

Research Report

2003-2008

**Faculty of Health Sciences
American University of Beirut**



March, 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) has attracted substantial funding over the past five academic years (AY), amounting to nearly 4.6 million US Dollars (Table 1). During the past AY alone (2007-08), the Faculty was awarded a total of \$1,027,629 million for research as *new* grants spanning a duration between one month and three years. However, the annual amount of funds which was *available* for research during the past year was \$1,443,633, representing over double the funds that were available in 2003-04 (\$730,488). The majority of its sponsored research grants were obtained from international and regional sources (91.6%), a trend which has been consistent for the past five years (Figure 1).

In 2007-08, the total number of publications was 68, out of which 47 were publications in refereed journals. The latter included 43 articles and four publications as letters, book reviews or brief reports. The number of publications in refereed journals during the past AY (n=47) falls within the range of the previous four years, with the lowest value being 39 in 2006-07 and the highest value (68) being achieved in 2005-06. The mean number of articles published in that year in refereed journals per full time equivalent research active faculty member was 1.8 (range during 2003-08 1.4 to 2.5), yielding 52.0% as per cent faculty member publishing at least 2 articles in refereed journals (Figure 2).

With respect to collaborative research, co-authorship within one department and across the five departments at FHS decreased, respectively, from 34.5% and 19.0% in 2003-04 to 29.8% and 6.4%, respectively, in 2007-08. During the same period, co-authorship with outside FHS increased from 63.8% to 87.2%. Out of the total publications co-authored with outside institutions in 2007-08, co-authorship with national or international researchers (25.5% and 38.3%, respectively) was much higher than that with regional researchers (2.8%). The proportion of publications with FHS Faculty as principal authors (first or corresponding) was 63.8%, and those co-authored with current or recent graduate students was 27.7%.

FHS faculty members continue to publish in high quality international refereed journals, with the majority of papers (59.5%) being published in high quality journals (journals ranking in the top 60%). Around a quarter of the papers (25.6%) were published in non-ranked journals.

Summary: Facts and Figures

Table 1: Total funding in US Dollars in 2007-08 and during AYs 2003-2008 by source*

Funding Source	Year	
	2007-08	2003-08
International/Regional	1,322,672	4,214,483
Local agencies	95,894	265,926
University Research Board (URB)	25,067	139,817
Total	1,443,633	4,620,221

* Note: All figures are in US dollars and only funds allocated for expenditure in the respective years were included.

Figure 1: Funding in US Dollars by source and AY, 2003-08

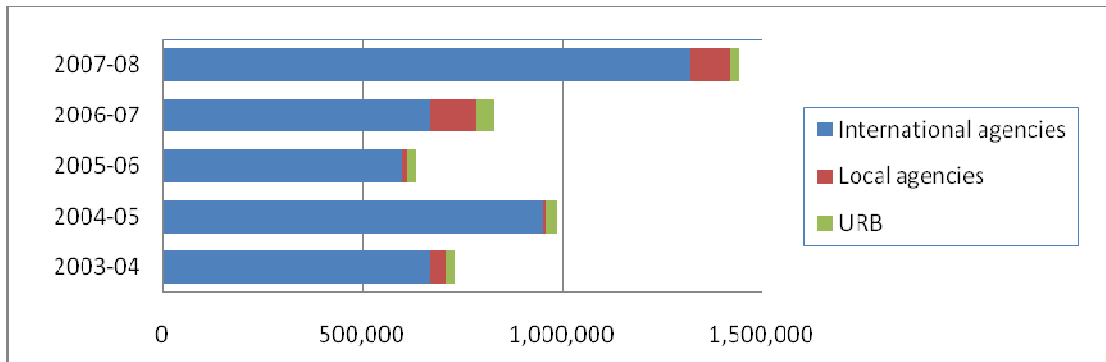
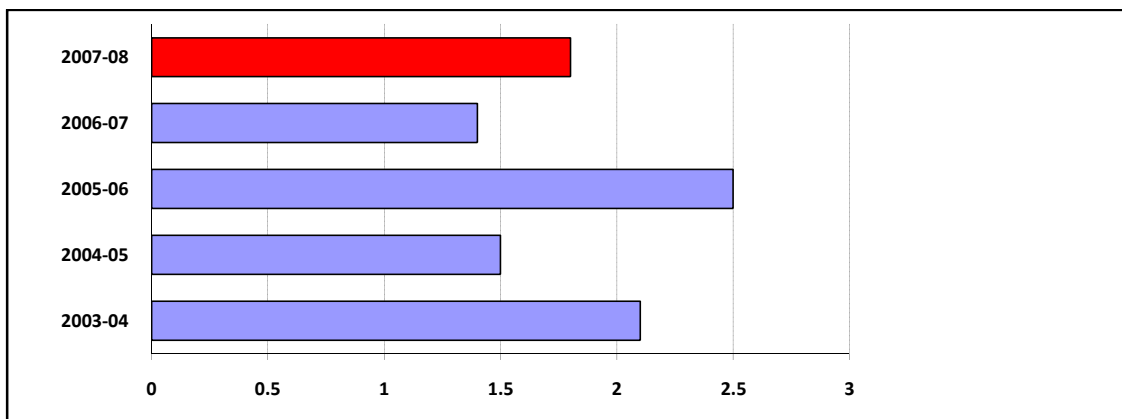


