

1. PROJECT TITLE Alternative Organizational Strategies			2. PROJECT NUMBER 931-0609	3. MISSION/AID/W OFFICE DS/RAD
5. KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DATES			4. EVALUATION NUMBER: Enter the number maintained by the reporting unit e.g., Country or AID/W Administrative Code, Fiscal Year, Serial No. beginning with No. 1 each FY) <u>81-2</u> <u>10/27/80</u>	
A. First PRO-AG or Equivalent FY _____	B. Final Obligation Expected FY <u>80</u>	C. Final Input Delivery FY _____	6. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING A. Total \$ _____ B. U.S. \$ <u>503,000</u>	
			7. PERIOD COVERED BY EVALUATION From (month/yr.) <u>June 30, 1976</u> To (month/yr.) <u>Sept. 30, 1979</u> Date of Evaluation Review _____	

8. ACTION DECISIONS APPROVED BY MISSION OR AID/W OFFICE DIRECTOR

A. List decisions and/or unresolved issues; cite those items needing further study. (NOTE: Mission decisions which anticipate AID/W or regional office action should specify type of document, e.g., algram, SPAR, PIO, which will present detailed request.)	B. NAME OF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	C. DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
<p>The decision has been made to accept the final two-volume report by the contractor but to limit distribution of this report because of reservations concerning the manner in which the data was collected and the manipulation of that data for purposes of quantitative analysis. The lesson to be drawn from the implementation of this project is that the contractor's use of "rapid reconnaissance" data collection techniques is probably inappropriate where the objective is to prepare a study that can be defended as valid, survey-based social science research.</p>		

<p>9. INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVISED PER ABOVE DECISIONS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Financial Plan <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/T _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Logical Framework <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/C <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P _____</p>	<p>10. ALTERNATIVE DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF PROJECT</p> <p>A. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Project Without Change</p> <p>B. <input type="checkbox"/> Change Project Design and/or <input type="checkbox"/> Change Implementation Plan</p> <p>C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discontinue Project (project completed)</p>
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<p>11. PROJECT OFFICER AND HOST COUNTRY OR OTHER RANKING PARTICIPANTS AS APPROPRIATE (Names and Titles)</p> <p><i>John W. Harbeson</i> John W. Harbeson, DS/RAD</p>	<p>12. Mission/AID/W Office Director Approval</p> <p>Signature: <i>Jerome French</i></p> <p>Typed Name: Jerome French, Director</p> <p>Date: <u>10/27/80</u> DS/RAD</p>
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Alternative Local Organization Strategies for Rural Poor in LDCs

The purpose of this project was to examine methods employable by external donor agencies such as A.I.D. to promote effective local organization by the rural poor. The research was to focus on alternative strategies that were adapted or adaptable to particular local circumstances. The goal was to help A.I.D. missions analyze their local circumstances with a view to arriving at cost-effective strategies for organization of the rural poor that could be recommended to host governments. The project began in July 1976 with the final report due in 1979. The two volume report, *Local Organizations and Rural Development: A Comparative Perspective*, was submitted in October, 1979. The findings of the study were the result of searches of relevant literature and field investigations in seven countries.

The general conclusions of the study are (1) "there is no alternative, particularly for outside donors, but to work with progressive farmers and the politically powerful;" (2) perhaps the proper sort of small farmer participation in local organizations can serve as a vehicle to get a greater share of benefits to the rural poor than in the past;" (3) participation through local resource commitment is an important demonstration of commitment to projects and increases their financial viability; and (4) participation is "useful for adapting and gaining acceptance of a new idea in the local environment." (page 204) The study also concludes that "to avoid exploitation the rural poor should band together as a group, form a local organization, and insist on having a say in organizational decision-making." The study identified three approaches to nurturing the development of local organizations: process/broker, broker, and blueprint approaches. Each approach was examined in terms of its effects on a range of indicators of organizational success: income change, financial viability, provision of services, equity, organizational influence and leadership. None of the approaches was found to have any particular advantage in promoting equity. Blueprint and process/broker approaches were found to be more effective than the broker approach in promoting overall organizational success.

The usefulness and reliability of any study is directly related to the appropriateness of the methodology employed. In the project approval stage there was considerable discussion about the suitability of the DAI proposal as a scientific study in terms of such matters as the clarity of the model, specificity of the hypotheses and procedures for sampling. A panel of experts was assembled which considered these matters and, in the end, the project was approved.

First, instead of completing a questionnaire for each person interviewed, DAI investigators summarized the results of indeterminate numbers of interviews with persons not identified on one interview form. As scientific interview-based research is normally conducted in LDCs as well as elsewhere, the data are the responses of interviewees to discrete, specific, focused questions. Such data then are used to test hypotheses and subsequently refine models. In the DAI study, however, these data appear to be lost, the only record being the investigators summaries of groups of interviews in the data collection document. Second, interview research, according to accepted canons of scientific investigation,

consists in asking respondents a limited number of specific, discrete, focused questions. Many of the questions in the DAI data collection instrument were very general, abstract, complex, and comprehensive. The instrument itself, moreover, is exceedingly long (nearly 100 pages). Hence the interview instrument, even as applied to the investigators themselves, is not rigorous enough to yield data on the investigators impression that can be reliably used to test hypotheses. Third, the impressions of the investigators are nonetheless coded and quantified as though the data were more discrete and specific than for the above reasons they were. Hence the quantitative analysis conveys a misleading impression of objectivity and scientific reliability.

Even if the study does not meet canons of scientific research, the report's conclusions and the descriptions of the local organizations studies (volume 2) prove interesting to the Agency. But these findings should be treated as impressions and not as conclusions. They may, therefore, add insights useful in the policy making process but will not provide reliable guidelines for determining the probable effectiveness of policies relating to local organizations and the rural poor.

Recommendations. I recommend (1) that distribution of this study be limited to members of the Office of Rural Development, the Rural Development and Development Administration Steering Committees, and others as approved in writing by the Office; (2) that copies distributed carry the substance of the evaluation as a forward; and (3) that the Agency not contract for scientific investigations where the data collection methodology employed in this study is to be used.