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1. PROJECT NO. 598-11-995-005	2. PAR FOR PERIOD: Dec. 1970 TO Aug. 1973	3. COUNTRY PARAGUAY	4. PAR SERIAL NO. 74-2
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5. PROJECT TITLE

REGIONAL TECHNICAL AIDS CENTER (RTAC) ACTIVITIES IN PARAGUAY

6. PROJECT DURATION: Began FY -- Ends FY --	7. DATE LATEST PROP --	8. DATE LATEST PIP --	9. DATE PRIOR PAR --
10. U.S. FUNDING	a. Cumulative Obligation Thru Prior FY: \$ --	b. Current FY Estimated Budget: \$ --	c. Estimated Budget to completion After Current FY: \$ --
11. KEY ACTION AGENTS (Contractor, Participating Agency or Voluntary Agency)			
a. NAME		b. CONTRACT, PASA OR VOL. AG. NO.	

I. NEW ACTIONS PROPOSED AND REQUESTED AS A RESULT OF THIS EVALUATION

A. ACTION (X)			B. LIST OF ACTIONS	C. PROPOSED ACTION COMPLETION DATE
USAID	AID/W	HOST		
X			1. Contact RTAC Mexico regarding the possibility of increasing the number of books received in Agriculture (Category 1) from 55 to 70 copies, and reducing the number of books in Engineering (Category 7) from 55 to 35 copies.	15 October 1973
X			2. Continue follow-up actions with institutions that have not returned the evaluation questionnaire. As appropriate, discontinue distribution of books to institutions that have not returned the questionnaire.	15 November 1973
X			3. Before entering into any new Bookstore ProAg with the National University of Asuncion, determine if the plans to establish a central bookstore will increase the efficiency of the program.	30 October 1973
X			4. Encourage the National University of Asunción to prepare and distribute a film catalog containing an adequate description of films.	30 October 1973
X			5. Initiate continuing monitoring visits to the various bookstores to strengthen managerial and financial practices and to promote the program. Consider the possibility of carrying out a seminar for Bookstore Managers.	Continuing

D. REPLANNING REQUIRED
 REVISED OR NEW: PROP PIP PRO AG PIG/T PIG/C PIG/P

E. DATE OF MISSION REVIEW
 August 1973

PROJECT MANAGER: TYPED NAME, SIGNED INITIALS AND DATE
 Boris Michailuk *BMichailuk* 10/11/73

MISSION DIRECTOR: TYPED NAME, SIGNED INITIALS AND DATE
 Oliver L. Gause *Oliver L. Gause*

REPORT ON EVALUATION OF RTAC ACTIVITIES IN PARAGUAY

During August 1973, the USAID/P Program Office carried out an evaluation of RTAC activities in Paraguay to determine the effectiveness of the program and its contribution to the education sector. The evaluation encompassed all the activities in which RTAC currently is engaged. Comments on the operation of each are summarized below under individual headings, including recommendations which we believe will strengthen the program.

I. SYSTEMATIC DISTRIBUTION

Commercial Publications

The systematic distribution program was established by RTAC during 1970 following the first RTAC Contact Officers' Meeting in Mexico City in May 1970. Since December 1970, USAID/P has distributed 32,250 books (471 titles) with an estimated value of \$78,675 to local educational and governmental institutions. The distribution list as of June 30, 1973 was as follows:

University Libraries	29
Governmental and Municipal Libraries	26
Research and Development Institution Libraries	31
Ministry of Education (for subsequent distribution to 5 regional education centers and approximately 40 normal schools)	1
Ministry of Agriculture (for subsequent distribution to approximately 49 Extension Service Offices in the interior)	1
Vocational Schools	11
Other	<u>27</u>
TOTAL	<u><u>126</u></u>

For the purpose of this evaluation a questionnaire was prepared and distributed to all the recipient institutions to obtain information on the organization, the administration of its library, and the significance and acceptance of the RTAC program.

