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Review CRS/Lesotho PL 480 Title ^{II} Program

Nov. 27 - 30, Dec. 11 - 14, 1979

Conducted by

R/FFPO STRONG

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CRS/Lesotho PL 480 Title II Program Review

1. PREFACE:

This review was initiated at the request of the USAID/Lesotho and carried out by the Regional Food for Peace Officer (R/FFPO). As AID/Washington is in the process of re-designing a PL 480 Title II Evaluation model, the review has been conducted primarily as a mission in-house exercise to assist the USAID/Lesotho Director and staff to better understand the current CRS/Lesotho program, its management, objectives and implementation in the context of developing a Mission Food-Aid strategy appropriate to Lesotho. This review is not an audit or an evaluation.

II. BACKGROUND:

CRS/Lesotho has been implementing PL 480 Title II programs in Lesotho since 1965 in agreement with the Government of Lesotho. In May 1978 the Government of Lesotho established the Food Management Unit (FMU) as part of the Prime Minister's Office to coordinate and control all donated food supplies. The FMU receives, stores and issues Title II commodities in collaboration with CRS/Lesotho. It also provides CRS/Lesotho with financial assistance for CRS/Lesotho program administrative costs (approximately \$38,000 annually) and serves as the major CRS counter-part in Title II matters. CRS/Lesotho programs have been recently limited to Food for Work and a Pre-School, Food and Nutrition Program. The latter is a recently developed standard CRS program designed for Africa and implemented on a standard basis within each CRS African country program. The Food for Work program follows traditional implementation modified in Lesotho over several years and is primarily implemented by several elements within the GOL. The CRS/Lesotho program has expanded to cover approximately 299,000 beneficiaries in FY 1980.

III. PRE-SCHOOL - MOTHER/CHILD, FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAM:

A. Background

This program was designed by the CRS Regional Medical Director for Africa and is implemented along standards lines in several African countries. Through a central AID/W grant CRS/Lesotho is one of four African countries which receive assistance in the implementation of this particular program. The objectives of the program are outlined in the AID/W Grant documentation (see files). CRS/Lesotho will be included in the eventual evaluation of this grant. The essentials of the CRS pre-school, Mother and Child Food and Nutrition Program is the "contract" between the responsible recipient, i.e., the

mother, and CRS or its distributing agent, e.g., clinic or "center". This "contract" implies that the responsible recipient will regularly attend the "center", receive nutrition education, medical consultation, follow specific feeding practices and in return receive a food supplement which has an economic as well as nutritional value. CRS has developed a system (referred to as the growth surveillance system - GSS) which monitors the "contract" performance and provides a control over Title II commodity utilization by the recipients. CRS's pre-school, Mother/Child, Food and Nutrition program which incorporates Title II commodities as an essential element.

B. IMPLEMENTATION

1. The CRS/Lesotho FY 80 program intends to reach 75,000 pre-school children and 67,000 mothers or women of child bearing age. CRS/Lesotho makes this program available to "centers" willing to adhere to the defined CRS program criteria which include the nomination of manager, provision of health staff, administrative assistants and appropriate clerks and helpers. The number of days that a program operates is determined by the management of each center. Each center must have resources for transporting commodities from FMU depots and storing and account for the commodities. Currently there are 65 enrolled "centers": 6 Government, 5 Red Cross, 2 Community (local council) and 52 Mission (sectarian). Although any "center" is eligible for inclusion in the program, CRS/Lesotho's approved level of participation, i.e., 142,000 recipients has been reached with "centers" on the waiting list for participation.

2. Although CRS/Lesotho will provide training to the "center's" staff, as well as measuring/weighing equipment, nutritional educational supplies and food commodities, the "center" must operate financially independent, obtaining a small fee from the participation which will cover the costs of the "center's" operation and food logistics. The "centers" remit R0.03 per a Handing recipient per month to CRS/Lesotho. Accounts are maintained and CRS/Lesotho monitors the center's expenditures of these fees.

3. Recipients attend the center each month, the adults receive nutrition education lectures and demonstrations; the child is measured and receives a medical examination. Medications are provided as required and referral to additional medical facilities as appropriate. Immunization is given as necessary.

4. Records are maintained for each visit and each individual's records of visits, immunization, measurements are

completed on a chart which is retained by the adult as the "admission card" to the program.

