

6320066001701

PD-AAJ-184

(0066)

**BEST AVAILABLE DOCUMENT**

LESOTHO FOOD AND NUTRITION PLANNING  
AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE PROJECT

An Evaluation

Administering Agency: Planning Assistance, Inc.  
141 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10010

Evaluation Team: Ronald Parlato, Team Leader  
Sonny Fong, Government of Lesotho, Ministry of Health  
Connie Collins, USAID Health Projects Administrator

Dates of Evaluation: 15 August-25 August, 1977

Report Prepared by: Ronald Parlato, International Development Consultant  
6503 Waterway Drive  
Falls Church, Virginia 22044

**BEST AVAILABLE DOCUMENT**

## Introduction

The Lesotho Nutrition Project, executed by Planning Assistance, Inc., with a USAID grant, is a project designed to give management assistance to the Government of Lesotho for the development of a nutrition planning capability. Specifically, the project has two major goals:

1. To provide assistance to the Government of Lesotho (GOL) in the establishment and support of a central food and nutrition coordinating office.
2. To orient and train Lesotho nationals to the level of self-sufficiency in the techniques of program planning and the management of food and nutrition programs in Lesotho including the collection and analysis of basic program information and the monitoring and evaluating of program efficiency and effectiveness.

A third goal: To assist the GOL in collecting, analyzing, and reporting basic information on the food and nutrition system in Lesotho -- related specifically to a third-party research study to be done by the University of Colorado. Although the results of that research will be of obvious significance to nutrition planning it was considered an ancillary activity of Planning Assistance, and was not an integral part of what should be considered a basically management assistance project.

It was felt that at the end of one year of international assistance, a Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office could be established, a well-qualified staff hired to manage it, training begun to bring this staff to levels of international nutrition planning expertise, and data begun to be collected to serve as an operational resource.

Due to a variety of reasons which this evaluation report will attempt to explore, these goals were not met (with the exception of the Colorado Study). This does not necessarily imply that the project failed or should not continue; only that due to a series of mitigating factors, completion of the project as expected was impossible. At the writing of this report, however, the Government of Lesotho has made a certain commitment to Nutrition Planning in the country by officially posting an announcement for the Director and Deputy Director of the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office - a step that has been long awaited and critical to the eventual success of the project. On the basis of that posting, the Government of Lesotho has indicated its formal support of the Planning Assistance Project.

This evaluation, therefore, will focus on the events and circumstances of the Lesotho Nutrition Planning Project from its inception in the Summer of 1975 to the present. It will look at a variety of factors relating to project design and conception; the role of Planning Assistance as an advisor in a complex governmental situation; the role of other international organizations and their relationship to nutrition services and nutrition planning; the attitudes, priorities, and commitments of the Government of Lesotho in terms of overall development planning; the social, political, and economic situation of the country and its effect on rational, planned, nutrition programs. By so doing, the evaluation will, it is hoped, elucidate key problem areas in the first year of program planning and make recommendations, where appropriate, concerning Phase II.

## History

In the summer of 1975, communication began between Planning Assistance, New York, and professional contacts in Lesotho (e.g., private, voluntary agencies), exploring the possibilities of developing an annual conference on family planning or nutrition in the country under the provisions of a Development Program Grant from USAID. Based on these initial consultations, PA contacted the Government of Lesotho directly and discussed the possibility of a National Nutrition Conference. By the Fall of the same year, Planning Assistance made personal contact with members of the Lesotho government and with various international development agencies involved in food and nutrition services. It was agreed at this time to hold the First Annual National Nutrition Conference in December.

The Conference was well attended, with members of various government ministries and international agencies present. The participants discussed the state of nutrition in Lesotho, agreed that rational nutrition planning was important and necessary, and set up a National Nutrition Steering Committee to take responsibility for structuring planning within government. At the Conference, certain guidelines for such structuring were clearly given, the most important of which concerned the location of the planning body within government. The Conference participants agreed that it should be within Cabinet, to insure a representation of all ministries. Historically, Lesotho's first national nutrition planning body, the Permanent Board of Nutrition (begun in 1962 with UN assistance), was ineffective and eventually ceased to function largely because of political difficulties arising from its location within one ministry -- the Ministry of Agriculture. A National Nutrition Steering Committee was also set up at the '75 Conference with the Permanent Secretaries (second rank of government bureaucrats) of Health, Agriculture, Education, and Cabinet (a ministerial rank office) designated as principal members. This committee was to be responsible for the formal structuring of a national nutrition planning body within a government. Finally, the Director of the Central Planning Office was designated as the pro tem government official responsible for liaison with Planning Assistance and other international agencies on the one hand and with the Cabinet on the other. The selection of the Director of Central Planning was made because his office was responsible for all international development projects.

