



### 13. Summary

This evaluation, conducted in September 1979, included a final evaluation of Project Number 664-0285 Rural Development (Siliana) and a mid-term evaluation of Project Number 664-0307 Integrated Rural Development (Siliana), OPG No. AID/NE-G-1438 to the Save the Children Federation. It attempted to examine these two projects within the overall context of the cluster of RD projects in the two southern delegations of Siliana governorate (Makthar and Rohia). Other projects included a loan-financed rural penetration road (Project 0305 Rural Development Loan 664-T-052) and a grant to CARE/Medico (Project 0299 Siliana Water Improvement and Sanitation OPG No. AID/NE-G-1295).

The evaluation was a joint activity by the GOT Ministry of Plan and USAID with the assistance of the GOT National Center for Agricultural Studies (CNEA) and Practical Concepts Inc. (PCI). The CNEA report, which incorporated the PCI findings, was considered by the GOT as its official evaluation report and was formally reviewed by a GOT/USAID committee on January 23, 1980. Subsequently a set of recommendations was drafted by the GOT Ministry of Plan and USAID and passed on to the Ministry of Agriculture for clearance. These recommendations, which have been cleared by the Ministry of Agriculture, have been forwarded to all the parties concerned with the project.

The timing of the evaluation (Sept. 1979) was determined by the following factors:

- (A) Project 0285 was scheduled for completion by September 30, 1979.
- (B) Both the field manager of the Siliana RD project and the SCF country director were scheduled to depart post in early October 1979.
- (C) The SCF grant, as amended, provided for a mid-term evaluation before the end of September 1979, to permit timely consideration of a Phase 2 grant.

As a result of the evaluation, initial consideration was given to a Phase 2 SCF grant. However, due to the nonavailability of funds, a one year extension was awarded on the initial grant with an increase of \$300,000. A decision on Phase 2 has been postponed to the spring of 1981, which will give the GOT, USAID and SCF adequate time to evaluate SCF's success in collaborating more closely with Tunisian organizations to institutionalize the SCF methodology and provide training in community-based integrated rural development.

### 14. Evaluation Methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to (i) measure progress achieved as measured by the objectively verifiable indicators listed in the grant document as amended and (ii) to determine if AID should continue to support the SCF project and, if so, under what conditions.

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In carrying out the evaluation the team made use of basic documents in USAID files, SCF reports, interviews and discussions with USAID staff, the SCF Country Director and GOT personnel at the regional and local levels, with individuals and families among the target population and with others having knowledge of the project operations and impact. The evaluation team included two PCI staff members and two CNEA staff members who worked in close coordination with representatives of USAID, SCF, of the GOT Ministry of Plan and of the Governorate of Siliana.

15. External Factors:

While all assumptions are still valid, two of the premisses on which the project was based (GOT permission to engage in group activities, and ability of SCF staff to work freely to mobilize recipients for group activities) presented obstacle to the initiation of activities.

These early difficulties resulted from traditional skepticism in Tunisia about projects requiring cooperation among beneficiaries. This skepticism seems to come from the GOT experience in the 1960's when it tried to coerce farmers into joining cooperatives, a movement which farmers resisted.

16. Inputs

Start-up of the SCF program and the delivery of inputs were delayed by slowness in the negotiation of the SCF/GOT initial agreement.

17. Outputs

Four major outputs were projected: (a) "SCF development administration established"; (b) "dialogue established among SCF and local authorities"; (c) "necessary studies carried out" and; (d) "projects identified and implemented". As stated above the PCI evaluators confined themselves to the purpose level (see page V-6 of PCI's report), and did not verify indicators which measure outputs. However, SCF quarterly reports indicate that as of September 30, 1979, these outputs were satisfactorily produced.

18. Purpose

The project purpose was summarized by SCF in the following operational terms: "Successful self-help pilot project in place in Makthar/Rohia by April 1980".

It was to be achieved through application of SCF's techniques of local community self-help development in the Makthar and Rohia delegations of Siliana province, one of the most disadvantaged areas of rural Tunisia. Selection of the Secteurs (smallest political administrative subdivision) were to be made by SCF in consultation with local, regional and central government representatives. Once the Secteurs were selected, SCF personnel were to encourage the establishment of local village committees to:

- (a) identify local needs,
- (b) prioritize them,
- (c) translate these prioritized needs into projects,
- (d) implement the projects, and
- (e) evaluate the progress achieved until project completion.

In so doing SCF was to determine the applicability of the self-help approach to the Tunisian rural, political, and administrative environment.

Fourteen indicators were developed by SCF to measure progress toward reaching the purpose (See details in pages V-7 thru V-7c of PCI report).

The evaluators, when comparing planned activities and actual results, concluded that:

- (1) rural Tunisia was amenable to SCF's self-help strategy;
- (2) SCF had developed a staff that believed in and could put into practice the self-help strategy;
- (3) SCF had established strong working relations with Tunisian institutions; and
- (4) although government officials seemed to appreciate SCF, they were skeptical about government taking-on functions and approach upon conclusion of the Foundation's involvement.

#### 19. Goal

"Quality of rural life among the beneficiaries improved by April 1983." While the SCF project undoubtedly contributes to this goal, its impact can be only measured meaningfully in conjunction with other components of the AID-supported GOT development effort in Central Tunisia.

#### 20. Beneficiaries

+ 800 people as of September 1979.

#### 21. Unplanned Effects

Not pertinent at this time.

#### 22. Lessons Learned

As a result of this project, Community Based Integrated Rural Development (CBIRD) methodology is gaining support in Tunisia particularly from the target population and local officials. Central government officials, however, remain sceptical about the bottom-up approach.

During the January 23, 1980 USAID/GOT/SCF program review meeting, representatives of the Ministries of Agriculture and Plan made the point that they were uninformed of the results of the SCF experiment in CBIRD. It was suggested that by working more closely with

Tunisian institutions and keeping other interested entities informed of the impact of their program, SCF would increase the probability of institutionalizing its methodology in Tunisia. The PCI evaluation report concluded that AID should continue to support SCF activities subject to a number of conditions (see page VI-3 of report), principally that SCF be given, and agree to, a role as trainer of CTDA and other Central Tunisia extension personnel in the development and implementation of participatory, self-help projects. The CNEA report (page 36) also recommended that SCF perform a training function rather than a project implementation function.

23. Remarks

This Project Evaluation Summary is based on findings made during the period of September-October 1979. Since then, the situation has evolved somewhat due to changes in SCF management and staff. Nevertheless, the principal conclusions of the mid-term evaluation remain valid and have been reflected in the PIO/T issued in July 1980 by USAID requesting that the original SCF grant be amended to extend the completion date by one year and to increase funding by \$300,000. The PIO/T provided that SCF would seek to institutionalize its methodology through joint SCF-Tunisian program planning, funding, and implementation, as well as through the training of personnel from interested Tunisian institutions in bottom-up planning and execution of small-scale rural development projects.

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