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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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TO: AID/W (CAID A 135) X

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FROM: PANAMA CITY  
E.O. 11652: N/A  
SUBJECT: EDUCATION SECTOR LOAN REVIEW  
(525-L-036 - USAID/Panama)

DATE SENT  
11-5-74

A-DR-Att

REFERENCE:

List of Participants:

Ministry of Education

- Dr. Aristides Royo - Minister of Education
- Prof. Rigo Julrud - Vice Minister of Education
- Prof. Leonildo Fuentes del Cid - Director of Planning and Educational Reform/MOE
- Prof. Franklin R. Rodriguez - Loan Administrator, MOE
- Prof. Lilia de Urriola - Subdirector, Directorate General of Education/MOE
- Lic. Juan Alford - Director of Administration/MOE
- Prof. Anel Rodriguez - Coordinator of Decentralization/MOE
- Prof. Silvia de Galvis - National Director of Teacher Training and In-Service Education/MOE
- Prof. Josefa Maria Prado - National Director of Curriculum and Educational Technology
- Architect Ramon de Leon - Department of Construction and Maintenance/MOE
- Dr. Jorge Ardoñez - Technical Advisor/MOE (525-L-036 Loan Contract)
- Dr. Aristobulo Prado - Technical Advisor/MOE (525-L-036 Loan Contract)
- Dr. Claude C. Loyd - Technical Advisor/MOE (525-L-036 Contract).

① Werge, Paul  
for his check  
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Ministerio de la Presidencia

Lic. Orlando Calcedo

② official file

Att. 5250145-3

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FORM NO. 10-62 (REV. 10-67)

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PRINTED: 1-74

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USAID/Personnel

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Mr. Adrien Cruz-Jonzalez - Deputy Chief, Education Sector

Mr. Bruce Berry - Office of Controller

Mr. Larry Burnett - ODP

Mr. Jose Sanchez - Engineer, Office of Urban Planning.

The Third Annual Evaluative Meeting of A.I.D. Loan Project 525-L-036:

The meeting was convened in the conference room of the Ministry of Education at 3:50 p.m., Monday, September 10, 1974. Minister of Education, Dr. Aristides Rizo, and Vice Minister Hugo Guiraud presided over the meeting. The Minister of Education set the tone of the meeting with his opening words when he stated clearly that the purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the present A.I.D. Loan Project and to determine a perspective from which to visualize what might be accomplished under a future A.I.D. Loan.

It was agreed that the meeting would be conducted primarily on the basis of relevant questions and subsequent discussion and answers rather than solely as a series of formal presentations. MOE Loan Administrator Franklin Rodriguez distributed a folio of thirteen statistical tables entitled "Economic Analysis of A.I.D. Loan 525-L-036" and used flip chart-size corresponding tables to explain the actual status of Loan Project finances, and the manner in which the investments of both the A.I.D. Loan and JOP counterpart budgets have been carried out to accomplish the goals of the Loan Project. In his presentation, Mr. Rodriguez emphasized the importance of the contribution that has come from community participation in construction of selected schools under the loan. He stressed the desirability of capitalizing intensively upon the positive aspects of community participation in school construction in any future loan project. He also mentioned some changes currently being considered in present plans for some rural localities. He used as an example La Chorrera, Darien Province, where long range projections for school population do not justify the relatively large investment contemplated under the loan project. He stated that the JOP plans to change the type of construction originally planned for La Chorrera so that the community self-help concept can be capitalized upon to build an appropriate school at much lower cost than that now programmed. Construction funds can then be shifted to give added impact to other loan components.

Following Mr. Rodriguez's presentation, there was an exchange of comments, questions and answers which pinpointed key issues and highlighted several highly interesting and significant features of Loan Project operation. Typical of the questions and interchange were the following:

MR. LASSFORD: "Franklin, it is our understanding that the contingency fund set aside following last year's loan review was not to be utilized for construction, but for the components focusing upon improving the quality of education. Are we in agreement in this respect?"

MR. RODRIGUEZ: "Yes. The project activities will be reviewed and the budget will be revised to channel the remaining contingency funds into activities for improving the quality of teaching."

MR. BURNETT: "Mr. Rodriguez, I notice on the chart that you have indicated that some school construction projects have received help from the community while most have not. Which schools received help from the community?"

MR. RODRIGUEZ: "Although a self-help construction program was not originally contemplated under Loan 525-L-036, a number of rural communities subsequently indicated their desire to participate in the construction of their own schools. Responding to this enthusiasm and willingness to work for their own development, the MOE embarked on a program of self-help construction in twelve selected rural communities. In these self-help construction projects the cost per classroom is approximately \$3,000 while those built under formal construction contracts range upward to \$11,000 or \$12,000."