Following the Conference, the Director of Central Planning distributed a Conference Report to all participants, asking for comments, with particular reference to future planning. Few replies were received.

In the early part of 1976, the Director of Central Planning issued a document concerning the formal relationship between Planning Assistance and the GOL, dealing with imports, taxes, etc.

During the period from early Spring to late Fall, 1976 (when the present Planning Assistance Advisor arrived in Maseru), little progress was made on the institutionalization of a planning office within government. According to Karen Tompkins, a Planning Assistance professional sent to Lesotho as a pre-project liaison person, government officials were very conservative about taking any action on the Cabinet proposal. She believed that this was due to continuing jurisdictional disputes among the various ministries as to who was going to control nutrition programs. She stated further that the "... coordinated planning aide (sic) of this project (Planning Assistance Advisor) is going to have to begin at the square one -- after Cabinet approval ..." (excerpted from a progress report/letter to John Palmer Smith in mid-'76).

Furthermore, the National Nutrition Steering Committee did not meet to begin detailed discussions on the structure of the eventual Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office. In short, Government was stalled on the matter: The Director of Central Planning, having little to do functionally with nutrition in his normal duties, in a difficult political situation (vis a vis other government agencies) and bureaucratically not in a position to effect Cabinet action (he falls within the Ministry of Finance, and answers to that Minister), was unable to move the proposal. The National Nutrition Steering Committee, without a key government person responsible for its actions (someone to whom it, as a body, answered), did not meet.

At the same (June, 1976) the University of Colorado research team, headed by Dr. Charles Slater began its Nutrition Systems Study -- a study designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data about the food production-processing-marketing-consumption network in Lesotho and to recommend certain related interventions. A UCLA Nutrition Survey unrelated to the Slater-Planning Assistance study was also underway in biometric data (fat folds, arm circumference, etc.) relating to maternal child nutrition.

Although it is difficult to determine both the nature of the problem and its causes, the presence of both research teams created a number of difficulties and, however subtly, affected the attitude of the Government of Lesotho towards nutrition, nutrition research, and nutrition planning. In the same progress report/letter from Ms. Tompkins to John Palmer Smith, she writes: "... Lesotho's uncommon position as a country open for surveys in a world where so few are open (is a part of the problem). It is ... getting overused. And I think the problems I am feeling here (UCLA, Slater, etc.) are connected to that situation ..." She goes on: "... They (the GOL) are apparently working on an assumption that they will have to supply ... personnel input to the food survey (Slater) as they have been told they must for the nutrition survey (UCLA). Not that I would not welcome that input if Dr. Slater wants it, but that it causes resentment ...".

The presence of two research teams in the country at the same time, studying basically the same problem, involving reportedly highly motivated individuals, created a difficult present and future situation for all parties concerned: Planning Assistance, USAID, the GOL, the two research teams. Having received final USAID approval for the project in late June of '76, Planning Assistance began hiring for the post of Nutrition Project Advisor, and put John Williams in the field in August. Due to unforeseen personal problems, Mr. Williams was forced to resign within a month of his arrival in Maseru.

Planning Assistance again began hiring and sent Mr. Christopher Thorne to Maseru in November. His priorities were to begin preparations for the Second Annual National Nutrition Conference to be held in January 1977, to assist in establishing the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office within the Government, and obtaining a staff for that office.

Shortly after his arrival, the National Nutrition Steering Committee met to discuss the Second Annual Conference and to decide on procedures for formalizing the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office (FNCO), and the Cabinet Committee of Ministers which had been decided upon over a year ago in the '75 Conference. In that meeting of the Steering Committee, it was agreed that in view of the insignificant progress made in nutrition planning in Lesotho, a Second Annual Conference was not advisable. In addition the first, rough outlines of a Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office were drawn, but apparently (according to Mr. Thorne) were 'heavy and bureaucratic' and therefore unwieldy.

Taking the basic structure of the Steering Committee outline, and revising it, Mr. Thorne then circulated his draft document to the Steering Committee for their comments and suggestions. This circulation, to be done by the Central Planning Office was delayed, and by January 15 no action had been taken.

Deciding to take somewhat more of an active role, Mr. Thorne -- through his ad hoc government counterparts (no official counterpart had yet been established) -- was able to reconvene the Steering Committee, get a final draft document on the structure of the FNCO and Cabinet Committee, get Central Planning Office approval (the Director), and finally, Cabinet and Prime Ministerial approval. The date on which Mr. Thorne received, unofficially, a copy of the SECRET document approving the FNCO was April 15.