Figure 2: Average number of refereed articles per full-time equivalent research faculty member by AY, 2003-08



INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) Research Committee (RC) is pleased to present the sixth annual Research Report for FHS, covering the past five academic years (AYs 2003-08) with emphasis on the last AY (2007-08). An AY refers to the period extending from July 1 to June 30. This report is published by the RC on an annual basis.¹ The report contains numeric data on FHS research activities and output, with a focus on sponsored research and journal publications. The data may be used to monitor progress towards achieving the following research objectives:

1. Maintain the amount of sponsored research,
2. Maintain the average quantity and quality of research publications,
3. Sustain interdisciplinary and collaborative research with AUB Faculties and other universities in Lebanon, the region, and internationally, and
4. Strengthen student participation in Faculty research.

FHS consists of five departments: Environmental Health (EH), Epidemiology and Population Health (EPH), Health Behaviour and Education (HBE), Health Management and Policy (HMP), and Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT). The report includes measurable outcomes on the research objectives for FHS as a whole and by department. The quantity, type, and quality of research publications are also provided.

The RC would like to acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Sani Hlais, lecturer at the FHS, for conducting the data analysis, and Ms. Ruba Ismail-Hamad, instructor at FHS, for providing and collating the relevant data from various sources. We thank Dr. Huda Zurayk and Dr. Iman Nuwayhid, previous and current Deans of the FHS, for comments on previous drafts.

Research Committee, 2008-09

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By invitation:

Nasser Yassin (Center for Research on Population and Health – FHS)

Badia El-Masri (Student representative – FHS)

¹ An electronic copy of the previous reports is available on the RC website:
http://fhs-lb.aub.edu.lb/research/research_reports.html

RESEARCH GRANTS

The FHS has been successful in forming multi-investigator, multi-disciplinary research teams that are able to attract substantial extramural funding. During the past AY alone (2007-08), the Faculty was awarded a total of \$1,027,629 for research as *new* grants.² These grants have a start date between October and September 2008, and span over a duration between one month and three years. However, for the objective of this report, the total amount of funding for each grant was divided over the duration of the grant, and what is reported here, for each AY, is the amount of funds allocated or available for expenditure only in that year. Hence, the amount of funds that was *available* for research in the AY 2007-08 amounted to a total of \$1,443,633 (Table 2). This figure represents around two times the annual amount of funds (\$730,488) that were available in 2003-04. Appendix A shows an itemized list for faculty research grants in the year 2007-08.

Table 2: Sponsored research grant funding available for research, 2003-08*

Source	2007-08		2006-07		2005-06		2004-05		2003-04	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
International Agencies	1,322,672	91.6	669,573	81.0	599,286	94.8	954,362	96.7	668,590	91.5
Local Agencies	95,894	6.7	115,194	13.9	11,525	1.8	5,915	0.6	37,398	5.1
URB	25,067	1.7	42,305	5.1	21,600	3.4	26,340	2.7	24,500	3.4
Total	1,443,633	100.0	827,072	100.0	632,411	100.0	986,617	100.0	730,488	100.0

* All figures are expressed in US Dollars and only funds allocated for expenditure in the respective years were included.

RESEARCH OUTPUT

Publications

During the past AY of 2007-08, the number of publications, including those that appeared in refereed and non- refereed journals, books, book chapters and published research reports, was 68 in total. A full list of articles published in refereed journals in 2007-08 is included as Appendix B. This figure has fluctuated during the past five AYs between a minimum of 47 in 2004-05 and a maximum of 79 in 2005-06 (Table 3).