MR. L. A. BERRY: "What type of input does the community make? Are the materials for the schools being imported?"

MR. RODRIGUEZ: "The communities furnish non-specialized labor and some materials such as sand from the local area."

MR. L. A. BERRY: "How many schools are constructed to replace old schools and how many are newly created schools? What percent?"

MR. RODRIGUEZ: (The Loan Administrator, along with Minister Royo stated that the Ministry of Education has not determined this information in terms of the percentage of schools which are replacements of old or rented quarters and the percentage which constitute new schools. The Minister stated, however, that such information would be made available.)

MR. LASSFORD: Stated that the construction program has gone well and that it had also been refocused to address rural needs through the community self-help projects. He said that the MOE has actually constructed more classrooms than originally planned.

MINISTER: Stated that the success of the (construction) program was due to the administrative quality of the MOE Loan Administrator, Mr. Franklin Rodriguez. The discussion then shifted to qualitative aspects of the loan program.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Mentioned that the presentations would now be given by Prof. Leopoldo Fuentes del Cid, Dr. Jorge Ordoñez, Prof. Josefa Prado and Prof. Juan Abood. He added that in the course of the loan project implementation, it had been very difficult to secure experts for technical assistance, particularly in the field of curriculum. He stated, however, that from this point forward highest priority would be given to improve the qualitative aspects of education in accordance with the Education Reform Plan.

MINISTER: Stated "We still do not have a clear picture of what the future of education in Panama will be... The majority of secondary school students still are studying "Philosophy and Letters" (the majority in education)... and are finding difficulty in securing employment after graduation. Thus the Nation is not being provided with personnel needed for its development. Panama needs a scientific study to determine its manpower requirements. Other questions that should be addressed include: What type of education are we delivering? Is it an education for development? We want to take advantage of the (geographical) location of our Nation and need also to produce more food. It is time the Ministry of Education had an economic purpose in nature; not only the (national) planning office should decide what type of programs the Nation should have. The Ministry of Education should also participate in this (economic planning), as should the University.

The University of Panama is now considering the creation of an Institute for National Development (INNADE) which will be composed of a group of professors that will, with the Ministry of Education and other Ministries, conduct research activities and prepare development plans on soil, cement, production schools, hotel industry and on the design of integrated rural programs. This Research Institute will also provide the technical expertise necessary to investigate and develop innovative projects. It may cost initially as much as \$400,000 to create this Institute (50% MOE and 30% University).

MR. FIRFER: The AID/Panama Director manifested general agreement with the Minister's line of thought and asked Dr. Applegate to say what he thought about the idea.

DR. APPLEATE: "The personnel of the country itself should be utilized to do this (type of) work, and A.I.D. is in agreement with a center of this type."

MINISTER ROYO: "We will have a meeting with you (meeting subsequently held the next day). The five-year plan for education will be one of the projects of this Institute."

MR. FIRFER: Posed a question concerning how a National Research and Planning Institute might be established, and asked Frank Bassford to talk about the package he carried to Washington.

MR. TASSFORD: Talked about the letter he had sent to the University with copies to the Ministry of Education about possible avenues to development of a Research Institute.

MINISTER: The United States and Panama seem to be speaking the same language.

DR. APPLEDATE: Took the opportunity to change the subject by asking about an item on the chart of loan project expenditures. He directed a question to Mr. Franklin Rodriguez about the apparent over-expenditure of funds for construction by \$134,000.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: The overage will be lowered. It is actually small. In the end it will not amount to \$134,000 as shown on the status report. There are balances in various construction projects that will more than account for the overage as shown. There will have to be a revised letter of implementation to solve this problem (the over programming).

MR. TASSFORD: The A.I.D. Loan Administrator reminded the MOE Loan Administrator (Mr. Tassford reminded Mr. Rodriguez) that the MOE is more than 100% obligated under the construction component of the loan, and stated that if the MOE wishes to construct more, it must be in accordance with the pre-loan review letter he had sent i.e., further construction would have to be with counterpart funds.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: The MOE Loan Administrator stated that this was understood and further stated that if the MOE should decide, as it is now planning, to build the Darien La Palma School with its own funds, that the amount now programmed from loan funds for the construction of La Palma School should more than make up the over programmed amount in loan construction. He also stated that he agreed that in the future remaining loan funds would concentrate on improving the quality of education.