From May 23, the date of the first reconvening of the Steering Committee (renamed, after project approval, the National Nutrition Advisory Group - NNAG) until the end of August, when a formal notice of hiring for the staff of the FNCO was posted, Mr. Thorne was engaged in assisting the GOL, wherever possible, in developing job descriptions, setting up pay scales, and meeting with appropriate GOL personnel officials. He, with ad hoc counterparts from the Central Planning Office, made contact with the Cabinet Personnel Office, attempting to facilitate the hiring process. Despite continued requests, no posting was made, and no reasons were given. Finally, at the end of August, the Government issued the formal announcement of hiring for Director, Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office, and Deputy Director Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office.

With that announcement, the Government made its first, formal commitment to at least one more year of nutrition planning, the details of which will be worked out between Planning Assistance and the GOL, whose financial inputs will begin only in April, 1978, the beginning of their fiscal year.

Two other circumstances of historical interest were: 1) the completion of the UCLA report and presentation of 'preliminary' findings; and 2) the completion of the Slater report and an open-session critique of his findings and methodology.

As regards the first point: upon completion of data collection and what the UCLA team described as preliminary data runs, Drs. Zerfas and Shaw made, in late 1976, statements to the effect that there was no serious nutritional problem in Lesotho. It was the consensus of people interviewed during the course of the evaluation that these statements -- right or wrong had an adverse effect on the progress of nutrition planning in Lesotho; set back whatever momentum had been begun within the Government; and disrupted the course of the Planning Assistance project.

As regards the second point: the open-session of the Slater study held in July of this year, with good representation from both government and international agencies was considered a success. It was more than simply a presentation of findings, and apparently engaged people into the process of systematic thinking about food and nutrition. The final report, however, has not yet been completed, and this fact had added to the overall uncertainty concerning the project.

### Relevant Findings

Following is a discussion of important findings that have direct relevance to Phase II of the Lesotho Nutrition Planning Project. As was mentioned in the Introduction of this Evaluation, the GOL has given formal and official support to the project by approving the formation of a Ministerial Committee on Nutrition and a Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office. Moreover, the GOL has recently published an announcement concerning the hiring of staff. These findings, therefore, should be looked at more in terms of their relevance and applicability to Phase II of the Project than in terms of past criticism.

#### 1. Nutrition is not perceived as an area of major concern in Lesotho.

The consensus within the Government of Lesotho and the international community is that there are 25,000 families within the country affected by malnutrition. It is generally agreed that these 25,000 families live primarily in the mountains, suffer periodic food shortages caused by dramatic seasonal weather changes, but are not considered in serious difficulty. The UCLA study confirms this opinion, suggesting that indeed most nutritional problems concern children of the mountain regions, but more importantly stating that only 6% of them have a 'high risk for having chronic PCM using the criterion of height for age under 90% of an internationally accepted reference value'. (Six percent fall in the range 85-87.4%. The range 87.5-89.9%, encompassing only 2.5 percentage points off the norm is not considered significant. All figures from the UCLA Nutrition Survey Draft Report, Table on Height for Age). Using other criteria (e.g., Weight for Height), percentages are similar.

Although there have been a number of professional questions raised about the UCLA study (Planning Assistance files in Maseru include written comments about it from a number of sources), it appears to have a certain validity because of the similarity of its findings to generally accepted conclusions. The point, however, is not so much whether the nutritional situation in Lesotho is or is not as UCLA has seen it, but as to what this perception of low nutritional problems means for National Nutrition Planning. Part of the problem, it is felt, is due to the persistence of very traditional conceptions of nutrition. For years nutrition has continued to mean - in Lesotho and throughout the world - kwashiorkor, marasmus, child stunting, vitamin deficiency and the like. Although these malnutritional effects are of course valid in many situations, they are not always the key problems in a given country. In Lesotho, there is more a dangerous potential nutritional problem than an existing one: with the country's near total dependence on the Republic of South Africa for wages (migrant mine labor), food (89% of food imports), transportation (all food imports come through the Republic), and much else, what is at present a quasi-stable food situation could become a very unstable one.

This is not to imply that this potential problem has not been considered. It has; but not as perhaps the key issue of nutrition planning - the socio-economic-political issue on which all other

nutritional considerations can be based. Nutrition planning, as presently conceived by the Government of Lesotho, is still a general, all-encompassing premise without a clear, real relationship to national priorities.