As of this writing, 51 of the 126 institutions have returned a completed questionnaire, and the information contained therein was

analyzed in detail. Of this total, 41 institutions were visited during the evaluation to make a physical confirmation of the data provided.

We found that, in general, most of the institutions visited, although operating with very limited financial resources, were following adequate administrative practices and had established control systems. The responses to the questionnaire indicate that in most cases the RTAC books are being favorably received by the institutions and, apparently, are also well accepted by the users.

The RTAC Contact Office at the Mission has been following adequate distribution procedures. Every book is reviewed to determine the type and level of the content and thus determine which institutions could make good use of it. Therefore, relatively few cases were found of institutions that were not taking full advantage of the books. These were institutions that, mostly as a consequence of previous agreements or special requests, were receiving a copy of every title distributed by the Mission.

Only 2 cases were found of libraries that have not established adequate inventory records and control of borrowings. Actions have been taken by the RTAC Contact Office to exclude temporarily these institutions from the distribution list until appropriate controls are established.

Based on responses to the questionnaires with regard to the type of books each institution desires to receive, the distribution list has been modified to ensure that each institution receives only those types of books that will suit their needs.

Follow-up should be made by the RTAC Contact Office with the institutions that have not yet turned-in the questionnaire, and further revisions of the distribution list should be made if necessary. As appropriate, distribution of books to institutions that have not returned the questionnaire should be discontinued.

The number of copies received by the Mission under each subject category was analyzed. Copies in the field of Engineering (Category 7) surpassed actual needs, while copies in the field of Agriculture (Category 1) are too few to cover the demand.

- Recommendation No. 1:
- a. Contact RTAC Mexico regarding the possibility of increasing the number of books received in Agriculture (Category 1) from 55 to 70 copies, and reducing the number of books in Engineering (Category 7) from 55 to 35 copies.
(Due October 15, 1973)
 - b. Continue follow-up actions with institutions that have not returned the evaluation questionnaire. In the meantime, discontinue the

distribution of books to these institutions as deemed necessary. (Due 15 November 1973)
Action: RTAC Contact Officer

Non-Commercial Publications

Since the inception of the systematic distribution program in December 1970, a total of 227,310 pamphlets (259 titles) have been distributed. The distribution of non-commercial publications is being made to the same institutions receiving commercial publications, plus some governmental agencies which provide adequate re-distribution on a country-wide basis, e.g. the Ministries of Agriculture, Education and Health. The type and number of non-commercial publications being received is considered adequate.

II. UNIVERSITY TEXTBOOK PROGRAM (Bookstore Operations)

Background Information

The objective of the bookstores is to offer the students the option of purchasing books at near cost or renting them for a fee, thereby expanding the use of textbooks in the educational institutions.

The operations were initiated with Mission and local institution contributions, matched by an equal RTAC contribution in RTAC books. The objective of these contributions is to provide the initial working capital needed to establish a revolving fund for the continuation of the program. Under the various ProAgs, the local institutions agreed to contribute 10% of the amount provided by USAID plus adequate space, equipment and personnel. The responsibility of the management and financial operation is assumed by the institution.

The total investment in the bookstores as of June 30, 1973, excluding the institutions own in-kind investments, was as follows:

	<u>Agreed</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Balance</u>
USAID	\$40,000	\$39,166	\$ 834 ^{1/}
RTAC	\$51,100	\$34,505	\$16,595
Institutions	<u>\$ 4,600</u>	<u>\$ 4,600</u>	<u>-.-</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$95,700</u>	<u>\$78,271</u>	<u>\$17,429</u>

^{1/} \$657.53 deobligated.

The program was initiated during the academic years of 1969 and 1970 with the establishment of a) bookstores within four faculties of the National University and b) one bookstore within the Ministry of Education. During 1971 a bookstore was established within the Catholic University and a new ProAg was signed with the National University for textbooks sales in 14 Faculties and Institutions of the National University (including those four faculties which already had a bookstore operating under previous ProAgs).