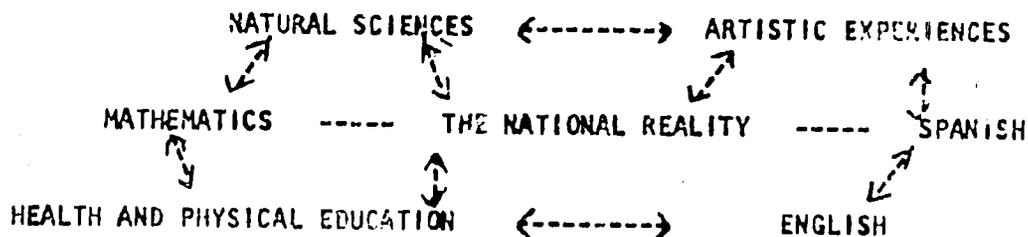
MR. FUENTES DEL CID: The Director of Planning and Educational Reform alluded to the letter written by Mr. Tassford and spoke about a proposal prepared by the Ministry of Education to develop a multisectorial five-year plan to include inputs from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health. He stated that under this plan, the small rural school will become an educational and social center, and in any given region the social centers would become the nuclei of population concentrations for the purposes of local planning and the provision of community services. He called the local school nuclearization complex a "production school" (i.e. a school with a diversified curriculum incorporating practical with academic instruction and including facilities for resident students where needed. These schools will provide a basic nine-year education relevant to regional and community social and development needs. "However, we cannot re-structure and reorient these schools toward development without serious study. Beginning there, we need to intensify research. We need a level of planning which will coordinate technical help. The National Directorate of Teacher Training and In-Service Education is working in curriculum, as is the National Directorate of

Educational Services with the help of Dr. Ordoñez. We in the National Directorate of Planning and Educational Reform are creating plans for Educational Development as we go. We do not want an innovation for the sake of innovation, but innovation based on concrete research..."

PROF. PRADO: The Director of Curriculum and Educational Technology of the MOE began her presentation with two strongly enunciated rhetorical questions: What does the Panamanian State want? What kind of education is needed? The National Curriculum Director then proceeded to present the MOE position with respect to what is needed and what the direction of curriculum is in Panama for basic education.

She referred back to Mr. Franklin Rodriguez's statement that "communities participate in construction of school classrooms." She termed this participation in their own development, and stated that communities should also participate in other formal and non-formal educational programs. She utilized charts to explain the approach being made by the Curriculum Reformers to develop the nine-year General Basic Education Program. It was presented as information from the Curriculum Development as a project now under way. The content areas and relationships one-to-the-other were portrayed as follows:

Project for Programs in Education



She added that technology in the following six program areas would be integrated with the above content areas: "Agropecuaria", Industrial, Artisanal, Agro-Industrial, Commercial and Family Education (Educación para el Hogar).

General Basic Education as outlined above would be developed on a regional basis with maximum community participation for nine years (grades) for all children from six to fifteen years of age. It would provide them with basic education and would offer a maximum of flexibility with respect to options in technological areas. The program would also include out-of-school adults as school and community are integrated. The school will not be the "typical academic school". Rather, it would provide students with an educational background which will allow them flexibilities to choose a future career, either by continuing their education at a higher level in either vocational or academic fields or to use practical skills gained immediately in the labor market.

The curriculum will incorporate all human beings who live in the area. The objectives (of the curriculum) are inspired by the National Constitution (1972) which establishes this type of education (for Panama).

MR. ADRIAN CRUZ-GONZALEZ: The AID/Panama Education Sector Assistant asked: "What type of support under Loan 525-L-036 would be needed?"

PROF. PRADO: She responded very precisely: (1) In the preparation of texts and teachers guides; (2) In printing; (3) In the development of a specialized library for the Department of Curriculum Development, and (4) In the training of teaching personnel.

MR. EASSFORD: The AID/Panama Education Sector Chief directed a request to Miss Prado that she please explain the type of contribution that Dr. Aristobulo Pardo had made to the work of the Curriculum Reform.

PROF. PRADO: Miss Prado stated that Dr. Pardo has done a valuable service, reviewing, updating and re-writing Spanish language programs at the primary and secondary levels. She stated that he had also rendered high-level service to the University in the programs of Spanish for teachers and in the Post-Graduate Spanish Program.

PROF. RODRIGUEZ: Asked for a presentation from the next person on the regular agenda.

