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*9311170 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE *
* RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FERTILITY *
* PY78 TO FY82 *

PROJECT SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Cooperative agreement grant is extended to the Research Triangle Institute to enable Missions and LDC's to design rural development programs which take into account the interrelationship between population growth and overall improvement in living standards. Specifically, the demographic impacts of selected rural development activities will be reviewed, and present methodologies will be refined from these investigations useful to project officers concerned with assessing the impacts on population growth of future projects.

The following services will be provided during the project: (1) short-term consulting to Mission personnel; (2) state-of-the-art papers to provide clear and concise information on the impact of rural development interventions on population variables; (3) a network of scholars/practitioners working on population impact analysis whose expertise in demography and rural development can be accessed for program support in design, implementation, and evaluation; and (4) information dissemination generated through these activities via a series of workshops and seminars, case studies, and a final report.

DESCRIPTORS

FERTILITY RES STATE OF ART RURAL DEVEL

SUB-PROJECT NUMBER: 00

BATCH NUMBER: 52

931 1170 00 5301

PD-AA H-553
931170 (3)

BEST AVAILABLE DOCUMENT

MIDTERM EVALUATION OF
RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FERTILITY
Project 931-1170

A Report Prepared By:
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During The Period Of:
OCTOBER 3 - OCTOBER 27, 1979

Under the Auspices of the:
AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Supported By The:
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE OF POPULATION, AID/pha/C-1100

AUTHORIZATION:
Ltr. POP/FPS: 9/18/79
Assgn. No. 1100-182

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I. TERMS OF REFERENCE

I was asked to provide a general evaluation for the Population Office of the progress and achievements of this project, Rural Development and Fertility, #331-1170, and to make recommendations on the continuation of the project into its proposed Phase II. Project documents were reviewed and personal interviews were conducted with staff from Rural Development, Population, Research Triangle Institute, the Southeast Consortium for International Development, and the members of the Peer Review Panel. (A list of persons interviewed are presented in Appendix A to this report).

II. A BRIEF NATURAL HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

A. Origins

The original idea for the project came from the Office of Rural Development, in response to 104d legislation. In light of this legislation, and the anticipation that it would be mandated for all missions, the office considered it would be appropriate and important to attempt to provide assistance to RD mission officers in assessing the project impacts on population, professional and organizational considerations led to the cooperation of Rural Development and Population (Policy Division) officers in formulating a project that would provide benefits to both offices.

From some (now undetermined) source there was also an interest in assisting a group of minority scholars and institutions to become involved in international assistance work, from which they had largely been absent in the past.

These combined interests led to the formulation of a project with two major types of aims: technical and institutional. The technical aims were generally oriented to providing the tools and personnel to assist mission rural development officers in assessing the population impacts of their projects. This implied four specific activities:

1. A review of the existing research literature to define the state of the art and to design field research in which linkages between rural development activities and fertility could be identified and measured;
2. the production of a manual for mission rural development officers, which would show them how to assess rural development project impacts on fertility;
3. the development of a network of consultants who could be called upon to provide the technical assistance rural development officers would need both to write impact statements in their project papers and to undertake the research that would more clearly identify the rural development -- fertility linkages.

The project was funded in August 1977 and planned for four years, through FY 1981. The original recommendation was for a total of \$770,910, of which \$358,040 was obligated for the first phase, to produce the state of the art papers. It was then envisaged that the second phase would call for field work both for technical assistance and for research on the development -- fertility, linkages in ongoing rural development projects.

The institutional aims called for the generation of interest and activity among minority scholars and institutions in uncovering linkages between rural

development and fertility. This was to be accomplished through the offices of the Southeast Consortium for International Development (SECID). SECID was formed in 1977 to bring together 31 colleges and universities in the Southeast United States which had interest in and competence for work in international development assistance. The consortium is made up primarily of 1860 land grant universities and the 1890 black land grant colleges, with the Research Triangle Universities providing much of the initiative. RTI was the project's prime contractor, with subcontracting through SECID to appropriate institutions and scholars.

