

**MICRONUTRIENT GLOBAL LEADERSHIP  
(HNR-A-00-98-00027-00)**

**Progress Report**

**Activities over the Past Six Months (1 October – 31 March)**

**IVACG**

- Managed the IVACG Annecy Conference held in Annecy, France at the Fondation Marcel Merieux from 30 October – 2 November. Travel and lodging arrangements were made for twenty-six invited participants (scientists from developed and developing countries and UN organizations). Necessary arrangements were made with the conference facility. Papers describing the state of knowledge on issues related to assessment of vitamin A deficiency as a public health problem and interventions were collected from the assigned authors and reviewed for content. Follow-up contacts were made to 22 bilateral and foundation representatives to participate in the final day of the meeting. Representatives from the United Kingdom Department for International Development and from the Gates Foundation participated in the wrap-up discussion on the final day.
- Organized an IVACG Steering Committee meeting on 3 November 2000 to review progress made at Annecy and to revise the program for the XX IVACG Meeting in Hanoi. Minutes of this meeting were prepared and distributed following the meeting.
- Managed the XX IVACG Meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam on 12-15 February 2001. Notified authors whose abstracts were selected for oral or poster presentations. Processed requests for travel grants and raised \$ 45,000 from the private sector for these grants in addition to the funds provided by USAID. Made travel arrangements for 70 speakers, staff and participants funded by USAID. Invited the oral presenters based on the Annecy Conference. Worked with the rapporteurs to make sure they would be able to complete their work. Maintained close contact with the Local Organizing Committee from the Ministry of Health in Vietnam to help them provide support for the meeting, including helping participants obtain visas, organizing the study tours, planning a regional session at the meeting, organizing the opening and closing celebrations, and hosting the welcome dinner. Prepared the meeting program/abstract booklet and participant list. Made all necessary arrangements with the Meliá Hotel where the meeting was held and additional hotels where participants were housed. Made all necessary arrangements for banking capability in Hanoi. Worked with speakers and hotel technical staff to ensure flawless visual presentations using PowerPoint. Arranged for poster boards to be built and delivered for the poster presentations. Helped other groups find space and time for ancillary meetings. Organized

exhibit space and worked with those interested displaying exhibit materials. Over 550 participants from 64 countries attended the IVACG meeting. A news release describing the major outcomes of the meeting discussion was prepared and distributed.

- Organized a follow-up meeting (“Day zero”) for the Annecy participants, which was held on 11 February 2001 in Hanoi. Specific assignments were given out during the Annecy meeting and the subsequent IVACG Steering Committee meeting. The results of these assignments were discussed and the presentations for the XX IVACG Meeting were polished.
- Organized an IVACG Steering Committee meeting on 15 February 2001 to review the outcome the XX IVACG Meeting and begin preparation for the XXI IVACG Meeting. Minutes were prepared and distributed.
- Prepared memorial documents for Dr. Abraham Horwitz and Dr. James A. Olson, which were distributed at the IVACG meeting and a brief memorial session was organized for the first day of the IVACG meeting.
- Published *IVACG Statement on the Status of the Studies on Vitamin A and Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection* and *IVACG Statement on Delivery of Vitamin A Supplements with DPT/Polio and Measles Immunization*. These documents were also posted on the ILSI web site - IVACG page and electronic versions sent to the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse. These documents were also included in the USAID monthly mailing to missions.
- Exchanged information with the International Zinc Consultative Group (IZiNCG) on how IVACG operates.
- Made contact with the *Journal of Nutrition* seeking approval for publication of the XX IVACG Meeting report. The journal editor approved the request.
- Circulated to the IVACG Steering Committee a revision of the IVACG/UNICEF/WHO document prepared by WHO, “Vitamin A Supplements – A Guide to their use in the treatment and prevention of vitamin A deficiency”. The revision is meant to be the third edition. The Steering Committee was asked to review the document and provide comments, which will be given to WHO.

### INACG

- Organized conference calls for the INACG Steering Committee on 21 November 2000 and 19 January 2001. The steering committee used these calls to complete plans for the INACG Symposium in Hanoi, Vietnam. Minutes of these calls were prepared and distributed.

