683021500/501 (1)
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Unclassified
CLASSIFICATION

PD-AAH-240-A1

PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (PES) — PART I

Report Symbol U-447

1. PROJECT TITLE	2. PROJECT NUMBER	3. MISSION/AID/W OFFICE
Niger Marshlands Survey Project (Accelerated Impact Program)	683-0215	USAID/Niger

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) 80-1

☐ REGULAR EVALUATION ☒ SPECIAL EVALUATION

5. KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DATES	6. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING	7. PERIOD COVERED BY EVALUATION
A. First PRO-AG or Equivalent FY 76 B. Final Obligation Expected FY 76 C. Final Input Delivery FY 81	A. Total $ 475,000 B. U.S. $ 100,000	From (month/yr.) 8/76 To (month/yr.) 10/79 Date of Evaluation Review 10/79

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., airgram, SPAR, PIO, which will present detailed request.)	B. NAME OF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	C. DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
1. Determine with Genie Rural and the Ministry of Plan the level of funding needed, as well as the sources of funds, in order to continue the project through the duration of the PC volunteers assignments to the Project. PL 480 counterpart funds are the most likely source of funds if an adequate amount is still available in the account.	Bliss USAID/Niger Ernst PC/Niger Seyni Ali -GR Sani Omarou Plan	April 1980
2. Determine an appropriate mechanism for providing operational expense accounts to the PC volunteers in order to reduce financial problems mentioned in the evaluation report.	Bliss USAID/Niger Ernst - PC/Niger Seyni Ali - GR	March 1980
3. Locate individual(s) to participate in Peace Corps volunteers mid-term conference to evaluate quality of work currently being done by volunteers and assist in planning the coming year's activities.	Baker USAID/Niger	March 1980

9. INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVISED PER ABOVE DECISIONS

- ☐ Project Paper
- ☐ Financial Plan
- ☐ Logical Framework
- ☐ Project Agreement
- ☐ Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network
- ☐ PIO/T
- ☐ PIO/C
- ☐ PIO/P
- ☒ Other (Specify) A.I.L., amendments, or exchange of letters (P.I.L.) ☒ permitting use of counterpart funds.

10. ALTERNATIVE DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF PROJECT

- A. ☐ Continue Project Without Change
- B. ☒ Change Project Design and/or
- ☐ Change Implementation Plan
- C. ☒ Discontinue Project after present group of PCVs terminate in Fall 80

11. PROJECT OFFICER AND HOST COUNTRY OR OTHER RANKING PARTICIPANTS AS APPROPRIATE (Names and Titles)

M. Baker - Project Design and Evaluation Office

S. Bliss - Program Office

12. Mission/AID/W Office Director Approval

Signature

Typed Name HERBERT MILLER

Acting Mission Director, USAID/Niger

Date 29/2/80

AID 1330-15 (3-78)

PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (PES) - PART II

13. SUMMARY. The evaluation which has been completed shows a number of weaknesses both in the design and the implementation aspects of the project. Some of these weaknesses have already been addressed, others remain to be addressed if the project continues and finally others cannot be addressed in the context of the current project but can make for better future project and implementation planning. The mission feels that the evaluation is especially relevant to project designers planning joint AID/Peace Corps projects.

The reader of this PES and the attached Evaluation Report may be led to think that the particular project being evaluated is a gross failure and as such is a rather exceptional case. The project certainly is not one of the mission's or for that matter, one of Niger's worst projects. The actual state of project implementation in this case is similar to many other projects operating in Niger. The major difference between this evaluation and many others is that the evaluator was very knowledgeable about the project and the subject matter and presented his findings frankly. The mission presents this evaluation without any attempted rebuttal or defense although on occassion, the mission does have a somewhat differing viewpoint than that of the evaluator.

14. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY. This evaluation was completed by a contractor who was recruited earlier in 1979 to train the new Peace Corps volunteers who were assigned as surveyors to the project. The evaluator has the formal technical education required to implement and evaluate such agricultural engineering projects plus considerable field experience in the Sahel in executing such projects. The evaluation was contracted as an "end-product contract" for the amount of $3,000. Once the evaluation began, it was estimated to require 30 days for completion. Compensation to the contractor ($3,000) included salary, per diem, and hiring of secretarial services. The contractor was provided with a USAID vehicle. To clarify the scope of work for the evaluation, a memorandum of understanding was prepared and signed at the time the contract was signed. Copies of these documents are attached to the evaluation report.

As is evident by reading the evaluation, the contractor based his evaluation on extensive observations over approximately a thirty day period.

It should be noted finally that the complete evaluation report contains the attached report plus an annexed file for each department containing correspondence, reports and studies made by the volunteers and officials assigned to that department office. Rarely has the mission received such a thorough and consciously prepared evaluation report, although it often pays a much higher price.

15. EXTERNAL FACTORS. The evaluation specifically requested the contractor to determine whether the planned outputs of the project responded

to the development policies contained in the regional plans developed as part of Niger's Five Year Plan. The evaluation, in addition to the above concern noted the changes in the mandate of the implementing agent (Genie Rural) with the creation of a national office for the construction and management of irrigation projects. This change of organizational responsi bilities and the uncertainty preceding the actual change created additional hardships on those charged with the implementation of the project. It appears however that the function for which the Peace Corps volunteers were originally sought will remain the legitimate function of "Genie Rural".

16. INPUTS. Problems associated with supplied inputs and their suitability are described at length in the evaluation report and any serious reader of this evaluation would be advised to consult the contractor's full report. The major problems identified were: a) the work expected of the volunteers normally required a level of technical skills that they most often did not have; b) the supervision and collaboration expected from the Host Country implementing agent was not adequate; and c) the technical surveying equipment provided by the project did not, in general, perform well.

17. OUTPUTS. The outputs in this activity have been rather narrowly defined as technical studies or project proposals adequate in nature to attract financing of small-scale irrigation activities. The evaluation report, again to which the reader is referred, concludes that it was somewhat unrealistic to assume that Peace Corps volunteers would be able to complete all the necessary studies and documentation (proposed outputs) required for proper project planning. Even more dissappointing, the evaluator, after rather in-depth site inspections, indicates that a considerable number of the surveys (actual outputs) completed are of rather dubious quality.

18. PURPOSE. The purpose of the project was to attract investment in small scale surface water development. The evaluation report notes firstly that the types of studies expected from this project are needed and will continue to be needed if the regional plans are to be implemented. It also notes that to date none of the studies completed by the project have yet to be funded as projects. This, according to the evaluator, is due primarily to the fact that not until very recently have technically viable studies been completed and most probably, several studies will in fact be financed as components of Niger's rural integrated development projects. Perhaps most interesting, is the conclusion drawn that the types of projects developed by this activity do not have an immediate donor audience. Funding currently seems to be drawn to either very small scale activities that essentially require no technical studies or large scale projects with heavy pre-investment studies.

19. GOALS/SUBGOALS. A subgoal of the project, at least for AID, was to increase the institutional capability of the implementing agent.

Achievement toward this subgoal has been limited to increasing the material inventory of the subdivisions of the implementing agent. There has been little transfer of technical skills for rather obvious reasons. The author of the evaluation notes however that with better trained, more qualified volunteers and the recent assignment of counterparts to the volunteers, some progress towards the above stated subgoal can realistically be expected.

20. BENEFICIARIES. Primary beneficiaries are those who have their technical skills upgraded or benefit from the utilization of a project designed by this activity and subsequently implemented. For this project, one can unfortunately conclude that the primary beneficiaries of the project are few and the magnitude of the benefit received by them, limited.

21. UNPLANNED EFFECTS. This point was not specifically covered by the evaluation and in respect to this project, an inquiry into the unplanned effects would, in the opinion of the mission, be of marginal utility.

