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OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANT TRAINING IN THE  
NEAR EAST BUREAU OF THE  
AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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# I

## INTRODUCTION

Participant Training is one of the Near East Bureau's most successful programs. Participant candidates are anxious to learn technical or academic skills, in the U.S. or in a third country. Host country government perceptions are equally positive, and training of personnel at all levels has been given special priority by national leaders in the area. Both President Sadat of Egypt and President Assad of Syria have sought participant funds for long term scholarship programs. Training accomplished both under general training projects and other more specifically oriented projects contributes a significant and essential element to the accomplishment of development objectives. Consequently, training represents a significant proportion of Near East Bureau funding.

Participant training, by its very nature, has the potential for a number of problems. Dealing with people who have varied skills and expectations is much more difficult than the transfer of impersonal resources. People who may never have been outside of their own country are sent abroad, and must deal simultaneously with a foreign culture, usually a foreign language, separation from family, and various other factors in addition to the technical material which is the primary concern of their classmates.

In spite of the difficulties, participants do acquire technical and academic skills as well as a broadened cultural perspective, do return to

their home countries, do occupy positions of importance in the development of their country, make use of the material and methodology they have learned, and advance in their careers.

In addition to the widely expressed support for the participant training effort from host governments and from technical project managers within AID, three recent major evaluations of participant training in the Near East have confirmed the importance of training in development. Egypt and Yemen returned participants were surveyed in 1977, and the Syrian program was evaluated in 1979. The conclusion of all three evaluations was that the programs were effective and would make major development contributions. The problems raised were not major ones, taken in the context of the overall significance and impact of the program. Specific aspects of these evaluations are discussed in more detail in Chapter III of this report.

Participant training evaluations, as well as other sources, have also pointed out areas in which the program could be improved. It is the intention of this report to bring together information on major issues in Near East Bureau participant training programs, steps that have been taken in an attempt to address those issues, and to indicate areas in which further study and action is needed.

### The Central Issue

A central continuing problem is management of participant related information. Accountability in terms of the number and kind of participants in process at any one stage of the training process is not yet easily accomplished. In large part this is because the AID participant training program is a highly decentralized one; the Office of International Training

(DS/IT) does not directly program all participants, but is only one option, others being programming under AID administered contracts, and under host country administered contracts. Each separately administered project may have a participant component.

### Additional Issues

Additional issues in the Near East participant training effort as discussed in this report deal with programming procedures before, after, and during training. Areas of concern in pre-departure procedures and AID's processing of participants include the selection criteria for participants, and establishment of programs relevant to participant needs, expectations, and abilities. Pre-departure orientation and assessment of language ability have also been cited as deficient areas.

Monitoring of program progress and problems experienced by participants during training has been fragmented, which can also be a problem. Actual management of participants during their stay in the U.S. is the responsibility of various contractors, including universities, and falls under separate specific projects and project managers. Difficulty and relevance of training, and any other problems in training are monitored during the training period by the programming agent and dealt with by this responsible officer as needed. This information has not been sent to a central source such as the Office of International Training. Consequently patterns that would emerge in a broad statistical profile of training experience may not be rapidly identified.

At the end of training there are also several problem areas. The adequacy of communication with Mission and/or host country personnel about returning participants has been cited and has been an interest of Congressional and other inquiries. Questions are asked about how long returned participants remain in their own country, what role they play in their country's development after training, and what role their AID financed training plays.

### Improvements

Many of the issues are not of the type that are "solved." They require constant management attention and improvement will always be possible. In others, specific actions and significant improvements are needed. Modifications have been made in the acquisition of data for a centrally managed information system and in the capabilities and operation of that system. Also a Participant Return Reporting System (PRRS) has been instituted. It provides a system for notifying Missions when participants are due to return and receiving confirmation from the Mission of arrival. These systems are described in Chapter IV of this report.

