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Progress Report

to the

Agency for International Development

and

the Peace Corps

under

Contract No. PDC-0000-C-00-6201-00

for services as Secretariat for the  
Joint AID/Peace Corps Coordinating Committee

March 1, 1987 - August 31, 1987

Submitted by:

Benchmarks, Inc.  
3248 Prospect St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20007  
October 29, 1987

## Progress Report

This report is submitted to the Agency for International Development by Benchmarks, Inc., pursuant to Contract Number PDC-0000-C-00-6201-00 for services as the Secretariat to the Joint A.I.D./Peace Corps Coordinating Committee. The report covers the period March 1, 1987 through August 31, 1987.

### Introduction

Under the terms of this contract, Benchmarks, Inc. serves as the Secretariat to the Joint AID/Peace Corps Coordinating Committee. During this reporting period the Secretariat assisted the Coordinating Committee to meet its objectives and enabled it to continue functioning effectively as the coordinating mechanism between the two agencies.

The report is divided into two sections: (I) Method of Work and (II) Status of Work/Accomplishments. An Administrative Report covering expenditures and personnel for the period September 1, 1986 - August 31, 1987 follows.

### I Method of Work

Benchmarks enables the Coordinating Committee to achieve its objectives by providing technical assistance and logistical/administrative support.

Technical Assistance: In general, Benchmarks provides various forms of technical assistance, including advisory services, problem solving, information sharing, and inter-agency liaison activities.

The primary methods for delivering technical assistance are person-to-person meetings, briefings, telephone conversations and preparation of written reports.

Logistical/Administrative Support: Benchmarks provides logistical support for each Coordinating Committee meeting including making arrangements for space and lunch, confirming attendees, and preparing the minutes. Benchmarks supplies administrative and secretarial services to the Coordinating Committee on a continuous basis. These services include word processing, typing and drafting of correspondence, photocopying, handling telephone calls, arranging meetings and providing meeting space.

### II Status of Work/Accomplishments

The following were the activities completed under this contract during the period March 1, 1987 - August 31, 1987. A summary description including tasks carried out and recommendations for the future is provided for each of the ten activities set forth in the Scope of Work.

A. Benchmarks prepared the agenda for the Coordinating Committee meeting held on May 7, 1987 at the Peace Corps. Selection of the agenda items required careful consideration of relevant topics, taking into the account the priorities of each agency. Benchmarks worked in close consultation with the Project Officers at each agency and with personnel from AID/FVA/PVC to develop a list of agenda items in draft, which were discussed extensively and then finalized. Planning the topics for the meeting involved weekly personal and telephone contacts between Benchmarks and the Project Officers.

In addition to preparing the agenda items, Benchmarks also designed the theme for the meeting, which was "A Farewell to the A.I.D. Administrator." This involved additional preparations which are discussed in detail under Item F, below.

The Project Officers determined that as a result of the changeover in Administration at A.I.D., no additional Coordinating Committee meetings would be held during the remainder of FY-87. The next meeting is scheduled for October 21, 1987, and will be reported on during the next contract period.

B. Benchmarks assisted the Coordinating Committee to follow up on the recommendations and decisions made at the Coordinating Committee meetings of December 11, 1986 and May 7, 1987. This involved a continuation of follow-up activities from December 11th and initiation of new follow-up after the May 7th meeting.

The action item of December 11th which required continuous follow-up during the second half of this contract year was the decision to make recommendations for improving the management of the SPA program. In order to follow-up on this item, Benchmarks:

1. participated in the SPA Working Group formed after the meeting;
2. met personally with the Director of OTAPS, the SPA Coordinator, and the SPA Assistant Coordinator at the Peace Corps on various occasions;
3. conducted background research on the status of SPA obligations and expenditures worldwide;
4. made telephone calls to Peace Corps staff in seven African countries with problems in SPA management for the purpose of understanding the problems and making recommendations; and
5. prepared a comprehensive report in draft and final form on SPA management recommendations.

Benchmarks initiated work on the four action items that were decided upon at the May 7th meeting and developed a plan for completing the tasks necessary to assure closure on each of these items.

In addition, Benchmarks followed up on a verbal request by the outgoing A.I.D. Administrator at the May 7th meeting that a briefing memorandum on highlights of A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation be prepared for the Secretary of State and key members of Congress. Benchmarks drafted this briefing memorandum in several versions, worked closely with the Project Officers to secure necessary clearances and final approval, and typed and mailed the final copies.

C. Benchmarks developed a concept paper for a new collaborative program involving A.I.D./Peace Corps/PVOs in PL-480 projects. This concept paper was developed in close coordination with the Peace Corps Liaison Officer of A.I.D./FVA, and was submitted in the form of a draft cable describing the concept and proposing the program to selected A.I.D. Missions. This concept paper is still under consideration and will be followed up on during the next contract period.

Benchmarks also prepared various briefing papers describing the Coordinating Committee and the status of A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation. These included one-and-two-page summaries, a detailed draft briefing paper for the new assistant administrator of the African Bureau, and the first draft of a comprehensive position paper on the benefits of A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation.