B. Transformations

After the initiation of the project the responsibility for 104d legislation was lodged with the Policy Planning and Coordination Bureau (PPC), effectively removing it from direct responsibility of the Population Office. Further, personnel changes removed the project originators from both Population and Rural Development offices. Finally, PPC determined that demanding a full mandate for the 104d legislation would be inappropriate. Without adequate technical assistance for the missions, mandating 104d would only be an additional burden, and result in little more than pro forma statements attached to rural development projects. The strategy decided upon was that of encouragement and assistance to the missions, plus attempts to develop the skills and methods needed to provide that assistance. From the perspective of this evaluation, that appears to have been a wise decision. It did, however, remove the urgency from the task to which this project was directed. The personnel changes also eroded much of the internal personal support for the project in AID. Finally, drastic budget cuts in Rural Development made it imperative that assistance from other offices would be required if the project were to be continued. Despite its continuing interest in the aims of the project, Rural Development was financially unable to carry it on alone. In effect, the contractor was left as the major support for the project and its continuation.

III. EVALUATION

The overall activities to date represent good movement toward the achievements of the project aims. Project personnel have displayed industry and intelligence in working toward both the technical and institutional aims. The relations between RTI and SECID appear to have been effective in what is certainly a complex and difficult task -- combining the two goal elements of the project. Although the important achievement has been movement on both sets of aims at the same time, it will be useful here to discuss the elements and their parts separately.

A. Technical Aims

1. State of the Art Reviews

The State of the Art Papers (SOAP's) are comprehensive, voluminous and generally adequate. They accurately reflect a state of the art that is weak in the capacity to identify precisely the relations between rural development activities and fertility. The exercise has been highly beneficial, however, in that it has identified many of the known or suggested indirect connections, and it proposed an analytical framework and set of hypotheses that provide a good basis for further empirical study. The final version of the Summary Report is especially useful for its brevity in summarizing the content of the voluminous SOAP's and for its presentation of the analytical framework and hypotheses derived from the SOAP's.

It is difficult to say much with precision about the cost-effectiveness of the review. If these are viewed as seven different reviews, with a cost of \$240,000 to \$290,000, or roughly \$30-\$40,000 per review, they probably compare well with other reviews. If the institutional achievements are included in the output, the comparison is more favorable, but less precise. In any event, the problem probably does not merit much attempt at calculation beyond the general assessment of probable favorable comparative effectiveness.

There are three problem areas in the SOAP's, however, one of which indicates some further action. Especially evident in the SOAP on the role of women is the neglect of the Spanish language literature from Latin America. This is summarized in some of the English language publications reviewed, but the inability to gain direct access to the Spanish materials is regrettable. On the other hand, it is probably not worth much further expenditure to correct this.

The second problem concerns the lack of integration or cross-fertilization of the seven different SOAP's themselves. The Summary Report helps correct this somewhat, but the individual SOAP's in their current form present very fragmented pictures of the rural development impacts on fertility. This observation leads to recommendation under 3 below.

A final problem arose over the attempt to structure the reviews to fit the major project categories used by the Rural Development Office. The reviews reflect

some struggle to use these categories, but it is my judgment that the struggle has not been worthwhile, nor would it be in any future reviews and analysis. One of the peer reviewers noted that the best reviews were those that ignored the RAD categories. Additional work on the analytical framework derived from the reviews is very much in order, but in this additional work, it is probably best to ignore the RAD project categories.

2. Guidelines for RD Mission Officers

The guidelines proposed in the original project statement have not yet been produced, and there is some controversy over the feasibility of producing anything useful at this time. Certainly it is not now possible to produce a manual that will give precise comparative partial elasticities or path coefficients for various types of rural development projects under precisely identifiable socio-economic conditions. On the other hand, a more modest set of goals might be feasible. For the second phase, there might be an attempt to distill both literature reviews and field experience into a set of questions and guidelines that RD officers could use to focus their attention on potential population impacts of their projects. One example, among many, appears on page 11 of the Summary Report. It would be most useful for RD officers to ask of agricultural development projects what impact they would be likely to have on the role of women in production. Displacing women from productive functions might well produce upward pressures on fertility and would thus suggest at least the inclusion of strong family planning program services coincident (but not necessarily integrated) with the proposed agricultural development project. Many similar questions could be identified at this time, and it is likely that future work with the practical questions RD officers have in the field will suggest additional questions.

