Cohort 1 (one group session and three individual sessions). During the first round of mentorship sessions, the mentors conducted group sessions on “Emotional Intelligence” and “How to Know Yourself” and they were able to create a comfortable and engaging environment for all students to participate in the session.

Sixty-two Cohort 2 students attended EFE|Egypt one-on-one first mentoring sessions (38 females and 24 males).

Career Guidance Sessions

During the reporting period, only 1 postponed session for 7 Cohort 1 students took place for marketing, media management, and mass communication students. The session was held on Saturday June 23, 2018 from 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM at EFE|Egypt premises. The speaker gave an in-depth view about the field, what are the students' expectations when they graduate, what are the industries/ jobs in every field, what training courses and further education should be pursued in order to achieve their goals, and a generic overview on starting a career in the marketing field. At the end of the session, the speaker left the chance for an open Q&A discussion. Five out of seven students attended the session as the other two students were pursuing their semester abroad at that time.

Career Directions and Civic Engagement Training (CDCE)

During the reporting period, the training department continued the preparations needed for the Career Directions and Civic Engagement training (CDCE). Based on a discussion with EFE|Egypt and IIE teams in addition to a communication with Cohort 2 students, a date was confirmed for the CDCE training from August 26 to August

31, 2018. The six-day training included five days dedicated for Career Directions training and one day for Civic Engagement training.

In regard to the Career Directions part, it was similar to the curriculum taught to Cohort 1 students last year, which included fundamentals of professional CVs, key skills necessary for interviews and LinkedIn workshop. This part of the training provided the students with the opportunity to work on their CVs and receive feedback from their trainers. The students also learned about the “Do's and Dont's” during an interview, in addition to practicing their interview skills through mock interviews during which the students were being assessed based on the criteria they have been learning throughout the training days. The students also had the chance to create their LinkedIn profiles and know more about how they can use it to expand their professional network and apply for different opportunities.

Based on Cohort 1 students' feedback, the Civic Engagement curriculum was modified to include an introduction to civic engagement, the importance of civic engagement, social responsibility and steps and skills needed to be involved in their local communities. The Civic Engagement part introduced the students to the legal framework for NGOs, ways and sources of funding it.

Internships

EFE|Egypt conducted Assessment Interviews with all 65 Cohort 1 students in order to align their interests with the internship opportunities, send suitable online and offline internship opportunities and contact several employers in order to secure placements for them. On April 14 and 15, 2018 the interviews for 43 AASTMT students were conducted at the Academy and on Friday, April 20 interviews were conducted at BUE premises for 12 BUE students. The remaining 10 students had their assessment Interviews during May and June¹⁰.

During the reporting period, one Cohort 1 student has shared the completion certificate for his internship. The student started his internship on January 25, 2018 and completed it on February 30, 2018. However, he shared the completion certificate in April.

Moreover, thirty-five Cohort 1 and seven Cohort 2 students have completed one internship placement in addition to three Cohort 1 students who completed two internships placement. The forty-five students submitted a total of forty-eight completion certificates.

In order to monitor and evaluate the internships experience for the students and to improve the process for the upcoming placements, IIE and EFE|Egypt agreed on conducting field visits as a monitoring tool for the internships taking place. EFE|Egypt team conducted one visit in FY2018 Q4 to one of the companies that had nine engineering students interning at the company's new capital location. The field visit's objective is to get the employers' direct feedback on the students' performance through discussions with their direct supervisors to highlight their strengths and the areas for possible improvements or challenges. The most important highlights were that the students are committed and hard workers.

Moreover, EFE|Egypt team put a plan for a 360-degree evaluation which involves feedback forms for both students and employers. The students' feedback form was to evaluate their general satisfaction with their internships, their learning experience, the new skills they learned and the organizations'/companies' contribution to their learning experience.

¹⁰ These were phone interviews.

The employers' feedback form was to measure the students' performance and learning curve during their internships by rating them on their professionalism. Examples of areas where employers rated students included the quality of work, reliability, technical skills, punctuality, and students' interpersonal skills such as communication, group work, productivity and ability to learn.

Reporting and Monitoring and Evaluation

Since the announcement of the first Cohort of the program in August 2015 till September 2018, three out of eleven indicators were achieved successfully and IIE exceeded its target:

- **Indicator 1a:** Number of scholarship applications received (Target 2400 – Achieved 6058).
- **Indicator 1.1a:** Number of individuals attending tertiary education institutions with USG scholarship or financial assistance (Target 195 – Achieved 210).
- **Indicator 1.1b:** Number of scholarships awarded to persons with disabilities (Target 10 – Achieved 12).

Monitoring LSP Program Activities

In addition to the team's efforts in monitoring the different program's activities conducted by internal or external trainers/facilitators, LSP Monitoring and Evaluation Officer was working closely with LSP Academic and Leadership Enrichment teams to monitor, evaluate and improve the activities conducted based on the observation and LSP students' feedback obtained at the end of each activity.

Throughout this reporting period, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer observed seven different activities and sessions for the three cohorts. During these visits, she was engaged in conversations with the students to learn more about their progress on both the academic and personal levels and to discuss their achievements in the activities they participated in.

Monitoring partners' activities documentation

On September 10, 2018, LSP team visited EFE|Egypt's office to conduct a spot check for data accuracy. LSP Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and the Leadership and Community Service Officer met with the LSP Program Coordinator who walked them through the documentation of all the activities. LSP team reviewed the documents against the reports provided and gave some recommendations during the visit. However, the team is still working on the meeting minutes and notes as it requires reviewing more data from our side and will send the spot check notes and recommendations to EFE|Egypt team in the next quarter.

Evaluating LSP Program

LSP Cohort 3 Comparison Group

During the reporting period, IIE continued the communication with the potential Cohort 3 comparison group students who either declined or were not selected for the scholarship. This process included an initial phone call with the Comparison group students, followed by an email/Facebook message to confirm the communication with a link to the baseline survey they should submit.

Reporting

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

Conclusion:

The second half of FY2018 was marked by major successes and achievements:

- Cohort 1 students started their fifth academic semester.
- Cohort 2 students started their third academic semester.
- Cohort 3 students completed their Bridge Year Program at AUC and Summer Intensive Program at AMIDEAST and started their first academic semester.
- Leadership in Action activities continued for Cohorts 1, 2 and 3:
 - o Cohort 1 students implemented their student-led conference and started their summer internships.
 - o Cohort 2 students participated in Career Directions and Civic Engagement training (CDCE), attended Mentorship and Career guidance sessions and planning for their service student-led conference.
 - o Cohort 3 students attended their first cultural trip to Minia, attended leadership camp 1 and gender-related issues for female students and started preparation for their service learning projects.
 - o Gender Forum conducted for all three cohorts
- The selection and placement process of LSP Cohort 1 and 2 students is ongoing for the Study Abroad Program
- Cohort 1, 2 and 3 students were engaged in a variety of extracurricular activities and community service activities in different organizations/NGOs.