In an effort to gain better control over participant information at the Mission level, the Cairo Mission is establishing a computerized system which can free training personnel from clerical functions and enable them to spend more time on pre-departure and follow up activities. This system is also described in Chapter IV.

Provisions have been added to agreements concerning contract managed participants which insure their entry into and monitoring through the information system and also provide opportunity for a more precise tracking of those who do not return at the end of their training program.

## Content of the Report

The following chapters of this report provide a basic introduction to participant training program elements (Chapter II), an expanded discussion of major problem areas (Chapter III), a discussion of improvements in participant information systems (Chapter IV), and Conclusions (Chapter V).

## II

### DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANT TRAINING PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Participant training is defined as AID sponsored training of foreign nationals outside their home countries. The extensive in-country training which takes place is, by definition, not "participant training." Participant training includes programs funded by AID loans or grants, independently or on a reimbursable basis by the government of a developing country. Responsibility for implementation of a participant's program can rest directly with the AID Office of International Training, or with a contractor of AID or of a host country.

During the design and implementation of all Near East Bureau projects, it is necessary to assess the human resources needed to meet program and project objectives. Where shortfalls in necessary scientific and technical knowledge are identified, or if project personnel could benefit from improving management and other skills, projects will provide for participant training in those knowledge and skill areas.

Some projects are oriented primarily toward training goals, and in other cases, training is only one component. In the case of projects oriented primarily toward sectoral goals, for example rural development, participant training is utilized to give host country personnel the skills necessary to carry out the goals and objectives of the project. Such training is designed to meet specific project needs with a portion of it frequently designed so that host country personnel will be ready to assume the responsibilities of AID project technicians at the completion of their

tours. Participant training may also be included in commodity projects where it is considered necessary to the procurement, distribution, or effective installation and utilization of a program commodity. In all cases, the participants are obligated to utilize their training by working in development activities related to their training when they return home.

Non-project general participant training provides short and long term training in key development areas to potential development leaders and specialists outside the scope of problem-specific projects. A special example of this participant training is the AID Post Peace Scholarship Project. It provides individual Egyptians with an opportunity to further their academic studies at the graduate level, in specialized areas of a development nature, which have been identified as priority needs by the Government of Egypt and the Agency for International Development.

The following sections of this chapter discuss categories of training, contract vs. non-contract training, third country training, and centrally funded training. A brief statistical profile of participants on board during September 1980 concludes the chapter.

### Categories of Training

Categories of training include academic, at the graduate or undergraduate level; and technical, which includes observation visits, on the job training, special programs, and combinations of two or more categories.

Academic training is enrollment leading to a degree in any accredited institution of higher education. Whether training is at the graduate or undergraduate level depends on such factors as project objectives, priority

development needs of the countries of the participants, and educational resources available within the country. For example, in Egypt, there are several national universities and a large number of graduates within the country itself. Therefore, as a matter of general policy, USAID/Cairo does not support degree training except at the graduate level, and then in most instances when the degree is obtainable incidentally to the technical or scientific knowledge gained in the study program, or the degree is a requirement for certification or licensing to qualify for positions included in project objectives. Other countries within the Near East Bureau have also adopted this practice.

Observational training consists of organized visits to facilities with specific objectives for learning about processes, methods or systems, through observation and discussion. This programming is usually short term and limited to senior officials who are responsible for the design, planning or management of development projects.

On the job training is the learning of specific tasks or jobs by doing, through personal, side-by-side, hands on training. It is usually of short duration.

Special training programs can be specifically designed to meet participant needs. They may be group, individual, institutional or non-institutional, may include workshops, seminars, specially designed short courses, or regular courses without degree objectives. As with other training, special programs are intended to expand the scientific knowledge or technical and managerial skills of individuals.