3. Dissemination of Information

This has not yet been done, but it is planned to distribute the Summary Report widely to mission personnel. I consider this is a wise and useful decision.

4. Consultants' Network

Work has gone ahead with the identification of the network, or more accurately list, of 90 potential consultants. It is impossible to evaluate this work in the absence of demands from the field and demonstrated experience in meeting those demands. The utility of the network is doubtful to me.

5. Case Studies

These are planned for Phase II. RTI personnel have made field visits and have identified potential sites for work on case studies and on the analysis of existing data. There has also been extensive correspondence to alert missions to the review work and to the possibility of providing assistance in field research.

B. Institutional Aims

1. SECID Involvement

There has been commendable movement toward what was originally defined as a unique aspect of this project -- the involvement of a wide variety of schools and scholars, with special emphasis on the participation of minority institutions and scholars. Four of the seven SOAP's had eight scholars from minority institutions on the author teams. These eight thus constitute more than a third of the 22 separate authors involved in the reviews. This is especially noteworthy in view of the suspicion with which minorities often view family planning and fertility control programs. The involvement of these scholars represents an immediate achievement in the education of potentially hostile groups to the necessity of using empirical rather than ideological approaches to problems of population and fertility.

There are two other longer term advantages as well. One is the advantage of greater legitimacy in promoting rational and humane population policies when the promotion does not simply involve whites telling non-whites to reduce their fertility. The second advantage concerns appropriate technology, and is one that was not stated in the original proposal. The minority, or 1890, institutions often deal with small, poor, labor intensive farms. This gives them experience in a technology more appropriate to many third world nations than the capital intensive high technology that now dominates the work of the larger land grant colleges, the 1860 institutions.

One must not minimize the difficulties in realizing these advantages. Black faces alone do not legitimacy make, and arguments for appropriate technology are often defined by third world elites as imperialist tricks to divert attention while the rich nations protect their monopoly control of high technology. Nonetheless, the advantages are real and potentially very useful. And they are advantages that flow from the achievements of the institutional portion of the project's aims.

2. Peer Review Process

Although it was not stated as an original aim of the project, the use of the peer review team constitutes a notable institutional achievement of this project. It is especially useful when a project crosses disciplinary lines, as this one has. In such work there is always the danger that professionals from one discipline will not be properly directed to the most advanced work in the other. The peer review team has helped to ensure that the rural development people would be more fully attuned to relevant population work and to some of the problems of translating the cross-disciplinary work into useful programmatic suggestions for the field missions.

Interviews with the peer review panel members revealed a high degree of personal commitment to the project. Peer criticisms of the drafts of the SOAP's

~~are reported by all sides to have been frank and extensive, but also to have~~
been highly constructive and well received. The peer panel appears to have developed something of a nurturing attitude toward the project, and it would be useful to capitalize on this orientation in the future. This is the subject of recommendation 3 below.

3. Rural Development-Population Office Linkages

Maintaining close links between different units concerned with development is a common aim of AID. It is also an aim commonly unrealized or only partially realized. To date this project is no exception to the latter rule. Linkages have been largely one-sided, with rural development, initiative and activity toward incorporating population considerations in its activities. The potential remains great for closer cooperation between the two offices, which could produce greater and more evenly balanced advantages for both.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue the project into Phase II. There has been sufficient movement toward incorporating population considerations into rural development thinking to warrant support by the Population Office. There has also been sufficient movement toward realizing the aims of the 104d legislation to warrant continued support from the Rural Development Office. Some consideration should be given, however, to reworking the priorities of the different technical elements.

a. Highest priority should be given to furthering both analytical and empirical work on identifying linkages between rural development and fertility. Recommendations 3 and 4 below speak to the implementation of this activity.

b. Low priority should be given to the development of the consultant network, unless it is demonstrated that this is in fact useful for RAD or for the missions.

c. The contractor and RAD should continue discussions of the feasibility of producing a set of guidelines useful for mission personnel. If a modest set of guidelines can be produced readily and with little cost, it would be worthwhile going ahead with this original aim.

