

THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES

Advisers to the Nation on Science, Engineering, and Medicine

Division for Policy and Global Affairs
Development, Security & Cooperation
USAID Research Support Program

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July 10, 2003

Mr. Mark Walther
Agreement Officer
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U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-0089

Reference: Agreement No. PCE-A-00-98-00008-00
Quarterly Report: 20 of 24

Dear Mr. Walther:

Attached is the quarterly performance report of the above-mentioned agreement for the twentieth three-month period ending June 19, 2003. The purpose of this activity is to assist the USAID Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (EGAT) by providing technical and administrative support for two international collaborative research programs, the U.S.-Israel Cooperative Development Research (CDR) Program and the Middle East Regional Cooperation (MERC) Program.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 334-2633.

Sincerely,



Maurice Fried
Responsible Staff Officer

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POLICY AND GLOBAL AFFAIRS
NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL
Quarterly Performance Report to USAID
Period 20 of 24: March 20, 2003 - June 19, 2003

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

I. CURRENT STATUS

Primary emphasis this quarter has been on preparing the revised 23 cycle of approved projects for action. This included all the preliminary activities required before AID can take the necessary steps for awarding contracts. These activities as well as other necessary activities during the quarter are described below.

- The mailing of decision packages for the Review 23 cycle has been initiated including mailing out approval and resubmit letters for CDR23 (C22-008, 013, 044; C23-001, 004, 019, 022, 025) and approval letters for CDR/CAR23 (CA23-005, 022, 032, 034, 036, 037, 038).
- Processed and checked mission clearance request packages for approved CDR/CAR23 approved proposals to the corresponding missions;
- Updated the electronic files with Review 23 proposal and Review 24 preproposal decision letter information and transmitted them to the US Embassy in Israel;
- Preparing an updating of the OYB 2003 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 some of the MERC23 and MERC24 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 CDR/CAR status;
- Continued to receive, process and summarize progress reports from researchers with active grants and began informing the US Embassy in Israel upon receipt;
- Continued ongoing communications with researchers, providing them with program guidelines and answering questions about grants, the review process or program policy.
- Attended and provided technical and administrative support for the MERC executive committee preproposal meeting and processed notes of the meeting.
- Prepared draft approval and decline letters for MERC23 and CDR, and MERC 24 preproposal reject letters.
- Prepared conditions for the MERC preproposal committee for acceptance letters.
- Provided draft conditions of the MERC preproposal review meeting to sponsor and processed MERC24 acceptance and reject letters.
- Processed all full proposal summaries for MERC (including declined projects) to check for compliance with preproposal conditions except for two off cycle projects.

- Arranged conference calls for Animal Pathology (CA23-011, M22-026) and Agricultural Economics (CA23-044, CA23-045), had the calls and prepared summary of the results of the conference calls.
- Prepared full proposal summaries for the MERC23 full proposal review.
- Continued to update the funded database as copies of grant agreements for CAR and MERC arrive.
- Continued to work on draft CDR23 decline summaries/decision sheets.
- Prepare contract for M18-072 consultants and arrange air travel and hotel reservation.
- Created binder for the Fall and Spring Review 23 Summary of Results and Reviewer Expertise.
- Plan trip to Morocco, arrange travel and correspond with Moroccan contacts to develop itinerary.
- Two weeks travel to Morocco in order to attend two workshops for on-going projects and meet with grantees and potential grantee on MERC proposals.
- Maintain USAID files and order additional supplies as necessary.

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 each year are greater in number, much broader, and much more detailed than in previous years. Additionally Conference calls and consultant contracts are increasing in number. At the moment we are awaiting an additional transfer of funds as the present resources will be exhausted before the end of July.

This report marks the completion of five years of our cooperative agreement. As mentioned at the end of the previous year we continue to take pride in being associated with such a worthwhile USAID program and are devoted to contributing to its success. We will continue to give the program our careful attention and full cooperation with USAID.

III. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

While many of the responses to provisos have arrived and been acted upon, 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 many panels and reviews of the CDR24 and MERC24 proposals submitted in the CDR programs. Specialized scientists will be located who are available at the appropriate time and are willing to donate their time to the review process.