## Contract vs. Non-Contract Training

Training may be directly administered by AID, may be done under the auspices of AID administered contracts, or may be administered by the host country. In the case of AID direct administration, functional responsibility for implementation is kept within AID channels, follows AID and Mission established selection criteria, utilizes Agency and Mission documentation and clearance procedures, and the AID Office of International Training (DS/IT) for program planning, implementation and monitoring. Participant monitoring is done through the Participant Training Information System (PTIS) of DS/IT.

When participant training is done under AID contracts, functional responsibility for implementation of training rests with the contractor. The contractor is responsible for assuring that training is accomplished in accordance with the policies, allowances, guidance, and reporting requirements of AID Handbook 10 - Participant Training. Under host country contracts the responsibility for implementation of AID projects rests with the host country government. It has primary responsibility for selection of contractor(s) and monitoring of training program progress.

## Third Country Training

Although the primary focus of this report is U.S.-based participant training, a word is in order about Third-Country Training (TCT). TCT refers to AID sponsored training in a country other than the participant's home country, the United States, or Puerto Rico. A basic aim of third-country training is to provide training that may be more academically and culturally relevant under the given circumstances. It also serves to broaden the training base of the developing world by encouraging the countries of training to finance and manage their own training programs and to share them with nationals from other countries.

Where this type of training is possible, in addition to possible cost advantages, training may be more effectively achieved by selecting sites in nearby countries which have recently addressed similar problems with reasonable success. In some cases the native language of the participant may also be the language of instruction, eliminating some of the problems associated with lack of competency in English.

#### Centrally Funded Training

In addition to the above training that is closely tied to Mission and/or specific project goals, a few training projects are centrally funded. Examples are in the field of energy, both in conventional and alternative energy technology, and in the area of population.

#### The Dimensions of Near East Training

Following are some statistical data on participants in the Participant Training Information System (PTIS) as reported on September 30, 1980. The PTIS, as described in Chapter IV is still undergoing changes and some information is not yet included in the system. This is especially true for data on contract managed participants. "On board" refers to participants who have arrived in the country of their training. They are maintained as "on board" until their departure is confirmed or until they are removed from participant training files through another procedure such as the granting of a visa waiver.

Total AID Participants On Board September 1980 by  
Funding Type and Academic/Non-Academic Status

	Non Contract	Contract	Third Country	Other	TOTAL
Academic	817	2173	702	120	3812
Non-Academic	402	175	120	2	699
TOTAL	1219	2348	822	122	4511

Near East Bureau Participants On Board  
September 1980 by Funding Source

Country of Origin	Non Contract	Contract	Third Country	TOTAL
Egypt	104	105	-	209
Jordan	19	32	35	86
Morocco	26	39	3	68
Portugal	10	6	1	17
Syria	52	31	1	84
Tunisia	10	40	-	50
Yemen	47	35	166	248
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>762</b>

Near East Bureau Participants On Board  
September 1980 by Academic/Non-Academic Status

Country of Origin	Academic	Non-Acaeimic	TOTAL
Egypt	102	107	209
Jordan	83	3	86
Morocco	57	11	68
Portugal	6	11	17
Syria	47	37	84
Tunisia	48	2	50
Yemen	228	20	248
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>762</b>

### III

#### NEAR EAST BUREAU EXPERIENCE

All AID Participant Training is subject to evaluation whether it is done under a primarily training oriented project or is a component of another type of project. Returned participants of general training projects in Egypt, Syria, and the Yemen were surveyed regarding all aspects of their training including pre-departure procedures, the training itself, and its relationship to their employment on return. In the case of projects where training is only one component, the evaluation is of the entire project and if the training were not contributing effectively to the goals and objectives of the project this would be determined during the project evaluation.

Evaluations have produced highly positive and encouraging assessments of AID participant training. It is necessary to keep this perspective through the rest of this chapter as major issues in the training effort are considered. These evaluations, as well as other sources, such as GAO reports, AID audits, and other inquiries have pointed out areas in which the program might be improved. Maximum effectiveness and continued improvement of participant training requires a careful study of these issues. Improvements in information systems as they relate to issues in this chapter are discussed in Chapter IV.

