

Upon approval of the OMB Clearance Package, the Contractor shall conduct the appropriate data collection activities (outlined in the OMB clearance package) at the selected Early Head Start programs. The Contractor shall develop a plan to have senior evaluation staff conduct periodic site visits during data collection periods for the purpose of monitoring on-site evaluation staff, ensuring quality control and maintaining good working relationships with local research and program staff. The Contractor shall develop procedures for monitoring local staff to make sure they carry out their evaluation responsibilities.

Where appropriate, the Contractor also shall consider the potential need for the use of security guards to accompany researchers in cases where their safety is at risk.

As the data collection in this project has a longitudinal nature, whenever possible, data collectors with demonstrated effectiveness shall maintain continuity with families; the Contractor shall have developed compensatory procedures for maintaining reliability of measurement.

In each site, the Contractor shall continue to design and implement methods for understanding the services provided to both the treatment and comparison groups and at the community level. The Contractor shall continue to build the profile begun at each site to describe the general character of each program and shall continue to examine methods for documenting the program. Finally, the Contractor shall continue to explore methods for understanding the communities' impacts on and from Early Head Start programs. The Contractor shall work closely with researchers at local sites in these tasks.

TASK 21—CONDUCT A MINIMUM OF TWO MEETINGS A YEAR WITH THE CONSORTIUM

Within the *first three months* following the beginning of each new phase, the Contractor shall convene the consortium, including the local researchers and the Technical Work Group, in Washington, DC., to conduct the business of the consortium according to the consortium workplan. A minimum of two consortium meetings shall be convened each year, and no six month period shall pass without a consortium meeting. The possibility of meeting in connection with Early Head Start program personnel shall be considered for at least one of the two meetings and ACYF shall guide the decision on whether a program-research meeting is advised. There shall be

support for at least two meetings of each of the consortium subcommittees per year, as necessary. The Contractor shall deliver ACYF consortium reports with embedded Technical Work Group reports *within one month* following each consortium meeting. The Contractor shall be responsible for all costs associated with consortium meetings (See TASK 11), except for the direct costs of local researchers and the federal staff. If the Contractor coordinates with program personnel, only the research and evaluation portion of the costs of the consortium shall be the responsibility of the national Contractor.

TASK 22—ESTABLISH A PROTOCOL OF ALL MEASURES FOR EACH NEW PHASE OF THE PROJECT AND PREPARE AND SUBMIT NEW CLEARANCE PACKAGES FOR SUBMISSION TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB), AS NECESSARY

Within the *first three months* of each new phase, and as needed, the Contractor shall review the work plan to determine acceptability of the protocol for each new phase of measurement and the need to obtain OMB clearance. Measures added shall be submitted with input from the local researchers and the Technical Work Group, to ACYF, pilot tested and approved by the consortium according to procedures developed in the original protocol before being submitted to OMB. Procedures under TASK 14, TASK 15 and TASK 16 shall be adopted for subsequent measures.

TASK 23—PROVIDE SITES WITH DATA FILES AND SUMMARY REPORTS

The objective of continuous program improvement necessitates the timely turnaround of all data. Therefore, it will be necessary for impact data submitted from local sites to the national Contractor to be cleaned, entered and returned on disk to the local site within *three months* of its submission to the national Contractor. The national Contractor will need to develop procedures for working with sites that do not maintain quality and timeliness standards within the subcontracting structure.

Within *six months* of each Phase, a site-level printout for all impact evaluation sites shall be generated with sites identified only by number to maintain confidentiality, presenting the data, as predetermined in the data analysis plan, in summary form for each site and summed or averaged, as appropriate, across sites. From these printouts, sites shall be able to compare

their own results with those of other sites. This report shall include HSFIS data. The national Contractor shall be required to submit, receive and report to ACYF a brief assessment of their own activities in the task of timely data turnaround. To this end, initiated by the national Contractor, local programs will briefly evaluate the Contractor's timeliness and formatting of returned data. This brief report shall be due to ACYF by the *eleventh* month of each Phase, and will be submitted to the ACYF together with printouts of data returned to sites.

TASK 24—PROVIDE FORMATS FOR CONTINUOUS PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

All Level I sites are expected to utilize formative evaluation procedures for continuous program improvement as a component of program management. Many Level I sites will identify a local university or research institution partner to assist them in completing this task; Level II sites will be expected to participate in continuous program improvement activities in addition to conducting research. The national Contractor shall be a partner in formative evaluation tasks for continuous program improvement by: Conducting site visits to all 12 evaluation sites in order to informally assess site preparedness for continuous program improvement and to provide on-site guidance for initiating this function at the local level; developing a standard format for orienting subsequent Early Head Start sites (FY '96 and beyond) to continuous program improvement activities; providing annual formative evaluation training, either directly or through the Training and Technical Assistance Contractor, to all program sites, during annual program consortium meetings in Washington, DC. or utilizing an alternative format; participating in bi-annual coordination meetings with the Training and Technical Assistance Contractor to ascertain that capacity for this new management function develops in all sites, and coordinating with the HSFIS Contractor through bi-annual meetings to assure that HSFIS data are being utilized for continuous program improvement. The Contractor shall provide a continuous program improvement report in the *twelfth month* of each Phase.

TASK 25—ANALYZE THE DATA

The Contractor shall conduct and complete analyses of national evaluation data on a timetable jointly agreed upon by ACYF and the Contractor, and based on the