DR. JORGE ORDÓÑEZ: Explained his role as a Technical Advisor in the MOE Department of Educational Services. He stated that for eight weeks after arriving in Panama he visited throughout the nation to orient himself concerning the realities of the Educational Guidance System and other aspects of the Panamanian educational situation. He said that he felt that as a Panamanian, he had been able to understand the difficulties involved in bringing about a reform in the Educational Services (including professional guidance) Department. His study shows that 72% of the guidance workers of the MOE are stationed in Panama City, and (among other statistics that can be read in his reports) there are no guidance workers in some provinces and only eight in Colon and ten in the relatively heavily populated Chiriquí Province. He noted further that all guidance personnel work at the secondary level; i.e., primary schools are not served by guidance workers at all. His analysis also revealed that there are no social workers in the Department of Educational Services. He noted that according to the National Constitution of 1972, the guidance service should cover the entire country, and should serve all levels of education. The implication was that with the present organizational structure of Educational Services and with a total of only 143 guidance personnel and six psychologists, the type of service stipulated for guidance in the National Constitution cannot be rendered. A new organization has been projected on a pilot basis. It assumes that individual guidance cannot be provided because of limited resources, that re-training of personnel now in service is necessary, and that re-assignment of the personnel in service is needed in order to render the maximum of service possible with existing personnel. One such study is now under way. In the City of Panama there are now two Pilot Guidance Centers which have been established by transferring existing MOE personnel from schools and from the Central Ministry Office of Educational Guidance Department.

Dr. Ordoñez stated that the guidance system must be reformed to respond to the needs of the Nation and that the key to the reform is the establishment of these centers, placement of guidance teachers in the centers (instead of having them underutilized in the schools) and training of additional personnel.

MR. HUGO GUIRAUD: Referred briefly to Dr. Ordoñez's topic (Guidance). He stated that the social workers would work in the communities and that provision would be made to include social workers in the budget in the future. He reiterated, however, that guidance would have to be provided in accordance with the available resources of the Nation.

The Administrative Director then made a presentation:

MISS JUANA ABOOD: The Administration Office has made a diagnostic study of the needs of the Department of Personnel for 22,000 employees. Based on this study, the accounting unit will be organized to include a system of accounting especially designed for accounting of the production schools. She mentioned also that the system for vehicles and services (Motor Pool) will be centralized and that an Office of Maintenance and Inspection has already been created in the MOE. It will operate a regionalized system of inspection and maintenance which will provide services such as plumbing and carpentry on a regional basis. The school furniture problem is being approached, and a design for school furniture appropriate to Panama is being sought. She stated that the regulations are being reviewed with the intent to find ways to improve the quality of personnel throughout the administrative division. She stated that for those tasks, 525-L-036 loan assistance in the form of training and technical assistance will be needed.

PROF. ISMAEL GARCIA: A question was raised by Prof. Ismael Garcia about the school furniture problem mentioned by the Administrative Director Juana Abood.

MR. BASSFORD: Responded to the question by explaining that he had noted that, in general, the same size desk is considered appropriate for all size children, and that this practice may be questioned. He suggested that the school furniture design studies mentioned by Director Abood might do well to include studies with respect to the furniture needs for different ages of school children.

MR. JOSE SANCHEZ: Engineer Sanchez inquired about the Department of School Maintenance. He asked if it is an action department, i.e., whether it actually executes work of maintenance required.

MISS ABOOD: Responded that is the idea -- in accordance with the resources -- and that work would be coordinated with DIGEDECOM and MOP.

MR. GUIRAUD: The Vice Minister summarized the review proceedings and expressed a highly positive and optimistic attitude with respect to the overall Education Sector Loan Activities. He stated that the National Plan for Education did not contemplate the sweeping political transformation of the country

which has demanded a rethinking of educational plans and programs. This has resulted in a realignment of loan resources to support new educational priorities to help realize new educational goals.

"Technical assistance is needed; the best technician which can be found, but the technician must understand Panama and Panama must understand him..." (The Vice Minister noted that there are cases in which the technician will not permit Panama to understand him). He stated the language at times creates difficulties. The attitude (the technician's) must not be one of imposition... The orientation of programs we want to maintain. However, we want support to realize the programs...". He went on to discuss the purpose and necessity of schools to provide an economically feasible way of educating those who need to be educated... and emphasized that schools and education should support development of all sectors of the population.

The Vice Minister elaborated upon how schools should help in creating "poles of development" nationwide; e.g., building a school deliberately to supplement an area in which a tourist hotel complex is being developed. He stated that a school curriculum which is relevant to the needs of local community may contribute to the control of migration to the city. He stated that academic education has in the past, actually contributed to an increase in migration to the city.

In closing, the Vice Minister vividly reminded those present that upon leaving Panama City in any direction toward the interior of the country, one will immediately note that there are Panamanians who have not received the benefits of economic development but who have the right to receive them. "It is for this group that our future efforts must be directed."

JORDEN