- 163 abstracts were received and reviewed by a small working group. Authors of those abstracts selected for poster presentations (51) at the INACG Symposium were notified. Authors of rejected abstracts were also notified.
- Managed the INACG Symposium held in Hanoi, Vietnam on 15-16 February 2001. Provided travel and lodging arrangements for the steering committee and invited speakers. Prepared the INACG Symposium program and abstract booklet. Participation in the INACG meeting was nearly identical to that of the IVACG meeting, so a joint participant list was prepared. The IVACG Local Organizing Committee graciously agreed to help with on-site planning for the INACG meeting as well. Worked with the Meliá Hotel to make all necessary meeting arrangements. Re-used poster boards prepared for the IVACG meeting. More than 500 attended the INACG Symposium. A news release describing the major outcomes of the meeting was prepared and distributed.
- Organized an INACG Strategic Planning Meeting for 17 February 2001 in Hanoi, Vietnam. Those invited were identified by the INACG Steering Committee as representatives of organizations with an interest in iron deficiency or other micronutrients. Thirty-nine individuals, including representatives from UNICEF, WHO, FAO, the World Bank, IVACG, IZiNCG, non-governmental organizations, and developing country program managers, participated in the half-day meeting and discussed the role INACG should play. A summary of the discussion was prepared and will be distributed to the INACG Steering Committee.
- Organized an INACG Steering Committee meeting on 17 February 2000 in Hanoi, Vietnam. The group reviewed the INACG Symposium, reviewed progress on previously identified projects, and identified new projects. Minutes of the meeting were prepared and will be distributed.
- Provided assistance when requested to the *Journal of Nutrition* for the preparation of the supplement containing the proceedings of the Belmont Conference, “Iron Deficiency Anemia: Reexamining the Nature and Magnitude of the Public Health Problem.” The supplement was issued in February and INACG purchased 500 copies for distribution. UNICEF requested 140 copies for their offices and Dr. Bernard Brabin requested 30 copies for a meeting in the Netherlands on anemia in developing countries. A notice was sent to the “iron list” serve about the availability of the publication. Copies were also distributed to the INACG Steering Committee and the authors of the papers included.
- Supported two participants for the regional technical consultation, “Iron Fortification: Where Are We in Terms of Iron Compounds?” sponsored by the Pan American Health Organization, ILSI, and INACG. INACG Secretariat attended the consultation. The planned INACG statement on selecting appropriate fortificants became part of this activity.

- INACG endorsed the reduction of iron deficiency anemia goal being proposed for the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children to be held at the United Nations in September 2001.
- No significant progress was made on a series of publications that had been initiated prior to the appointment of the new INACG Steering Committee. These included composition of iron supplements, revision of the INACG assessment “black book”, and a statement on the effect of altitude on hemoglobin.

#### Targeted Operational Research

- Dr. Penelope Nestel served as the Micronutrient Global Leadership Coordinator. She is a consultant for the MGL project.
- Received final reports from Drs. Ahluwalia and Gershwin. These were reviewed by Dr. Nestel and other external reviewers. Comments concerning expected revisions to the final reports were returned to the authors.
- Progress reports were received from Drs. Arthur and Zlotkin. Dr. Zlotkin asked for permission to use remaining funds to make an additional serum collection and analysis. This was approved.
- Dr. Beard requested an extension with new money to add more mother/child pairs to his study. After review by external experts as well as Dr. Nestel, the decision was not to provide additional funds. Dr. Beard then requested a no-cost extension to provide additional time to analyze the data he had collected. A six-month no cost extension was provided.
- A postcard advertising the availability of the three new IVACG statements and the Draper/Nestel publication, “*A Study of Factors Influencing Operational Issues of Iron Supplements for Infants and Young Children*”, was distributed to the MGL mailing list with ordering information. The iron list serve also received a notice about the availability of the Draper/Nestel publication.
- Dr. Nestel provided a summary of ongoing and multiple micronutrient trials for women and children to USAID. This information will be used in the planning of a USAID/Wellcome Trust meeting on multiple micronutrient supplementation.
- Dr. Nestel provided to USAID a review of the literature covering the interaction between various micronutrients and malaria and tuberculosis. The paper also identified research gaps.
- Dr. Nestel participated in two meetings, 1) First World Congress on the Fetal Origins of Adult Disease held in Mumbai, India on 2-4 February 2001, and 2)