Discussion of issues in this chapter is organized around pre-departure factors, considerations during the training program, and post program factors. The pre-departure section includes selection, orientation, program planning, and language competency. Considerations during training include

difficulty and relevance of the program and non-technical aspects such as per diem. Post program issues include confirmation of return, and follow up to determine participant perceptions of the program, employment as per agreement, and utilization of training.

## PRE-DEPARTURE

### Selection

On the question of whether the selection of participants should be left to the host government, be placed in private hands, or whether AID should take a more active role, there is no "right" answer. On the one hand, there is a feeling that "personal contacts" may have too much weight in selection, in proportion to ability, qualifications, and job needs. This was particularly a problem identified in the 1977 Yemen evaluation, in a country where tribal and personal loyalties are strong. Where this has the potential for distorting the selection process, AID may play a more direct role. AID also has intervened to promote selection of minority groups, particularly women in Near East Bureau projects.

On the other hand, it may be best not to interfere too much in selection, for those with the influence to be selected may have a higher probability of returning to positions of power and thus to make maximum use of their training. Both a 1966 worldwide evaluation of AID participant training projects and a 1977 evaluation of Egyptian participant training found that participants tended to be more successful in utilizing their training if their supervisor had had an active role in selection of the participant. "Cluster training" of both supervisors and personnel working under them also positively affected training utilization.

There are many additional issues in the selection of participants for training, including social factors and public/private sector participation, which are outside the scope of the present report.

### Orientation and Program Planning

As an example of participant perception of the overall pre-departure process, in the 1977 Egyptian evaluation about half of the returned participants indicated that they saw no problems in the handling of pre-departure arrangements. The most frequent comment among the other 50 percent was that they did not feel adequately briefed about their programs prior to their departure. A more complete orientation and opportunity to assist in planning their own programs has been suggested as a way to prevent many of these situations and to maximize the utility of the training program for the participant. A more thorough orientation also helps insure greater relevance of the training to the participant's job and greater correspondence between the participant's ability and the level of difficulty of the program.

### Language Competency

Another major element of pre-departure procedures is the testing of English language competency, prior to training that is to be carried out in English. Language difficulties limit the effectiveness of training programs, and have been reported by participants in varying degrees. The problem may become more serious in the short run. Those with English ability or a high foreign language learning capacity are frequently the first selected and those remaining may have greater difficulty in English. Over the longer term the problem should ease as the "pools" of people with knowledge of English, including returned participants, expands. At the

moment there is a need in some countries for some type of pre-program English.

An alternate solution is to provide the U.S. based training in a language other than English. At least two universities now provide an option of training programs conducted in French, but this approach severely limits the training opportunities that are available.

#### DURING TRAINING

##### Program Aspects

Issues during the training period can be divided into program aspects, and non-technical considerations. Typical complaints about programs are that they are too short, the level of difficulty is not appropriate, material duplicates that already learned elsewhere, or that material is not relevant. It is difficult to determine precisely how prevalent these kinds of complaints are, but the evidence points toward general satisfaction. In the worldwide evaluation, only one-fifth of the participants rated the level of difficulty of the program unsatisfactory, with the inappropriate programs more often being considered too simple. In the Egyptian evaluation 88 percent of the returned participants found their programs about the right level of difficulty. About half of the 1977 Yemen interviewees reported programs at the right level of difficulty, 21 percent felt studies were too advanced, and 26 percent perceived programs as too elementary. The Syrian evaluation reported that 74 percent of the participants were satisfied with the technical difficulty level of their program.

Given the complexity of matching participant experience and capacity to U.S. university requirements, we consider this a very positive achievement.