C. ADMINISTRATION:

The overall administration of this program appears satisfactory. CRS/Lesotho has supervisory staff and is back-stopped with technical assistance personnel from CRS Regional Office, Nairobi. A significant administrative element of the program is performed by the staff of the "center" which is trained and supervised by CRS/Lesotho. CRS/Lesotho receives monthly and other reports that are prepared by the "center". Food commodities are picked up at FMU depots against CRS/Lesotho allocations by the "Centers" using their own arranged transport. Satisfactory execution of administrative responsibilities on the part of "Centers" is a criteria for continuation and/or expansion.

D. ISSUES:

1. As CRS/Lesotho moved from a mission oriented feeding program of the past into a structured food and nutrition program as developed by CRS regional, there appears to have been missing element - namely appropriate communication between CRS and Lesotho Ministry of Health. As a result CRS/Lesotho has continued to implement their program in an atmosphere of growing criticism on the part of MOH and other health associated groups. The ownership of the program appears to belong to CRS with little attempt to "share" the program with others involved and responsible for the GOL's health objectives. Thus several issues have developed which in the minds of MOH concerned officials have become real. CRS/Lesotho defense of its program and retractability which may be inspired by CRS regional leadership have created a hostile ambience.

2. The Permanent Secretary, MOH, has indicated that CRS/Lesotho may have exceeded its agreement with GOL in the provision of food-aid. CRS/Lesotho on the other hand believes it has the approval to implement a food-aid program of its own design without compromise to GOL/MOH requirements. GOL/MOH believes that the CRS/Lesotho pre-school, Maternal/Child Food and Nutrition program as conceived by CRS Regional and implemented by CRS/Lesotho should be reviewed to determine if it should be continued or whether MOH should recommend its termination and seek food-aid for Health/Nutrition programs from other sources.

3. Issues, real or imagined, as each of the parties see them:

a) CRS:

1. Necessity to limit the program to AID/Washington authorized levels when most "centers" can enroll additional participants;
 2. Limitation of funds or authorization to expend associated fees for vehicles, construction of facilities to expand program into less accessible areas;
 3. Unjustified opposition to program which appears from most governmental source including MOH and the Food and Nutrition Unit;
 4. Critics do not face the realities of program implementation, the administration and monitoring responsibilities to which CRS/Lesotho is committed under Title II.
- b) MOH, etc:
1. Title II foods distributed by CRS/Lesotho are not geared to health needs; they may be an inappropriate selection relative to MOH position on breast feeding;
 2. Program is not sufficiently "targeted" to the most needy; a quota system has been imposed that prevents enrollment of new and perhaps more needy recipients; distribution is indiscriminate;
 3. MOH has various standardized statistical reporting requirements which are not pursued by CRS/Lesotho distributing agents or "centers";
 4. Objectives of CRS/Lesotho program appear not to be geared to national program; CRS/Lesotho food distribution detrimental to national immunization program activities; program identified as CRS's not Lesotho's;
 5. Permanent Secretary believes that CRS/Lesotho may have violated their agreement implying that AID has assisted in circumventing the essence of their bilateral agreement by supporting the CRS/Lesotho move to implement a program without appropriate collaboration;
 6. CRS-MOH-CRS communication has been less than desired.

c) R/FFPO:

AID's support of a program, which is essentially experimental, has not been adequately presented and discussed with governmental authorities, CRS implication of take it or leave it attitude with AID's support is not acceptable to MOH.

Table I

MONTHLY RATION PACKAGE

Pre-School: EACH PARTICIPANT

Children	75,000
Mothers	<u>67,000</u>
TOTAL	142,000

NFDM	2.0 kg
Bulgur	2.3 kg
vegoil	1.0 kg

FOOD for Work: Each Worker received ration for self and dependants

Workers	11,400
Dependants	<u>45,600</u>
TOTAL	57,000

SFCM	22.68 kg. (50 lbs)
Flour	22,68 kg. (50 lbs)
Veg oil	2.50 kg. (5.5 lbs)

Table II

DELIVERED COSTS (DOLS PER METRIC TON)

On basis of shipments during period March - June 1979

Commodity	Value	Ocean Freight	Rail	Inland (1) Rand	TOTAL
VegOil	899	197	100-130	0.10	1,196-1,236
NFDM (2)	352	205	75-110	0.10	632- 677
SFCM (3)	247	148	30 0	0.10	425- 475
Bulgur	242	141	30- 70	0.10	413- 463
Wheat Flour	204	130	24- 44	0.10	358- 388

1. Inland costs vary significantly on basis of routing. Although ocean freight is same to Durban or East London on-ward shipping to railhead and railhead to FMU warehouse differs significantly depending om FMU warehouse location.

