

the ACYF and/or the Technical Work Group; and

7. Prepare an Interim Report in September, 1997, and a Final Report for this project which fully integrate the cross-site and local studies, drawing upon the strengths of each.

#### C-3 Tasks

As part of this Early Head Start evaluation effort, the Contractor shall access, collect, utilize, analyze and synthesize information regarding the implementation, operation and effectiveness of Early Head Start programs.

The work for this contract will be conducted in five sequential 12 month phases and the activities that will be accomplished include the following:

In Phase I, the Contractor shall:

- (1) Participate in an orientation meeting;
- (2) Develop a coordination strategy for working with other Contractors involved with Early Head Start;
- (3) Conduct a literature review;
- (4) Select a cadre of consultants;
- (5) Select a Technical Work Group;
- (6) Prepare a revised study design;
- (7) Prepare a process data collection plan;
- (8) Conduct a feasibility study;
- (9) Prepare a logistical proposal for the consortium;
- (10) Prepare a site visit protocol;
- (11) Convene the consortium;
- (12) Prepare a final study design;
- (13) Conduct site visits to all impact evaluation sites;
- (14) Prepare a protocol for the data collection instruments;
- (15) Prepare a data collection and analysis plan;
- (16) Prepare an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance package;
- (17) Prepare a revised work plan;
- (18) Develop criteria for selection of impact sites.

In Phases II-V, the Contractor shall:

- (19) Conduct annual site visits to impact evaluation sites.

In ALL Phases, the Contractor shall:

- (20) Conduct cross-site data collection;
- (21) Conduct a minimum of two consortium meetings a year in Washington, DC;
- (22) Establish a protocol of all new or additional data collection instruments and prepare OMB clearance packages for all new or additional data collection instruments;
- (23) Provide timely data entry and return of data disks to sites;
- (24) Process and analyze the data collected;
- (25) Provide a format for continuous program improvement and support its use.

In addition, in all phases the Contractor shall prepare deliverables as necessary for the work completed in each Phase, including monthly progress reports and in-depth annual progress reports, and the following reports within an agreed-upon time: "Report of Characteristics of Early Head Start Programs," "Pathways to Quality Study," "Impact Study," "Study of Program Variations," "Studies Directed Toward Specific Policy Concerns," an Interim Report, and a Final Report which shall include a synthesis of the results of the final data analyses, reports of site researchers and a summary of the five-year project. In all Phase reports, the national impact study will be supplemented and integrated with the studies from the local research sites.

#### A. PHASE I

Task 1—Orientation Meeting With the Federal Project Officer (FPO)

Within *one week of the effective date of the contract*, the Contractor shall meet with the Federal Project Officer (FPO), and other relevant Federal staff to review the background of the project, and the work to be conducted. The FPO will provide the Contractor with available copies of the relevant grant proposals for ACYF-funded Early Head Start grantees. The Contractor shall propose an agenda for the meeting, indicate who would attend on behalf of the Contractor, list the types of study design modifications or other problems that would require FPO decisions at that meeting, and shall provide a project summary for distribution to ACYF staff. Specific topics to be discussed at the meeting include: Revisions to the proposed work plan in the Contractor's proposal; arrangements for maintaining regular contact with the FPO and relevant Federal staff via the INTERNET network and other means of communication; arrangements for initial contacts and ongoing cooperation with program sites; arrangements for information to be supplied upon selection of research sites and plans for carrying out the Phase I tasks. The meeting shall provide an opportunity to discuss any clarifications of the Contractor's proposed approach, the nature of the project, the schedule of work, and the progress report requirements and other deliverables. There shall be an additional meeting with the consortium in the second half of Phase I.

#### TASK 2—DEVELOP A COORDINATION STRATEGY FOR WORKING WITH OTHER CONTRACTORS—HSFIS and TRAINING/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONTRACTORS

During all phases of the project, effective coordination with the Federal staff, Federal Contractors working on related projects and evaluations and outside stakeholders will be important to the success of the project. The Contractor shall work with the FPO and other Federal staff to establish and maintain cooperative working arrangements and in weeks *two through six* of Phase I shall establish a list of tasks and a communication plan for approval by ACYF. It is particularly important that procedures be coordinated with the HSFIS Contractor, including procedures for communication and bi-annual meetings in Washington, DC; procedures for ensuring readiness of grantees to utilize the HSFIS at the outset of Early Head Start; feasibility of HSFIS process data collection for project and comparison groups; procedures for transferring HSFIS reports to the national evaluation Contractor and for reports to the HSFIS Contractor. It will also be necessary to coordinate with Training and Technical Assistance personnel at ACYF and with the Contractor for Early Head Start Training and Technical Assistance, planning for two yearly meetings with that Contractor and ACYF staff in Washington, DC. Reports shall be given to ACYF from each of the meetings.

#### TASK 3—PREPARE A LITERATURE REVIEW

The Contractor shall conduct a thorough review of the existing literature on programs and evaluations of services to families with infants and toddlers, including documents produced by ACYF, foundations and reports of evaluations, published and not published. To place this evaluation in a national context, the Contractor shall review and synthesize relevant research and evaluation findings based on reliable research methodologies about the effects of services to families with infants and toddlers. This report shall synthesize findings from services to families for infants and toddlers and those from services related to any portion of Early Head Start, present methodological issues and creative solutions to those issues, identify gaps in the findings and methodologies and outline how this study will fill those gaps. This report shall also include the Contractor's recommendations for adding to or refining the evaluation research questions. The draft report