² Note that funds granted and allocated only for research are included in this report. Scholarship funds do not appear in this report.

Publications included in the majority those that appeared in refereed journals (47; range 39-68), out of which 43 were original research articles (range 32-62) and four in the form of letters, book reviews, or brief reports (range 4-11). These were followed by research reports (15, range 3-15), yielding the highest output across the past five years. Additionally, publications included four papers that appeared in non-refereed journals and two book chapters (range 2-4). While there were not any books published in 2007-08, a total of three appeared in the previous five years.

Table 3: Number of publications by publication type, 2003-08

Publication Type	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
Publications in refereed journals	47	39	68	40	58
Articles	43	33	62	32	47
Letters/book reviews/brief reports	4	6	6	8	11
Publications in non-refereed journals *	4	-	-	-	-
Books	0	1	0	1	1
Book chapters	2	2	4	3	4
Research reports (published)	15	11	7	3	5
Total	68	53	79	47	68

* Owing to lack of data, earlier research reports did not report on publications in non-refereed journals.

Table 4 shows the mean number of research articles that were published in refereed journals (n=43) as per full time equivalent (FTE) research active faculty member. For the year 2007-08, the mean number of articles published per one FTE was 1.8 (range in the past five AYs 1.5 to 2.5) with the highest output (2.5) being achieved in 2005-06. Furthermore, the proportion of research active faculty members publishing at least 2 articles per AY in refereed journals was 52% in 2007-08, a value which is comparable to that achieved in 2006-07 (54.2%). For the latter estimate, articles co-authored by more than one FHS faculty member were credited for each single author.

Table 4: Articles published in refereed journals according to full-time equivalent (FTE) research active faculty member*, 2003-08

Publications in Journals	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
Articles	43	33	62	32	47
Total number of research active faculty members	25	24	26	23	23
Total FTE	23.5	23.0	25.0	22.0	22.5
Article per FTE	1.8	1.4	2.5	1.5	2.1
Percent active faculty members publishing at least two articles per year in refereed journals	52.0%	54.2%	-	-	-

* Includes all full-time or part-time faculty of professorial rank, as well as those lecturers and instructors who are involved in research programs and projects.

Table 5 presents the research output at FHS in 2007-08 stratified by each of the five departments and results were compared with the average number of publications for the prior three years (2004-07). The three-year period is chosen to provide relevant information for the FHS accreditation process. For this analysis, duplicate articles published by co-authors from different departments within FHS were counted in all corresponding departments; hence the totals in Table 5 do not necessarily match with those in Table 3. Only one article published in refereed journals was co-authored by faculty members from different departments. Except for one department, all departments yielded a lower number of publications of all types in the AY 2007-08 than the average computed for the prior three years. Nevertheless, the total research output, including duplicates, for all departments for the AY 2007-08 (n=69) remained slightly higher than the average of the previous three years (n=65.7). The same trend was observed for specifically research articles appearing in refereed journals as well as number of articles per FTE (Table 6). For the past AY (2007-08), while the highest number of research articles per FTE was achieved in the EPH Department (4.3), the highest proportion of research active faculty members publishing at least two articles per year in refereed journals was observed in the MLT Department (100.0%). This was followed by the EPH Department (85.7%) and the EH Department (60.0%).

Table 5: Number of publications in the AY 2007-08 compared to the mean number of publications in the previous three AYs (2004-07) by publication type and department*

Publication Type	EH	EPH	HBE	HMP	MLT
Publications in refereed journals					
AY 2007-08	6	30	7	3	2
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	9.7	27.7	10.3	4.3	2.7
Publications in non-refereed journals					
AY 2007-08	0	0	0	4	0
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	0	0	0	0	0
Books					
AY 2007-08	0	0	0	0	0
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	0.3	0.3	0	0	0
Book chapters					
AY 2007-08	0	2	0	0	0
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	0.7	0.7	1.7	0.3	0
Research reports (published)					
AY 2007-08	3	7	1	4	0
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	1.3	2.7	2	0.7	0.3
Total					
AY 2007-08	9	39	8	11	2
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	12	31.4	14	5.3	3

*Articles published by co-authors from different departments within FHS were counted in all corresponding departments.