The effectiveness of the operations of the bookstore program was evaluated through the semi-annual reports submitted to the RTAC Contact Office and visits to 8 bookstores where the program was examined in detail, including, to the extent possible, personal interviews with professors and other officials of the different institutions.

Program Effectiveness

From the sales rate of the different bookstores, which is the only currently available indicator, it can be concluded that program effectiveness is very low. For example, the highest sales rate was achieved by the bookstore at the Institute of Sciences, where cumulative sales during 3-1/2 academic years of operation amounted to \$11,860, an average investment per student, per year, of \$8.20. The average investment of the other bookstores varied from a low of 50 ¢ to \$7.20 per year, per student. Although no specific targets were established at the programming stage, it is obvious that the average investment per student is much lower than desirable, and constitutes a clear indication that the bookstore program has not yet had a significant impact within the educational institutions of the country.

Part of the reason could be attributed to the fact that Paraguayan students are not yet fully accustomed to the use of textbooks. The students either copy data dictated by professors or buy a mimeographed summary of a textbook, normally prepared by a professor and sold either by the professor or by the institution. Moreover most professors are not full-time and do not do much preparation for classes, resulting in little emphasis placed on the use of textbooks by these professors, i.e. they use the mimeographed summary as a crutch and do not encourage their students to get out ahead of them. Additionally, the low average income of the students has proved to be a significant factor in the low purchase rate of relatively expensive textbooks, and many professors and teachers receive such low pay that they themselves do not purchase textbooks, (e.g. the monthly salary of a normal school teacher is \$40 vs. an average cost per book of \$4).

Implementation Problems

It was found that as part of the new ProAg signed with the National University on March 25, 1971, the University has established

bookstores in four faculties which already had bookstores operating under separate individual ProAgs.

It appears that the second bookstores are not justified since their operational level is much lower than the original bookstores, and although both stores are physically integrated, there is a duplication of effort as separate records have to be maintained and separate reports prepared, which may easily lead to errors.

It was also found that from the total of 14 bookstores to be established under the ProAg, the National University has started only 9. Since four were established in faculties which already had a bookstore, this new program has had a very limited impact.

The National University is presently planning to establish one Central Bookstore and has approached the Mission requesting financial assistance to purchase the necessary facilities (shelving, office equipment, etc.) costing approximately \$4,000.

Physical Facilities

In the Project Agreements for the establishment of bookstores, the local institutions committed themselves to provide adequate equipment, space, personnel and other needs for the proper administration of the Textbook Program. With only one exception, it was observed that the bookstores did not have adequate facilities. The bookstores were mostly located in small isolated rooms out of the way of students and professors. In most cases, there is insufficient shelving, books are piled to the ceiling, and no browsing is possible. In one of the bookstores visited, all the books were stored in closed cabinets and all the low demand titles were tied up in wrapping paper.

Management

Poor management practices were observed in most of the bookstores visited. The people in charge are either librarians, professors or secretaries who were assigned the responsibility of managing the bookstores in addition to their regular duties.

Sales promotions have been found to be inadequate in all cases excepting the Faculty of Agronomy and Veterinary Sciences. Although committees have been established to select and approve purchases, these committees rarely meet. While in most cases price lists of books available are distributed, this has not proved to be effective.

There is insufficient participation of the professors in the selection of titles and in sales promotion. Most managers are not in direct contact with professors. In cases where forms were distributed to professors for title selection purposes, few replies were received.

On the other hand, cases were found where the stocks of titles were exhausted immediately after they arrived but were never re-ordered.

To a certain extent these failures can be attributed to the inadequate financial capability of the local participating institutions; however, it seems that several measures could have been taken by these institutions to make the operation of the bookstores more efficient, without necessarily increasing the cost to the institution. The fact that this is not being done, reflects a certain lack of interest and willingness on the part of most of the host country officials responsible for the implementation.