22. LESSONS LEARNED.

a) Design:

1) Obviously, the design of this activity was over optimistic in terms of what could realisticaly be accomplished in short term projects of the AID nature.

2) The evaluation points out that the GON implementing agent (i.e., Genie Rural) wanted "across the board" general assistance for their ongoing program, which probably would have been acceptable to Peace Corps for their manpower input. AID however in order to provide material support to the volunteers needed to "projectize" the assistance given and orient this assistance in fairly specific directions. Thus the project generated additional support requirements on the implementing agency and the lack of these supporting services was exactly what was lacking in their pre-project program. Project planners must be more conscience of the limited human resources available to support projects.

b) Implementation:

1) AID and Peace Corps have somewhat differing institutional goals and objectives. Peace Corps places a fairly high importance on providing an experience to a volunteer for his own personal growth and development. AID, however, gives more importance to undertaking activities that produce tangible benefits to a target group of beneficiaries. These institutional objectives are neither mutually exclusive nor mutually

self-fulfilling. AID, in planning the use of Peace Corps volunteers, must realize that volunteers will most likely tend to be inexperienced with limited professional skills. As a consequence, output expectations should be scaled down or technical supervision and more intensive training included as an AID input to insure producing the desired output. Mutual goal attainment will also require greater coordination in the actual implementation process. The sharing of information and inter-agency reporting did not, in the case of this project, insure adequate coordination to accomplish the project outputs and purpose. To remedy this situation, Peace Corps has been able to recruit better qualified volunteers and has strengthened its training program. AID is advised and accepts the recommendation to provide a greater degree of technical supervision for the volunteers in future programs involving PCVs, however, no firm arrangement has yet been made. In general, when Peace Corps volunteers are an intregal part of a project, AID must take adequate measures to provide technical supervision of their work. It is noted, on the other hand, that such an approach is inimical to the basic thrust of the AID program which is to fund and implement small projects relying upon the technical and administrative capability of the host government - or an intermediary such as a PVO or PC.

2) Project implementation for small, short duration projects remains encumbered by tying development assistance to US procurement. The landrover vehicles have provided good service while the surveying equipment has caused numerous problems.

c) Evaluation:

The problems encountered in the implementation of this project could have been determined earlier had an evaluation been completed earlier in the course of project implementation. An evaluation should at least have been completed as the first group of volunteers departed and before the arrival of the second group.

As has been stated previously this is a rather frank and critical evaluation which the mission appreciates in order to try to rectify shortcomings in project implementation. The reaction of the other participants in this project to such a frank assessment remains to be seen.

Finally, it should be noted that the current restrictions on Personnel Services Contracts makes completing small punctual evaluations such as this one rather cumbersome chores. End product contracts tend to lessen the missions ability to direct evaluations. In this case, a memorandum of understanding was signed concurrently with the End-Product Contract which enabled the mission to provide some direction to the contractor. While the mission is by and large happy with the end

end product, we feel it reflects more the capabilities and attitude of the contractor rather than the mode of contracting.

23. SPECIAL COMMENTS OR REMARKS.

Attachments to this PES include:

1. An Evaluation Report on Niger Marshlands Survey Project - (AID/AIP 683-0215) by Steven Evett. 54 pages.

2. Contract for the Evaluation of Niger Marshlands Survey Project (AID/AIP 683-0215). 4 pages.

3. Memorandum of Understanding to the End-Product Contract between USAID/Niger and Steven Evett. 3 pages.

PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (PES) - PART III

1. An Evaluation Report on Niger Marshlands Survey Project - (AID/AIP 683-0215) by Steven Evett. 54 pages.

2. Contract for the Evaluation of Niger Marshlands Survey Project (AID/AIP 683-0215). 4 pages.

3. Memorandum of Understanding to the End-Product Contract between USAID/Niger and Steven Evett. 3 pages.