Table 6: Research articles published in refereed Journals in the AY 2007-08 according to full-time equivalent (FTE) research active faculty member* compared to the mean in the previous three AYs (2004-07) by department

Publications in Journals	EH	EPH	HBE	HMP	MLT
Articles					
AY 2007-08	6	29	4	3	2
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	8.3	24.3	8	4.3	2.7
Total number of research active faculty members					
AY 2007-08	5	7	8	3	2
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	4	8	7.7	2.7	2
Total FTE					
AY 2007-08	5	7	7	3	1.5
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	4	8	6.7	2.7	2
Article per FTE					
AY 2007-08	1.2	4.3	0.6	1.0	1.3
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	2.1	3.0	1.2	1.6	1.3
<hr/>					
Percent of research active faculty members publishing at least 2 articles per year in refereed journals†					
AY 2007-08	60.0%	85.7%	12.5%	33.3%	100.0%
AY 2006-07	50.0%	62.5%	25.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* Includes all full-time or part-time faculty of professional rank, as well as those lecturers and instructors who are involved in research programs and projects.

† For articles co-authored by more than one single FHS faculty member, the article is credited for each single author. This statistics was not available for the years before 2006-07.

Conference Presentations and Msc. Theses

The number of conference presentations including oral presentations, conference papers, and posters in the AY 2007-08 was 33, which is as low as the prior AY and contrasts with the higher figures of 45 to 51 in the previous years (Table 7). The number of graduate MSc. theses finalized in 2007-08 was 8 falling within the range of the previous AYs (range 5-11). The data on conference presentations were re-analyzed by department and findings compared with those reported in the previous three years (Table 8). Except for HMP Department, all departments have shown an overall decrease in conference presentations in the AY 2007-08 compared to their respective means of the prior three AYs.

Table 7: Summary of conference presentations and MSc theses, 2003-08

Type	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
Conference presentations	33	33	50	45	51
MSc theses	8	5	8	11	11
Total	41	38	58	56	62

Table 8: Conference presentations and MSc theses in the AY 2007-08 compared to the mean in the past three years (2004-07) by Department

Type	EH	EPH	HBE	HMP	MLT
Conference presentations					
AY 2007-08	7	14	5	6	1
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	11	14.3	13	3.7	1.7
MSc theses*					
AY 2007-08	2	7	0	0	0
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	2.7	5.3	0	0	0
Total					
AY 2007-08	9	21	5	6	1
Mean of 3 years (2004-07)	13.7	19.7	13	3.7	1.7

*One thesis was co-supervised by two faculty members from the EH and EPH departments.

INTERDISCIPLINARY AND COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Table 9 describes the range of interdisciplinary and collaborative research produced by FHS faculty members in refereed journals as evidenced by co-authorship between FHS departments and with other faculties at AUB or outside institutions for the academic years 2003-08. Of the total number of refereed journal publications (n=47), the proportion of publications co-authored within one department at FHS decreased from 34.5% in 2003-04 to 29.8% in 2007-08. Similarly, co-authorship across departments substantially decreased from 19.0 % to 6.4%, respectively, after a peak of 25.6% in 2006-07. However, co-authorship with outside institutions increased during the same period from 63.8% to 87.2%. Out of the total publications co-authored with outside institutions, there has been an increased tendency in the previous three years to publish with other Faculties at AUB, mainly the Faculty of Medicine, perhaps at the expense of collaboration with regional researchers.

In terms of authorship order, the proportion of publications with FHS faculty as first authors has maintained a level over 50% for the past three years, and as principal authors³ at a level exceeding 60% during the past two years (Table 9). Publications co-authored with current or recent graduate students, however, decreased from 43.6% in 2006-07 to 27.7% in 2007-08.

RESEARCH QUALITY

Table 10 shows the distribution of journal publications by FHS ranking of the journals and based on the Impact Factor of each journal, as defined by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI).⁴ The majority of papers (59.5%) was published in high quality journals (A⁺ and A journals ranking in the top 60%). Only 8.5% and 6.4% were, respectively, published in the type-B journals (rank in the lower 61-85%) and type-C journals (rank in the lowest 86-100%). Around a quarter (25.6%) of journal publications appeared in non-ranked journals. These figures are comparable to those in the previous academic year.

³ A principal author is defined as first, corresponding or sole author.