### Non-Technical

The most common complaint on non-technical aspects of training programs has been inadequacy of per diem allocations. Participants have reported that they were not realistically informed before their departure about the amount and/or the manner in which they could expect to live on their per diem. Missions, on the other hand, have reported difficulty in getting some participants to deal with the question. Further, participants during training may meet others from their own country, sponsored under other arrangements who receive different per diem rates.

### Dealing with Problems During Training

AID participant procedures provide for counselling of participants, first by the programming officer or project manager, and if the seriousness of the problem(s) require more professional services, these may be provided. Problems requiring counselling include, but are not limited to, a participant's serious illness or injury, misconduct, emotional distress, legal difficulties, and all requests for termination of programs and other general problems which interfere with the training program.

Handling of participant difficulties during training is presently the responsibility of a large number of contractors, including universities and other government agencies, and this information is not necessarily transmitted back to the Office of International Training or to any other central source. A more complete overall compilation of the frequency and type of difficulties encountered during training would be useful in suggesting improvements in programming procedures.

## POST TRAINING

The implementation role of AID in participant training does not end with the completion of the formal training program. What happens after the completion of training largely determines whether the training will be successful in attaining its objectives.

### Non-Returnees

The most immediate and fundamental issue is whether participants return to their home countries after completion of their training, decide to stay in the U.S., or live in a third country. A three year Agency-wide summary of participant return statistics as reported by the Missions shows proportions of non-returnees for FY 77, 78, and 79 as 0.02, .008, and .009, respectively. The FY 77 figures represent 47 total non-returned participants, and 33 of the 47 were Ethiopians who did not return home due to unsettled conditions. In FY 78 and 79, 25 non-returnees were reported each year. The total number of participants expected to return in each of those years was 2,139 for FY 77, 3,185 for FY 78, and 2,795 for FY 79. For the years prior to FY 1977 a worldwide non-return rate of .005 was reported, which represents 73,611 returned participants and 428 non-returnees.

Data for FY 79 have been broken down by region and non-return rates reported as follows: Africa (.014), Latin America (.007), Asia (.007), and Near East (.0085). Within the Near East Region, with 8 Missions reporting there were a total of 7 non-returnees, four in Egypt and one each for Jordan, Syria, and Tunisia. The number of returned participants for that period was 817. The non-return rate for Egypt is .010, with four non-returnees out of a total of 381 participants. Additional data from a Syrian training project evaluation showed that of 274 participants completing

training between January 1976 and October 1979, only one failed to return on schedule.

The accuracy of figures on non-return of participants has been criticized, and they are subject to limitations in data as discussed above. The data are probably most accurate in reflecting participants directly administered by AID. The project related training programs, which are more commonly contract managed, are assumed to show higher return rates than the general training programs, as the training objectives and immediate utilization of the training are more closely linked. Therefore, as the available data are more likely to relate to the general training or direct managed participants, we believe the non-return figures are conservative. The overall return rate may in fact be higher. Further confirmation will have to wait for results from the newly established Participant Return Reporting System (PRRS) which is discussed in the following chapter.

Another question in the issue of participant return is to what extent AID can expect to have an influence. Factors affecting return and retention of participants are mainly within the sphere of the recipient government, in terms of providing adequate incentives for return. In general, relevant clauses requiring prompt return are included in Project Agreements. The degree of their enforcement is the responsibility of the host country.

Another option might be to concentrate upon types of training and fields which have high return and retention rates. This, however, is likely to distort development priorities. Little systematic analysis has been done in this area and it is uncertain how aspects such as length, type and field of program are correlated with return and retention rates. Given the low non-return rates worldwide, analysis may well prove non-significant.

## Follow Up of Participants

Follow up of participants is discussed with respect to participant perceptions, employment and career impact, utilization of training, and long term follow up.