If the Mission intends to enter into a new Project Agreement with the National University for establishing a Central Bookstore, special attention should be devoted to ensuring the viability of the project. The National University should be required to provide reasonable evidence that the new unit will be staffed by a qualified manager and that adequate arrangements will be made to ensure that the centralized operations contribute to solving the problems presently being faced by the existing bookstores.

- Recommendation No. 2:
- a. Initiate continuing monitoring visits to the various bookstores to strengthen practices and promote the program. Consider the possibility of carrying out a seminar for Bookstore Managers. (Due date: Continuing).
Action: RTAC Contact Officer

 - b. Before entering into any new Bookstore Project Agreement with the National University of Asunción, determine if the plans to establish a central bookstore will increase the efficiency of the program. (Due date: 30 Oct. 1973).
Action: RTAC Contact Officer

III. FILM LIBRARY

Background Information

The film library was established within the National University under a ProAg signed on March 25, 1971, for the benefit of all of the universities faculties, schools, institutes, etc. The Mission obligated \$15,000 and the National University agreed to contribute \$5,000 (in cash) for the purchase of films. The University's contribution was actually made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). These amounts were matched by an equal RTAC contribution in films. In addition, RTAC is contributing one copy of every film and filmstrip produced under the sponsorship of RTAC since 1971.

Program Effectiveness

The program was initiated in early 1972 with the receipt of the first shipments of films. Total purchases through June 30, 1973 amounted to 514 films (511 titles).

A review of **film use** showed that borrowings were as follows:

April 1972 - June 1972 (6 mo.)	71 Titles
July 1972 - December 1972 (6 mo.)	158 Titles
January 1973 - June 1973 (6 mo.)	211 Titles
July 1973 - September 1973 (3 mo.)	434 Titles

Although these figures on film borrowings show an ascending trend, the program has not expanded sufficiently and the stock of films is greatly underutilized. Out of the total of 511 films provided there were approximately 100 that have never been borrowed or displayed. An analysis of the titles of films that were never displayed revealed that they consisted of films covering areas which we believe should be of general interest. The films that were shown covered more or less the same areas; therefore, it is difficult to draw a conclusion as to which type of films are in demand.

According to the Project Agreement, the purpose of the establishment of the film library was to make available to professors technical films to be utilized in their regular classes as well as in seminars or workshops with the final objective being the improvement of the curriculum and teaching methods. It was found that, with the exception of three faculties that borrow certain titles in a systematic manner, all the other Faculties or Institutions have used the services of the film library on only an occasional and sporadic basis. Therefore, the program objective of integrating the use of the films into the curricula and teaching plans has not been fully met.

It would appear that one of the reasons for the slow usage of films was the lack of adequate promotion. However, a list of titles of films in stock, prepared and distributed by the film library during May-June 1973, has contributed significantly to increased use of films. This type of promotion could be even more effective if the lists were issued in the form of a film catalog containing a description of each film, which could facilitate the selection and encourage potential users.

Recommendation No. 3: Encourage the National University of Asunción to prepare and distribute a film catalog containing an adequate description of films.
(Due date: 30 October 1973)
Action: RTAC Contact Officer

Physical Facilities

The National University has provided generally adequate space and installations. The equipment presently in use was provided by RTAC as an additional contribution at the time the RTAC Film Library in Buenos Aires was closed. Although many of the faculties have their own projectors and adequate display rooms, the film library has a pressing need for its own display room for the use of the institutions which lack their own facilities. The National University is now planning to remodel the room where the film library is located in order to provide space for film displays.

Administration and Controls

It was observed that the film library has instituted an adequate system of control for the borrowing of the films. Physical inventories are periodically performed, and all the films are still in good conditions. Individual cards are maintained for each film title which show the frequency of use and the name of the borrowing institutions.

Ev.Off:BMichailuk:ga
October 11, 1973

COMMENTS
FICHE
ABSTRACT
CATALOGUE
PROJECT
INFORM