

O.F./ANE

Project 398-059.11

West Bank / Gaza - SCHC

B. C. 28

59 JAN 1987

## ACTION MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, ANE

FROM: ANE/PD, Peter Bloom

SUBJECT: West Bank/Gaza - Society for the Care of Handicapped Children (SCHC) - Services for the Handicapped in Gaza (298-0182) (298-0159.11)

Problem: Your approval is required to increase life of project funding for subject project by \$100,000 to a new total of \$1,188,695 and to extend the project assistance completion date from June 14, 1987 to October 31, 1987.

Background: The Society for the Care of Handicapped Children (SCHC) is a Palestinian organization in Gaza which has been certified by the Embassy/Tel Aviv as an indigenous PVO. SCHC has one of the most advanced programs for handicapped children in the region. It is headed by a prominent Gaza physician, Dr. Hatem Abu Ghazaleh.

AID grant funding of \$453,659 was provided to SCHC in June 1984 to implement a "Mothers' Home Care and Early Outreach Program." Shortly thereafter, SCHC requested funds to expand the overall program by conducting a survey of handicapped children in Gaza and constructing a hostel to accommodate the program's trainees. Additional AID grant funding totalling \$635,036 was provided to SCHC in subsequent years to expand the overall program.

The SCHC project activities are part of a larger, comprehensive program for the handicapped in the West Bank and Gaza being undertaken by SCHC and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Over the years, the SCHC project has consistently received high marks from AID visitors to Gaza and is strongly supported by the Embassy/Tel Aviv. The SCHC program currently involves 25 home teachers training 475 families regarding the need for and benefits of early infant stimulation, good nutrition, child rearing practices, behavior management, and child development.

In general, SCHC has been successful in raising considerable sums of money from other sources in Europe, Canada and other places for aspects of its program. For example, CIDA is funding SCHC's teacher training projects that will result in 40 teacher graduates with Bachelor's of Education in Rehabilitative Training. However, sustainability of the AID-funded program services at SCHC's current level of effort has been a continuing concern.

Proposals: Last September, Dr. Abu Ghazaleh visited Washington and in meetings with ANE staff indicated that he planned to request an increase in the funding of the currently authorized project and an extension of the project assistance completion date (PACD). Dr. Abu Ghazaleh also indicated he would be submitting two additional project proposals: (1) to fund a three year continuation of the "Mothers' Home Care and Early Outreach" activity, and (2) a three year project to extend the Mothers' Home Care Program to non-handicapped children (preschoolers 0-4 years) utilizing the home care approach. The above proposal requests were received in November 1986. (Attachment A.)

SCHC's amendment request to the existing Mothers' Home Care program (298-0159.11) totals \$273,416 which would be used primarily to cover personnel, support and travel costs expense up through October 31, 1987. The current grant is scheduled to end on June 14, 1987. SCHC's spending under this activity has been higher than originally anticipated. SCHC currently only has sufficient funds to cover basic operating expenses through mid-March 1987. SCHC's request for an extension of the PACD is based on its report of unanticipated delays in project start-up.

The second proposal requests \$1,096,170 to support a three year continuation of current Mothers' Home Care/Early Intervention Program. Basically, the program would maintain the salaries and other expenses for the 25 home teachers and other operational costs.

SCHC is also requesting \$1,792,631 to support a three year project to expand the Mothers' Home Care Program to 950 families with non-handicapped children. SCHC would utilize the Portage Project curriculum, an international model home teaching program originally developed in the U.S., to serve at risk children from birth to 4 years. This same curriculum was adapted by SCHC two years ago for handicapped children and is being used in the AID-funded Mothers' Home Care/Early Intervention Program. SCHC's rationale for expanding the program to include non-handicapped pre-schoolers is based on its assessment that the negative effects of environmental conditions in Gaza warrant early intervention with this target group.

Discussion: The West Bank/Gaza Working Group considered SCHC's requests on December 10, 1986 and decided to recommend approval of SCHC's amendment request for additional funds and an extension the PACD to October 31, 1987. It is recommended, however, that only \$100,000 be provided towards the SCHC budget request of \$273,416.

This recommendation is based on several factors including the reduced overall AID budget for West Bank/Gaza programming, the new emphasis on private sector initiatives, and finally, our concern that SCHC identify alternative funding sources to ensure the activity can be sustained after AID's involvement has been terminated.

This last concern has been communicated repeatedly to SCHC by ANE and Embassy staff. We believe a reduced AID contribution to SCHC's budget request will make the limitations of AID's support clearer to SCHC. It will also serve to put pressure on SCHC to consider or experiment with other options, e.g., charging of user fees.

The Working Group decided it would not recommend approval of SCHC's second proposal to provide a three year continuation of the existing program for handicapped children. We believe that sufficient support has already been provided to establish this activity. We are confident that under the capable leadership of Dr. Abu Ghazaleh, SCHC should be able to attract other donors.

Finally, based on a preliminary review of SCHC's third proposal, the Working Group anticipates that ANE would want to favorably consider this activity for non-handicapped children in Gaza. Given the greater human needs in Gaza, it is our assessment that it is important to maintain some level of support in Gaza for the underserved. We also believe that the opportunities for private sector initiatives in Gaza are likely to be more limited and thus programming in other sectors such as education will have to be considered.

The Working Group decided, however, to defer any final recommendation on this proposal until we have had an opportunity to review SCHC's success in sustaining the current AID-funded activity. We believe that initiation of any new AID-funded activity with SCHC should be approved on a cost-sharing basis which would require SCHC to indicate up-front the funds being contributed from other donor sources. We might also want to consider supporting this activity on a pilot-basis, e.g., 18 months. Over the coming months, we will be consulting with the Embassy/Tel Aviv to obtain their thoughts on this activity.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that you sign the attached authorization amendment (Attachment B) thereby increasing life of project funding by \$100,000 for a new total of \$1,188,695, and approving an extension of the project assistance completion date from June 14, 1987 to October 31, 1987.

**Attachments:**

- A. SCHC Proposals
- B. Project Authorization Amendment

**Clearances:**

ANE/TR/HR: HFreeman (Draft) Date 12/30/86  
ANE/TR: BTurner (Draft) Date 1/2/87  
ANE/MENA: GKamens (Draft) Date 12/31/86  
STATE/NEA/IAI: PPatterson (Phone) Date 1/6/86  
ANE/PD: RVenezia (Draft) Date 12/31/86  
ANE/DP: BSidman (Draft) Date 1/5/87  
GC/ANE: AMattice (Phone) Date 1/6/87  
DAA/ANE: RBell ~~HS~~ Date 1/8/87  
ANE/TR/HR: C <sup>am</sup> Maged: 12/17/86: W#5525F: X79124