### Perceptions

Perceptions about programs must be gathered during or close to the end of training to provide information of maximum utility to program planners. Data of this type was gathered in the participant evaluations in Egypt, Syria, and the Yemen. Additional information is in Office of International Training files, some with programming agents, and some at Missions. Both the Egypt returned participant survey and the Syrian evaluation included participant suggestions for increasing the effectiveness of the program, as well as an assessment of its usefulness in their job. In both cases participants were relatively well satisfied with the program and with the relevance of their training to their jobs. Principal complaints about programs, as stated in the previous section of this report, were the length (too short), technical difficulty (not difficult enough), and financial considerations.

## Employment and career impact

In the worldwide survey, the great majority of participants either returned to the same job they had had before they left for training (77 percent), or to a job that had been expected or planned before they left (14 percent).

In the Yemen case, about half of the participants were promised the same job on their return from training; 20 percent were promised a promotion and another 29 percent were just promised a job without specification. Of these agreements, about one-fifth were not fulfilled, generally because of delays in promotions or to replacement by another employee while away. The general indications from the Yemen evaluation were that participants who received AID training generally tended to return to government service and to be upwardly mobile, moving into more administrative and managerial occupations at a higher level of managerial responsibility.

A summary of the worldwide, Yemen, and Egyptian evaluations suggested that maximum career impact was achieved through choosing young participants and providing degree training. Further, it was suggested that to avoid possible unemployment, replacement or demotions, more attention to advance job planning was needed. This would enhance the relevancy of training to job responsibilities and would be a means of increasing return and retention rates.

## Utilization of training

Utilization of training is a subject best pursued in short term follow up activities. As time since training increases, it becomes more difficult to separate effects of training from other events. Participant use of

training themselves and transmission of things learned to others are questions asked in previous evaluations. In the worldwide survey, higher utilization tended to be positively correlated with more professional fields of training, higher status participants, programs taken in the U.S., programs of longer duration and university-based types. Furthermore, utilization tended to be greater for participants who played an active role in planning their programs, whose supervisor had an active role in selection and program planning, and who upon return maintained closer contacts with the Mission.

The Yemen survey reported that seven of ten participants utilized their training very much or moderately. Most frequent reasons given in those relatively small number of cases where little or no utilization was reported were either irrelevancy of training to the job or lack of trained staff and education of co-workers.

Another interesting reason suggested in some cases of limited utilization of training was high job mobility, as many participants moved up from professional and technical occupations to administrative and managerial jobs where their technical training was less relevant.

The "spread effect", or the transmission of training to others was impressive in the Yemen survey, with 90 percent of the participants reporting the transfer of some of what they had learned in training to others.

In the Egyptian evaluation, approximately 70 percent reported using training program experience in their current jobs to a very large or moderate extent, with a higher percentage reported by those in the upper occupational levels. Factors given by the minority of participants as

inhibiting the use of AID program experience included lack of material resources, irrelevance due to poor program planning, lack of support from supervisor, general resistance to change and lack of qualified staff. With respect to the sharing of information, about 60 percent were able to share at least some of the knowledge gained.

#### Long Term Follow-up

Long term follow up of general participant training, in terms of contact with participants two or three years after their return is not done as a general rule. It is more likely to occur naturally in technically oriented or institution building projects where an institutional relationship emerges. Information which such follow up would wish to ascertain includes continuing contacts with the U.S. and professional advancement of participants, particularly as related to AID sponsored training. Continuing professional contacts were reported in the Egyptian evaluation, although they were of a relatively short duration. Most were not with Mission personnel, but rather with U.S. professionals in their technical areas of interest. This is the type of continuing contact preferred by participants and encouraged by AID through subscriptions to professional journals and provision of memberships in professional societies.

As pointed out in the Egyptian evaluation and in several other discussions, such long term follow up would be desirable, but is also an expensive procedure. Tracking of participants, especially on a long term basis is an expensive, time-consuming process, as location of returned participants alone becomes more difficult with increasing time. While the collection of such follow up information on a regular basis is desirable, we do not feel a comprehensive effort would be feasible and cost-effective.

