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Part 1: Executive Summary

From July 27 to September 27, applications were accepted for Cycle 18 of the U.S. – Egypt S&T Joint Fund. During this period of time, much of NAS's work focused on outreach efforts for Cycle 18 and responding to applicant inquiries.

In addition to Cycle 18 activities, two-thirds of Cycle 17's sub-awards were fully-executed in Q4. Shortly after each sub-award was fully-executed, NAS disbursed Year 1 funds, provided PIs reminders on program rules, and began the process of disbursing travel funds for the October Joint Fund Symposium.

Part 2: Description of Key Activities

During the fourth quarter, most programmatic activity focused on the open RFA for Cycle 18, the full-execution of Cycle 17's sub-awards, and preparations for the U.S. – Egypt S&T Joint Fund Symposium.

Cycle 18 RFA

From July 27 to September 27, applications were accepted for Cycle 18 of the U.S. – Egypt S&T Joint Fund. Cycle 18's RFA (Request for Applications) included calls for collaborative research grants of up to \$400,000 (\$200,000 in the U.S. and \$200,000 in Egypt) and junior scientists grants for Egyptian scientists of up to \$30,000.

The RFA text featured four broad thematic areas (agriculture, energy, health, and water) and 13 sub-areas that would receive priority for funding. It was noted that "Nexus" proposals would also receive priority for funding. Nexus proposals were defined as those that make direct and substantive scientific advances in each of the selected priority areas. The RFA text was approved by USAID prior to the RFA's launch.

Cycle 17 Sub-Awards

Sub-award documents for Cycle 17's 15 U.S. PIs were sent by NAS to their institutions in late Q3. After answering the institutions' inquiries, ten sub-awards were fully-executed in Q4. After the sub-awards were fully-executed, NAS began the process of disbursing the sub-awardees' Year 1 and Travel 1 funds and provided program guidelines to the PIs.

Program Administration

On August 30th, NAS submitted to the USAID AOR a Year 3 workplan. After follow-up correspondence, in FY2017 Q1, the workplan was approved.

Planning continued for the October U.S. - Egypt S&T Joint Fund Symposium in Cairo. NAS consulted with STDF for updates on the venue, provided letters of invitation to the U.S. PIs, and coordinated the collection of U.S. and Egyptian attendees' biographies and abstracts. In addition, multiple updates were made to the agenda, in consultation with USAID, the Department of State, and STDF.

Plans for the Next Quarter

- NAS and STDF will finalize the eligibility check process of Cycle 18's collaborative proposals, confirming the total number of proposals that will be sent to review.
- U.S.-based reviewers will be contacted to participate in Cycle 18's panels. Ad-hoc reviewers will be found for specialized proposals that cannot easily be placed within a panel.
- NAS will submit to USAID the program's annual report.
- NAS will continue to stay in contact with Cycle 17's U.S. PIs, as more of their sub-awards are fully-executed and programmatic questions arise.