In addition, Benchmarks undertook a survey of Peace Corps Country Directors on the status of A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation in their programs. Benchmarks developed the questionnaire for the Country Directors, analyzed the responses, and prepared a comprehensive report on the results. A first draft of the report was discussed orally at the session on A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation of the Peace Corps' Worldwide Country Directors' Conference held in February 1987. Benchmarks helped to design and prepare the agenda for this session. The final report of the survey on A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation was circulated in March and submitted to the Coordinating Committee on May 7, 1987.

In addition to preparing the reports described above, Benchmarks initiated background research for six additional case studies during this contract period. These will be prepared in final form during the next contract period.

D. Benchmarks served as a catalyst for joint planning between the two agencies by frequent meetings and telephone conversations with the staff of both agencies to share information and involve appropriate staff members in activities of each other's agencies. This included informing staff of upcoming events and suggesting that A.I.D./Peace Corps Cooperation be included on the agenda of all appropriate agency

meetings. For example, Benchmarks worked with the Peace Corps' Inter-American Region to include A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation on the agenda for its region-wide Program Managers' conference in March 1987.

E. Benchmarks continued to encourage collaboration between the Peace Corps and A.I.D.-funded PVOs. In connection with this activity, Benchmarks:

1. held strategy meetings with the Peace Corps Liaison Officer and other personnel of the FVA Bureau;
2. held strategy meetings with the Peace Corps' PVO Coordinator;
3. held planning/information sharing meetings with the Chief of Programming and Training for the African Region of the Peace Corps; and
4. organized a meeting between the Peace Corps' Africa Region and Save the Children Federation.

Benchmarks is continuing to work on new strategies for increasing A.I.D./PC/PVO collaboration and will also continue to monitor reports from Peace Corps' field staff on new and ongoing collaborative projects with PVOs.

F. Benchmarks arranged for A.I.D. and Peace Corps staff to make presentations at the Coordinating Committee meeting of May 7th. This included briefing them beforehand and providing guidelines on what was expected. Benchmarks also prepared routine briefings for the A.I.D. Administrator and the Peace Corps Director before the meeting to supply them with background details and answer questions. Additionally, Benchmarks prepared comprehensive briefing books and distributed them to each Committee member in advance of the meeting.

Since this meeting represented a farewell for outgoing A.I.D. Administrator Peter McPherson, Benchmarks arranged for presentation of a special proclamation to him by the Peace Corps Director in honor of his work. Benchmarks drafted the wording of the proclamation and arranged for artwork and printing. Benchmarks also designed and printed a banner in honor of the A.I.D. Administrator and organized photo-taking sessions and farewell remarks.

G. Benchmarks provided secretarial and administrative support for the Coordinating Committee meeting of May 7, 1987. This included making all the logistical arrangements for the meeting including reserving two conference rooms, requisitioning and arranging furniture, ordering lunch, confirming attendees, taking notes, and preparing the minutes. Within two weeks of the meeting, Benchmarks submitted a draft of the minutes to the Project Officers for circulation to all the Committee members for their review and comments. Benchmarks then incorporated comments into the final

minutes, retyped and reproduced them and distributed copies to the Project Officers with cover memos for circulation to the Committee. The same process will be undertaken for future Committee meetings.

In addition to providing administrative services in support of the Coordinating Committee meetings, Benchmarks makes these services available to the Committee on a continuous basis as needed.

H. During this contract period, Benchmarks assisted the Coordinating Committee to compile and analyze data received from A.I.D. and Peace Corps field staff in response to guidance on joint programs prepared by Benchmarks and sent to the field in February 1987. Benchmarks collected all of the responses, analyzed them, and prepared a comprehensive report on the status of joint programming. This report was discussed at the Coordinating Committee meeting on May 7. Following the meeting, Benchmarks arranged for reproduction of sufficient copies of the report for mailing to all overseas A.I.D. and Peace Corps posts. Benchmarks drafted cover memoranda for the Project Officers to the Mission Directors and Peace Corps Country Directors to explain the report.

I. During this contract period, Benchmarks continued to work on case studies in A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation for use both in staff training exercises and in programming workshops. These case studies will be completed by the end of the contract term.

J. Mr. Scanlon travelled to Costa Rica and Guatemala from March 29-April 1, 1987 for the purpose of troubleshooting on the SPA program and on A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation in general. Additional trips are scheduled for subsequent contract periods.

In preparation for Mr. Scanlon's trip to Costa Rica and Guatemala, Benchmarks developed a checklist for systematic review of A.I.D./Peace Corps cooperation in the field. This checklist was also used during similar field visits by the Project Officers.

Administrative Report

Contract No. PDC-0000-C-00-6201-00

Total expenditures under this contract for the period September 1, 1986 - August 31, 1987 are as follows:

September 1986:	\$8,375.08
October 1986:	\$8,895.60
November 1986:	\$9,187.31
December 1986:	\$8,915.54
January 1987:	\$8,391.64
February 1987:	\$8,617.20
March 1987:	\$8,990.64
April 1987:	\$9,273.50
May 1987:	\$9,013.42
June 1987:	\$7,717.56
July 1987:	\$8,812.91
August 1987:	\$7,297.61
TOTAL:	\$103,440.20

The personnel employed under the contract are:

<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Total Days Spent</u>
Thomas J. Scanlon	70.0 Days
Noreen O'Meara	95.75 Days
Karen J. Veek	24.3 Days
Lisa Fouladi	6.5 Days
TOTAL DAYS SPENT:	196.55 Days