An alternative way of determining professional advancement of participants is through reports of Mission personnel on returned participants holding responsible positions within their own government. For example, in Jordan in 1979, Jordanian returned participants were reported in positions including Head of the National Planning Council, Minister of Finance, Director of the Budget and numerous other key government positions. A similar pattern is evident in most AID assisted countries.

## IV

### IMPROVEMENTS IN PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Continuous criticism of AID participant training has dealt with the adequacy of the system to handle information about participants, the availability of qualified personnel to manage that information system, and the quality of available data. This chapter discusses the Participant Training Information System, as well as a new system for tracking of participants who have completed their programs, and a new computerized information system in Egypt, at the Mission level. These tools make possible significant improvement in the handling of quantitative data on participants.

#### Participant Training Information System (PTIS)

The AID Office of International Training (DS/IT) is responsible for maintaining a central file of information on all participants. These data collectively are referred to as the Participant Training Information System (PTIS). Source documents are the Project Implementation Order/Participants (PIO/P), and bio-data form; Participant Program and Training Data (PPTD); the Monthly Report on Third Country Training, completed by Missions; and the Monthly Report of Participants Under Grant, Loan, or Contract Programs, furnished by contractors.

Deficiencies in the system were detailed in a December 1979 report by Pinkerton Computer Consultants, Inc., entitled "Requirements Analysis for the Agency for International Development Office of International Training's Participant Training Information System". The report recommended

establishment of a new data management system and cited the lack of familiarity with the PTIS on the part of DS/IT personnel and the absence of qualified personnel to assume responsibility for the system's operation as major problems. Staff reductions as a result of budget constraints had led to severe cutbacks in the Office of International Training. The report recommended two AID staff positions for data processing personnel. One such position has been filled, and a data management firm currently has staff on board to maintain the system. They also have been able to remove a substantial backlog of data that had been waiting for input into the system.

With respect to the data itself, a major limiting factor has been the lack of data on contract managed participants, discussed in an earlier section of this paper. In some cases, contractors have been unaware of the monthly reporting requirement. All contracts now routinely include a clause on contractor responsibility for submission of Form 1380-9, a Monthly Report of Participants Under Grant, Loan, or Contract Programs. This new procedure will need to be monitored closely to be sure the existing staff can manage the increased data load.

There was a further discrepancy in comparability of quality of information provided by Missions and that provided by contractors. The contractor form is an abbreviated version of information provided by the Missions. To address this problem, Missions are now being asked to prepare PIO/Ps including biodata on all participants. This should result in more consistency in the data on direct and contract managed participants.

The requirement for universal health and accident insurance registration should provide a means of cross checking the completeness of the list of participants in the PTIS system. Discrepancies in the two listings could then be reconciled with appropriate AID staff and/or contractors.

Processing of the certification of eligibility for exchange visitor (J-1) status, the visa classification required for participants, provides another check point for assuring that participants have been entered into the system. Through closer cooperation with the Immigration and Naturalization Service, a closer account could be maintained of participant arrivals in and departures from the U.S. as well as more efficient identification of those participants who do not leave at the end of their training program.

In addition to expanding the coverage of the participant information system, improvements are being made in its retrieval capacity. An example of data categories under which statistics can be retrieved includes country code, technical activity code (broad field of training), contract number, type of training, academic level, degree objective, sex, onboard date, major course of study, and termination date.

Regularly generated reports of the PTIS are as follows:

#### Monthly

Participant Training Statistics Report (B110) is a tally of participants by Region including on board dates, departures, carryovers from one fiscal year to another, country and training code, tabulated separately for academic and non-academic participants. Data presented in Chapter II were compiled from the B110 report for September 1980.

The Participant Locator Report (B310) lists active U.S. and third country participants and includes data on name, participant number, PIO/P and contract numbers, on board date, estimated termination date, termination date, field of study, degree objective, and programming agent.