2. Continue the RTI-SECID collaboration, with RTI as prime contractor and SECID as sub-contractor responsible for mobilizing the minority institutions. This also implies accepting the experimental nature of the project and especially of the institutional component of the aims. It should be noted, however, that this recommendation imposes upon RTI and SECID the obligation of sustaining the involvement of the authors and institutions that participated in phase I of the project.

3. Continue the use of the Peer Review Panel. The panel can be continued as a form of project advisory committee, which might be convened with other project members once or twice a year. In the immediate future, it would be useful to convene a conference of the peer review panel together with all SOAP authors to consider the Summary Report and the analytical framework presented in that report. The first outcome of such a conference would be a more complete cross-fertilization of the work of the different SOAP authors. This type of activity could encourage SOAP authors not only to continue interest and involvement in phase II of the project, but also to propose additional research and assistance projects for independent funding by either RAD or Population.

4. Field Work. Concentrate the case studies, technical assistance and data analysis for phase II in a few African countries. RTI has useful contacts covering many countries in the world. The experimental nature of the project, however, indicates that it would be best to focus the field work in a few countries rather than spreading attention over many. The possibilities of using countries within

~~one region to assist one another in population policy development indicates that it would be best to focus phase II attention on one region. Finally, the unique aspect of this project, involving minority scholars and institutions, indicates that it would be best to focus attention on Africa.~~

RTI field visits have already demonstrated interest in both the Sudan and Kenya in further work on the phase II studies and assistance. There would be many advantages to be gained from adding Tanzania to this list. Finally, contacts already established in Egypt, together with the resources and the Population officers available there, indicate that it would also be useful to add Egypt to the list.

Two types of activities are envisaged for phase II field work, and it would be best to select countries that offer opportunities to work simultaneously on both types. One activity will provide technical assistance to mission personnel to write population portions of project papers and of Country Development Strategy Statements. The other activity concerns research -- the analysis of existing data, case studies of ongoing projects, and developing research designs to be incorporated into planned projects.

5. RAD Management, RAD/POP Oversight Committee. Because it has a fully developed network of relations with rural development field officers, and because it has a strong orientation to project-relevant applied research, the Rural Development Office should continue to have full responsibility for project management. At the same time, it will be useful to provide some direct connection between the rural development and population offices, since this project and the 104d legislation to which it speaks is of direct relevance to the population office. The proposed oversight committee with personnel from Rural Development and Population appears to be quite adequate, and I recommend that this committee be established.

The committee's functions and responsibilities are difficult to define precisely, and should be worked out informally by the members as they observe the project in process. At the very least the committee will keep Population informed of the problems and accomplishments of the project, and will keep rural development informed of the interests and technical considerations important to the population office. At the other extreme, however, rural development should have final managerial authority in order to avoid confusions that might arise from divided authority.

APPENDIX A

List of Persons Interviewed

October 4, 1979

Ronald Curtis, RAD

Sarah Green, POP

Robert Corno, LAC

Joseph Speidel, POP

Steven Joseph, DAA/DSB

Ann VanDusen, PFC

Theodore Smith, Agricultural Development Council

October 10, 1979

Harlan Hobgood, RAD

Ronald Curtis, RAD

Pat Baldi, POP

October 11, 1979

A. S. David, RTI

Laurie Zivetz, RTI

Martii Ardito-Barletta, RTI

William Levine, SECID

Elsa Liner, SECID

October 24, 1979 (Peer Review Panel members: phone interviews)

Nadia Youseff, International Center for Research on Women

Cecile DeSweener, John Hopkins

Rae Lesser Blumberg, University of California, San Diego