- First South Asia Low Birth Weight Consultative Group meeting on 8-9 February 2001 in Hanoi, Vietnam. She provided trip reports for each.
- No progress was made on the quality assurance manual, a third revision of the vitamin A inventory with long and short-term priorities, or the OMNI Research follow-up activities.

#### MGL Administration

- Staffing changes – Ms. Dorothy Foote resigned her position as IVACG/INACG Manager. With USAID approval, ILSI initiated a search for her replacement.
- All necessary financial reports were submitted to USAID, including pipeline reports.

#### **Activities Planned for the Next Six Months (1 April 2001 – 30 September 2001)**

#### IVACG

- Report from the XX IVACG Meeting will be prepared for publication in *The Journal of Nutrition*. The report will include the Annecy papers presented at the IVACG meeting with recommendations for action, the biotechnology presentation made by Dr. Gary Toenniessen, the IVACG History prepared by Dr. Vinodini Reddy, the rapporteurs report of the meeting discussion, the meeting program and the abstracts presented at the meeting. The joint IVACG/INACG participant list will be published as a stand-alone document and distributed to those who attended the meeting.
- An IVACG Steering Committee meeting will be organized for August or September.
- Work on several new IVACG publications will be initiated, including a document describing the role of plants in meeting vitamin A requirements, a revised statement on the impact of night blindness during pregnancy, a glossary of terms used in the vitamin A field, and an updated unit conversion bookmark.
- Contact will be made with countries interested in hosting the XXI IVACG Meeting, specifically Morocco and Turkey.

#### INACG

- Minutes of the 17 February 2001 INACG Steering Committee meeting will be distributed to the steering committee members.

- Report from the Hanoi INACG Symposium will be prepared for publication and distribution to the meeting participants. The report will contain three-page summaries from the invited speakers, the rapporteurs summary of the discussions, the meeting program, and the abstracts presented as posters.
- A conference call for the INACG Steering Committee will be organized for May or June to discuss progress on ongoing projects. The next INACG Steering Committee meeting will be in the fall.
- Progress on the identified INACG publication projects will be made. These include revision of the assessment “black book”, a decision-tree to link to aid selection of appropriate assessment methods, and a statement on the impact of altitude on hemoglobin.
- INACG Steering Committee members will be encouraged to stay in contact with other organizations working in the field of iron deficiency anemia or related public health issues. Committee members from developing countries will be asked to provide summaries describing what iron activities are going on in their regions.

#### Targeted Operational Research

- Dr. Nestel will continue to serve as the Micronutrient Global Leadership Coordinator through a consulting agreement with ILSI Research Foundation.
- Revised final reports from Drs. Ahulwahia and Gershwin will be received. Final reports should be received from Drs. Zlotkin and Beard and sent out for review. Progress reports from Dr. Arthur will be received and reviewed.
- Dr. Nestel will work with the Wellcome Trust to organize a joint meeting with USAID on multiple micronutrient supplementation.
- Dr. Nestel will continue working on the data analysis from the Sri Lanka wheat fortification trial.
- Dr. Nestel will work with the MOST project on a series of program-based documents some of which were identified initially in the OMNI Research evaluation.
- Dr. Nestel will help generate progress with the quality assurance manual.
- Dr. Nestel will explore the possibility of co-sponsoring a study of the WHO post partum vitamin A dosing schedule (for mothers and infants) in Ghana and Tanzania.

MGL Administration

- A trip report covering the Hanoi meetings will be prepared and submitted to USAID.
- All required financial reports will be submitted.
- An appropriate applicant will be hired as the IVACG/INACG Manager.