The Participants Onboard by Facility Report (B710) lists data according to training facility, country of origin, and indicates if funding is through a contractor.

#### Quarterly

A Primary Programming Responsibility Report (B510) arrays participants by programming agency and includes on board dates, etc. Part one of this report is organized by type of program and part two is listed by academic status.

#### Annual

Six annual reports are generated by the PTIS system. They are concerned with running totals of PIO/Ps for all participants, activities in Development Assistance countries, major courses of study followed by participants, duration of training programs, and a special breakdown of major courses of study according to fiscal year.

#### Participant Return Reporting System (PRRS)

The Participant Return Reporting System (PRRS) has been developed by the staff of AID's Office of International Training and the Office of Data Management. The initial products of the system will be first quarter reports for 1981. The two major purposes of the PRRS are improved quality of participant return reporting and reducing the work required to maintain participant return statistics at the Missions and AID/W. The PRRS was based on the Participant Training Information System (PTIS) in current use in order to enable rapid implementation. Relatively minor changes to PTIS forms and data elements were required to implement the PRRS.

The PRRS will prepare quarterly turnaround reports (U 1380-6) informing Missions of reported participant departures. Mission staff must enter returnee's confirmation status and return the list to IT for processing. Quarterly and annual Mission response lists, returnee statistics, and a Year To Date cumulative "unconfirmed" returnee list will also be prepared. The U 1380-6 Report should also serve as a reminder to Missions regarding other participant follow up activities.

Based on the above, a Quarterly Delinquent Termination Report listing those participants whose estimated program completion date has transpired during the quarter and have not been reported to IT as extended, terminated, etc. will be sent to all programming agents via the AID Project Manager and selected AID contractors. The report will also list those participants who have been identified as non-returnees, or who have requested or been granted visa waivers. The programming agent will be requested to update the status of listed participants and return a copy to the Statistics Unit of IT for input into the PTIS.

Effective use of the system will assist IT management to determine the status of returnee reporting and to consider assignment of additional staff to this effort as necessary. Successful operation of the PRRS will also depend on timely and accurate Mission responses, and responses from programming agents and contractors. Timely and consistent data entry and data processing are also essential.

### Egyptian Computerized Participant Training System (PTS)

The Egypt Mission's Participant Training System (PTS), an automated means of keeping track of personal and program data on participants, became operational in Cairo on September 30, 1980 . Selected data elements of the system include participant name and identification numbers, home address, sex, degree of current education, area of study, current occupational information, training dates, training status, funding category, institution and type of training, and budget information. Source documents include participant bio-data, PIO/P forms, the call forward cable, and any other correspondence necessary to update required information. The system, tailored especially for needs of the Mission in Egypt, makes use of a utility program INQUIRY that is able to search and retrieve from virtually any data field without the necessity for writing a new program.

At the present time, there is no provision for entry of data such as problems encountered during training, or of follow up information with the exception of return status. The development of a system such as the PTS is a dynamic process and new elements will be added while others will be deleted. It is possible that at some future date procedures could be developed to make use of the PTS in processing problem-related and follow up information. If the Egyptian system proves to be cost effective, this type of system will be considered for replication in other Missions with significant training programs.

## CONCLUSION

The Near East Bureau's participant training programs have been extensively reviewed over the past few years. These reviews have confirmed the broad effectiveness and developmental benefit of participant training. They have also revealed several problems. Some, such as pre-departure preparation require greater attention by project managers, others such as incongruity between the trainees' goals and project objectives for training received are inherent in the program and can be minimized but not eliminated. Some methods of long term follow up may be feasible, while others clearly are not cost effective.

The most frequently cited problem is lack of consistent and reliable statistics. This is an Agency-wide problem. Total statistical reliability and comprehensive data collection is not possible to achieve in a cost-effective manner. However, major improvements in the data management systems are now being made which should substantially improve the participant data base. In this area, too, there will be continuous monitoring and continued improvement and refinement.