⁴ For the corresponding Impact Factor of each journal, as defined by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), follow the link <http://smlweb.aub.edu.lb/Databases/Default.aspx?CatID=6>

Table 9: Percent distribution of refereed journal publications by co-authorship within and outside FHS

Co-authorship	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04
Co-authorship within one department at FHS	29.8	30.8	41.2	17.5	34.5
Co-authorship across departments within FHS	6.4	25.6	16.2	5.0	19.0
Co-authorship outside FHS	87.2	66.7	73.5	75.0	63.8
Co-authorship with other Faculties at AUB	53.2	35.9	50.0	17.5	-
Co-authorship with national researchers	25.5	15.4	14.7	22.5	-
Co-authorship with regional researchers	2.8	5.1	7.4	22.5	-
Co-authorship with international researchers	38.3	30.8	25.6	42.5	-
First author from FHS	53.2	56.4	51.5	40.0	65.5
Principal author from FHS*	63.8	66.7	-	-	-
Co-authorship with students†	27.7	43.6	-	-	-
Total number of publications	47	39	68	40	58

* Principal author includes first, corresponding and sole author.

† Students include current or recent graduates.

Table 10: Percent distribution of journal publications in refereed journals by FHS ranking of journal, 2006-08

FHS Ranking of Journal*	ISI rank (percentile)	2007-08	2006-07
A ⁺	1-10%	10.6	23.1
A	11-60%	48.9	35.9
B	61-85%	8.5	7.7
C	86-100%	6.4	10.3
Not ranked		25.6	23.0

*Ranking refers to the ISI rank of the journal out of the total number of journals listed in the subject category. Hence, A⁺ as an example, refers to journals in the top 10% percentile of all journals in the same subject category of the specific publication.

Appendix A: List of Sponsored Research and URB grants for 2007-08

Project Name	Investigator	Collaborators	Funding source	Funding start and end date		Total Award	Amount this year
International & Regional Sponsored Research Grants							
Health Warning Labeling Practices for Waterpipe Tobacco Products	Rima Nakkash		Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada	5-Jul-08	5-Dec-08	\$24,860	\$12,430
Support for the reproductive health working group: institutional learning for the next phase	Jocelyn DeJong		Ford Foundation	1-Jun-08	31-May-11	\$450,000	\$50,000
Strengthening Research Capacity for Operations Research in Reproductive Health in Eastern Mediterranean Region	Marwan Khawaja	Kassem Kassak , Loulou Kobeissi	WHO-Geneva	15-Jun-08	15-Jun-09	\$110,815	\$0
Comparison of Estimates based on Cell Phone and Face to Face Interviews	Abla Sibai	Monique Chaaya, Ziyad Mahfoud	(TEPHINET)	12-Mar-08	30-Jun-10	\$140,130	\$70,065
The publication and dissemination of two books on public health and on Childbirth in the Arab region	Iman Nuwayhid	Marwan Khawaja	Ford Foundation	1-Feb-08	31-Jan-10	\$195,000	\$97,500
Neurotoxic Effects of solvents on working children	Iman Nuwayhid		NIH	15-Sep-07	31-Aug-09	\$288,528 (\$148,270 for Year 1)	\$148,270
Does reducing depression and/or anxiety symptoms of low-income married women (residing in Hey El- Selloum) using a community-based psycho-social intervention decrease their complaints of medically unexplained vaginal discharge?"	Marwan Khawaja/ Huda Zurayk	Ziyad Mahfoud, Sami Ramia, Faysal El-Kak, Loulou Kobeissi, Rima Nakkash	Wellcome Trust	1-Aug-07	31-Jul-10	\$410,406	\$136,802
Impact of a community based RCT to improve mental health of Palestinian refugee youth	Rima Afifi/ Huda Zurayk	Judy Makhoul, Ziyad Mahfoud, Sawsan Abdulrahim, Mayada Kanj, Rima Nakkash	Wellcome Trust	1-Jul-07	30-Jun-10	\$371,291	\$123,764
Bedouin Health- Improving Access to and Quality of Reproductive and Child Health Care to Marginal Peoples: Bedouin in Jordan and Lebanon	Marwan Khawaja	Faysal El-Kak	Oxford U/ Warwick University/ EC	1-Jun-07	20-Dec-09	\$333,291	\$111,097
Governance, Equity and Health in the Middle East and North African Region: A Scoping Study	Fadi El-Jardali		IDRC	1-Jun-07	6-Dec-08	\$61,020	\$20,340
Identification of Priority Research Questions Related to Health Financing, Human Resources for Health, and the Role of the Non-State Sector	Fadi El-Jardali		Alliance for Health Policy and Systems	10-May-07	6/30/2008 (initially Sept 07)	\$69,300	\$0