2. NFDM - Non-fat dry milk

3. SFCM - Sov fortified corn meal.

Table III

RATION COSTS

		LANDED COST	RETAIL MARKET VALUE ⁽¹⁾
<u>PRE-SCHOOL:</u>			
NFDM:	2.0 kg.	\$1.35	\$4.37
BULGUR:	2.3 kg.	1.07	.99 ⁽²⁾
VEG OIL:	1.0 kg.	<u>1.24</u>	<u>1.84</u>
	TOTAL	\$3.66	\$7.20

FOOD for Work:

SFCM:	22.68 kg.	\$10.77	\$5.66 ⁽³⁾
FLOUR	22.68 kg.	8.80	9.99
VEG OIL	2.50 kg.	<u>3.09</u>	<u>4.60</u>
	TOTAL	\$22.66	\$20.25

1. Retail Market Value calculated on basis of supermarket shelf prices Maseru 12/12/79.
2. Bulgur not a local product, retail market value shown is that of wheat flour.
3. Fortified corn meal is not available, retail market value shown is that of best quality maize meal.

Table IV

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

PORT	REAL LEAD	REAL LEAD TO FMU WHSE	FMU WHSE LOCATION
DURBAN	FICKSBURG/ GUMTREE	COMM. CONTRACTOR	LERIBE
DURBAN	MASERU	FMU TRUCKS	MASERU
DURBAN	MATATIELE	COMM. CONTRACTOR	QACHA'S NEK
DURBAN	UNDERBURG	COMM. CONTRACTOR	MOKHOTLONG
DURBAN	FOURIESBURG	SARR TRUCK	BUTHA-BUTHE
EAST LONDON	WEPENER	COMM. CONTRACTOR	MAFETENG
EAST LONDON	ZASTRON	SARR TRUCK	MOHALE'S HOEK
EAST LONDON	ZASTRON	SARR TRUCK	QUTHING

IV. FOOD FOR WORK (FFW)

A. Background

1. CRS/Lesotho initiated a Food for Work program in Lesotho in 1968. Together with WFP these program have progressed in their activities and scope until today (FY 80). FFW involves participants from an estimated 52,000 households or approximately 25 percent of Lesotho's households. CRS/L provides rations for 11,400 participant workers and 45,600 dependents or household members.

2. The objectives of FFW program are several including:

- a. Mobilization of unemployed and under-employed labor to accomplish community oriented tasks, agricultural related conservation efforts including afforestation, development and maintenance of tracks and trails, construction of ponds for fish production and other related programs.
- b. Provide a community oriented spirit to accomplish national objectives in rural development.
- c. Improve family incomes, freeing scarce financial resources for additional food and other essential purposes.
- d. Impact upon family nutrition with supplemental food inputs to diet.

B. Implementation

1. Both CRS/Lesotho and WFP Food for Work programs are coordinated logistically through the FMU with each activity under the technical and administrative control of specific ministries and offices. Those involved are:

- a) Ministry of Rural Development -Community based activities such as erosion control.
- b) Ministry of Works - development of tracks and trails; maintenance and/or upgrading of existing tracks, trails and roads.
- c) Ministry of Agriculture - water conservation, development of fish ponds and wood-lots (afforestation).

2. These ministries submit activity proposals to FMU which in turns includes the activity on the basis of CRS/ Lesotho may veto a certain proposed activity, this veto is seldom used as FMU's control over subsector activity is well exercised.

3. FMU issues Quarterly Authorizations for FFW activities citing projects and numbers of authorized workers. Activity supervisors record work attendance (time cards) and rations are issued by FMU on the basis of timecards submitted.

4. Commodities are transported from the FMU warehouse to the project site by the Ministry to which the activity is assigned, i.e., Rural Development, Agriculture and Works.

5. CRS/Lesotho monitors authorizations, work attendance records, warehouse issues and receipts. CRS/Lesotho performs periodic field inspections of work sites and warehouse activity. As no progress goals are established, CRS/Lesotho is primarily concerned that enrolled workers are present and that there is a bonafide project that is within the criteria established.

C. ISSUES:

Productivity: Work teams consisting primarily of women identified generally from both ends of the female workforce e.g., young women, 16 - 22 and older women 40 - 60, working approximately 5 hours/day for in-kind wages are not correspondingly productive as males being paid a cash wage. Therefore, if food were converted to cash and paid to women, productivity would rise. However, the latter assumes that adequate supervision (trained strawboss) and other support, e.g. tools and equipment, lacking in the former, would be present. Thus it can be argued that with trained supervision and tools/ equipment the activities carried out by the food-for-work team would improve significantly. However, the issue remains - would

the teams of women respond to this added element or rebel to increased productivity for the wage (in-kind food) they have been receiving over several years?

