

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
Quarterly Performance Report to USAID
Period 12 of 16: March 20, 2001 - June 19, 2001

RESEARCH SUPPORT PROGRAM
PCE-A-00-98-00008-00

I. CURRENT STATUS

Primary emphasis this quarter has been on preparing the revised 21 cycle approved projects for action. This included examining the responses to provisos and contacting PI's for additional information and/or documents where necessary. Other associated activities are described below.

- The mailing of decision packages for the Review 21 cycle has been initiated.
- Processed and checked mission clearance request packages for approved CDR21 and CDR/CAR21 approved proposals to the corresponding missions;
- Prepared and transmitted an analogous package for State Department approval for the CAR21 projects;
- Received and processed mission clearance responses and updated the files and databases accordingly;
- Updated the electronic files with Review 21 proposal and Review 22 preproposal decision letter information and transmitted them to the US Embassy in Israel;
- Prepared an updating of the OYB 2001 database to reflect recently granted projects, tracking the status of projects on hold (awaiting granting, in negotiations, etc.) and presented the results to the sponsor for use in funding decisions;
- Received checked and reviewed the responses to provisos for the CDR/CAR21, MERC21 and MERC22 fasttrack proposals; took appropriate action when not complete and passed the material to the sponsor for appropriate action;
- Updated the Research Support Program website with current program guidelines;
- Initiated logistical planning for five USAID Panel Review Meetings for cycle 22, scheduled to take place in October 2001;
- Continued to receive, process and summarize progress reports from researchers with active grants;
- Continued ongoing communications with researchers, providing them with program guidelines and answering questions about grants, the review process or program policy.
- Prepared position description and began necessary procedures for hiring a new staff member.
- Attended and provided support for the MERC executive committee meeting and processed notes of the meeting.
- Drafted for the sponsor summaries of conditions discussed at the MERC preproposal review meeting.
- Prepared draft decline letters for MERC21, CDR21, CDR/CAR21 and CDR, CAR, and MERC 22 preproposal reject letters.
- Contacted, notified and provided information and backup to the researchers of two long time hold projects that are being processed as new transmissions, including obtaining mission clearances.
- Continued to update the REVIEW22 database regarding the researchers' confirmations for submitting full proposals.

- Continued to update the funded database as copies of grant agreements for CAR and MERC arrive.

II. DISCUSSION

This quarter has been devoted to taking the myriad actions necessary to finalize grants for action by the sponsor, and preparing for the next round of reviews. We are current with all our responsibilities. A large amount of time has been devoted to the Response to Provisos that have been greater in number, much broader, and much more detailed than in previous years. These have required a sustained effort to keep apace. Unfortunately for us but fortunately for her John's Hopkins University has accepted our current project assistant for further studies. Her replacement requires the necessary steps for finding a replacement. These are being initiated.

This report marks the completion of three years of our cooperative agreement. We continue to take pride in being associated with such a worthwhile USAID program and are devoted to contributing to its success.

III. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

While most of the responses to provisos are well advanced, the remaining ones will be completed in the next quarter. Most of our attention will be devoted to preparing for the next cycle of reviews. This will involve the formation of five panels and reviews of over forty proposals submitted in the CDR and CDR/CAR programs. Some seventy specialized scientists will be located who are available at the appropriate time and are willing to donate their time to the review process. Considerable amount of time will, of necessity, be devoted to recruitment of a replacement for our project assistant.