in Low and Middle Income Countries of the Middle East and North Africa Region			Research				
MENA Regional Validation Ranking Workshop	Fadi El-Jardali		Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research	8-May-08	30-Jun-08	\$9,900	\$9,900
Labor Supply, Child Bearing & Women's Welfare in Old Age	Abla Sibai		Center of Arab Women for Training and Research	1-Feb-07	31-Dec-09	\$25,289	\$12,645
Determinants and Consequences of Smoking Nargileh: Extending the Research Agenda	Monique Chaaya	Rima Afifi, Abla Sibai, Ziyad Mahfoud, Robin Health, Mayada Kanj, Rima Nakkash	IDRC	13-Nov-06	31-Oct-09	\$187,230	\$62,410
Health status, well-being and population change in the Middle East: a research network approach	Huda Zurayk / Marwan Khawaja	Jocelyn DeJong, Tamar Kabakian, Hibah Osman	Wellcome Trust	1-Jan-05	30-Sep-10	\$3,085,075	\$409,689
Support for the Reproductive Health Working Group	Huda Zurayk		Ford Foundation	1-Jun-04	31-May-08	\$200,000	\$0
Developing Country-Specific Retention Strategies for Nurses in Lebanon	Fadi El-Jardali		WHO-EMRO	1-Feb-07	30-Sep-08	\$8,100	\$0
Towards a Better Understanding of the Magnitude and Predictors of Nurse Migration out of Lebanon	Fadi El-Jardali		WHO-EMRO	1-Aug-06	30-Sep-08	\$7,500	\$0
Therapeutic Decisions at Menopause	Marwan Khawaja		Harvard School of Public Health	1-Mar-03	31-Jul-08	\$76,247	\$0
Local Sponsored Research							
Alternatives to Combat Exploitive Child Labor through Education and Sustainable Services	Iman Nuwayhid		Rene Moawad Foundation	1-Apr-08	30-Jun-08	\$28,813	\$28,813
Prevalence and risk factors of Rheumatic conditions in Lebanon: a pilot study in southern Lebanon	Monique Chaaya		Abbott Labs	1-Jan-08	Till funds end	\$8,764	\$8,764
Towards an Accountable Health Care System in Lebanon: Performance Reporting for Public & Private Hospitals	El-Jardali		WHO	1-Mar-08	30-Sep-08	\$14,080	\$14,080
Towards Accountable Public Hospitals in Lebanon: Reporting of Hospital Performance	El-Jardali		WHO	8-Oct-07	10-Dec-07	\$11,500	\$11,500
Strengthening National Monitoring , Evaluation, & surveillance systems in Lebanon, Middle East	Kassem Kassak, Jocelyn DeJong	Rima Afifi, Sami Ramia, Ziyad	National AIDS Program –	10-Nov-06	10-Nov-08	\$98,210	\$32,737

and North Africa Region (these 2 grants were considered as one)		Mahfoud, Sawsan Abdulrahim	Ministry of Public Health/WHO				
Displacement & Pregnancy Choices and Challenges in Changing Childbirth	Tamar Kabakian		UNFPA	1-Nov-06	8-Feb-08	\$10,464	\$0
Coronary Angiography in Lebanon: use, overuse and inappropriateness of use	Abla Sibai		LNCSR	1-Nov-06	30-Apr-08	\$7,957	\$0
Role of Rural Wastewater Management in Offsetting Water Needs and enhancing Integrated Water Resources Management	May Massoud		LNCSR	1-Nov-06	31-Dec-07	\$7,957	\$0
URB Grants							
Occupational health & safety in Lebanon: between policy & implementation	Rima Habib		URB	1-Oct-07	30-Sep-08	\$7,065	\$7,065
Determination of Shelf Life of Halloumi Cheese	Rabih Kamleh		URB	1-Oct-07	30-Sep-08	\$6,700	\$6,700
Pictorial & verbal effects in media	Robin Heath		URB	1-Oct-07	30-Sep-08	\$6,076	\$6,076
Living arrangements of older adults in Lebanon	Abla Sibai		URB	1-Oct-07	30-Sep-08	\$5,226	\$5,226
Institutional Development Support Grants							
Support to Strengthen Teaching, Research and Community Capacities & promote the Regional Role of FHS with a focus on HIV/AIDS	Iman Nuwayhid	Jocelyn DeJong	Ford Foundation	1-Oct-06	31-Mar-10	\$275,000	\$57,761
Strengthening Teaching, Research & Community Outreach Capacities at FHS	Dean		Ford Foundation	1-Jan-03	31-Dec-08	\$430,000	\$0

Appendix B: List of articles in refereed journals

EH Department

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