Can the Food-for-Work teams work a longer day? The short workday was designed so that the workers would have several hours of day-light to perform other home farm work in support of rural activities. Experience is that during peak agricultural activities, e.g., planting and harvesting, food-for-work attendance drops and activities are usually curtailed during these periods.

Should in-kind wages be dropped in favor of cash wage from monitorized food-aid? Given the availability of trained supervision and productivity goals together with appropriate tools/equipment there is no question that additional productivity can be obtained by using male workers. Even with female workers productivity would increase, and with both sexes productivity would be about equal for most unskilled work. However, in-kind wages do offer as close to a guarantee as possible that the donated food commodities provide food supplements to the family diet. A cash wage would not necessarily result in increased family food. The alternative uses for cash are greater than food. However, an in-kind wage is more expensive to administer than a cash wage. There is no question that a cash wage is preferable. Unfortunately, the resource available is food - and food for in-kind usage.

In summary it would appear that in-kind wages serve a purpose. With better supervision, clearly defined short-term objectives in obtainable measures, and appropriate tools/equipment food-for-work activities can be more production efficient. Until such time as GOL resources are sufficient to offer wages for community projects, in-kind food payments are a useful mechanism to obtain work and provide food assistance. Food-for-Work can easily be phased over to cash wages without much effort. However, the question remains, will the cash wage buy the food that is received under the in-kind payment system?

V. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION

1. Although no audit was performed, one inventory test physical was made at a FMU depot indicating agreement between current book and physical inventory. On the surface this indicated that a system was in place. However, on the basis of recent records submitted by CRS/Lesotho to USAID/L, shortages have been discovered at FMU warehouses which CRS/Lesotho cannot identify as occurring from theft or record errors. This sufficient evidence that the CRS established commodity accounting system is not being pursued by the FMU and other responsible individuals and CRS/Lesotho has lost a portion of control. CRS/Lesotho has filed a growing number of claims which CRS/Lesotho describes as unexplained differences between book and physical inventories. The amounts of commodities involved in these losses are significant. Unsatisfactory explained losses are reaching the proportions where positive action is required by CRS/Lesotho in order for them to continue to receive USAID/Lesotho program approval.

R/FFPO recommends that: 1) CRS/Lesotho in collaboration with FMU and WFP review and if necessary revise the commodity control system in order to simplify, standardize and otherwise effectively improve records and reporting which will minimize errors and identify losses as to their nature, e.g., theft, error, etc., and 2) if losses through theft or misuse are identified, pursue actions to minimize the opportunity for recurrence of continuing theft or pilferage.

VI. CONTACTS AND FIELD VISITS

Field visits made and persons contacted during CRS/Lesotho Review conducted November 27 - 30 and December 11 - 14, 1979 by R/FFPO Strong Field Visits:

FFW - Khoaras Road Project
MCH - St Monica's Mission
FMU Warehouses - Leribe and Maseru

Persons contacted:

CRS/Lesotho	Mr Dennis O'Brien, Program Director Ms Gladys Koppulie, Assistant Program Director Ms. Rhonda Sarnoff, Field Assistant
WFP	Mr. Alan Jones, WFP Representative
FMU	Mr. John Briggs, Director Mr. Peter Khadi, Assistant Director Mr. M. Molapo, Senior Executive Officer

Ministry of Rural Development	Mr. Sam 'Mota, Permanent Secretary.
Ministry of Health	Mr. Tom Thabane, Permanent Sec. Ms. Christine Thakhisi, Acting Chief, Public Health Nurse Mrs. 'Manthua Seipobi, MCH/Coor- dinator Mr. Ben Pekeche, Executive Sec. Private Health association of Lesotho Dr. Pascal Ngakane, Senior Medical Officer Ms. Rosalie Kurde, Chief Matron Mrs. N.T. Borocho, Senior Planning Officer.
Ministry of Agriculture	Mr. Leduma, Project Officer.
Ministry of Works	Mr. Mamashela, Project Officer.
USAID/Lesotho	Mr. Frank Correl, Director Mr. Ken Sherper, Deputy Director Mr. Byron Bahl, Program Officer
REDSO/EA	Mr. Edward Greely, Assessment Officer.