2. The problem of migrant labor in South Africa and its implication on food policy is perceived as a top priority but is not perceived as having anything to do with national nutrition planning. Many government officials interviewed in the course of the evaluation were somewhat surprised that the subjects of migrant, labor, wage remittances, government international policies and economic strategies were brought up in a discussion of nutrition planning. For example, when asked why no government official representing the Department of Labor was an active part of the National Nutrition Advisory Group, most people answered that they did not know - or more frequently, did not realize - that there was a relationship between the migrant problem and nutrition -- this despite the fact that the migrant labor-food problem had been discussed at the '75 Conference. The conclusion seems to be that because of an incomplete understanding of the methodology of nutrition planning, the structure of the nutrition system and the techniques for delineating its possible relationships, most people have not considered the migrant problem important for active inclusion into the planning process.

It can be argued that since the Government of Lesotho (all formal and ad hoc members of the nutrition planning effort to date) did not identify the migrant problem for inclusion in nutrition planning, then it would be inappropriate to suggest that it be included. It can also be argued, however, that self-determination and self-identification of needs can never take place without a given structure: the methodology of nutrition planning and the structure of the nutrition system.

The migrant problem in Lesotho has the following implications for food policy:

Political. When the miners return, particularly on an emergency basis, there must be food for them to eat. If they are not fed, they could represent a dangerous political threat to the government.

Economic. When the miners return, all wage remittances stop, and what has been estimated to be between 50-70% of the national income is discontinued.

Social. With at least 50% of the male labor force employed in South Africa, the social structure of Lesotho is already distorted. When the miners come back, they will have to be re-institutionalized into an agrarian life. This has implications not only for agricultural production but for social organization.

Therefore, the apparent government priorities concerning Lesotho national miners and food policy are the following:

1. A rational system of food importation (including donations)

which will reflect the potential food-nutrition problem generated by returning miners. Presently most donated food is programmed for children (CRS, World Food Programme), but given the volatile migrant labor problem, much of it might have to be re-programmed for adults. The European Economic Community (EEC) is presently considering sales-donations of food to Lesotho and the ultimate end-use of these commodities should be determined by GOL policies-priorities concerning the migrant miners.

2. A system of food storage which will suffice for emergency supplies in the event of abrupt miners' return and will meet the present needs of miners' families in the inaccessible mountains. Discussions with Department of Labor officials and others indicate that the percentage of migrant miners coming from mountain regions is equal to that of other areas; that is, the same amount of wage remittances flows proportionately into mountain communities. If food were available in the mountains, there would be adequate financial resources to purchase it, and the present state of seasonal malnutrition and resulting stunting of child growth would be eliminated.
3. A system of immediate, emergency food distribution. Even if there were food available in the country for an emergency miner situation; and even if there were adequate storage for it, there would still be the problem of efficient, expeditious delivery. At present the technology of food distribution exists in Lesotho (private, voluntary agencies and United Nations expertise), and the GOL would have to consider an appropriate use of it.
4. A program of food works where miners can be temporarily assimilated into a non-agricultural work force. At present there are programs being considered by the GOL concerning food-for-work schemes (Department of Works-World Bank-World Food Programme) which would set standards for work output and would attempt to stabilize what has been a fluid work situation (food-for-work schemes have been characterized by an uncertain labor force, lack of incentive, and low work output). These new schemes would have to be expanded in number and conception to include returning miners who would have to be employed quickly with a sure system of monetary and food remunerations.
5. A plan of eventual agricultural re-entry. If the miners return from South Africa, and remittances stop, Lesotho will have to both dramatically increase its agricultural production and become more dependant on food donations. At present, the arable land in the country is considered overworked and badly eroded with little potential for increased production. Agricultural experts are pessimistic, but only a well-coordinated production-import policy will begin to remedy the situation. At present international developmental inputs are varied and disparate and are of questionable value (IBRD, for example, initiated a project to encourage farmers to grow asparagus as a cash

crop. Although the intention was to stimulate cash flow to eventually replace foreign remittances, the project was considered to be 'nutritionally' badly designed).

3. Despite the fact that the GOL, through its various Ministries and Departments, is considering the migrant problem as a critical priority, this concern is not reflected in the present structure of the ad hoc National Nutrition Advisory Group or the Lesotho National Nutrition Committee (Cabinet level). It is felt that this situation dates back to planning for the '75 Conference, when it was decided that the primary representation on behalf of Government would be from the Ministry of Agriculture (ten participants), and the Ministry of Health (five participants), with a lesser participation from Education (three) and Rural Development (two). There was only one member from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, an 'Assistant Secretary', and it is not known whether he was from the Department of Labor. Although the Conference participants did discuss the impact of returning migrant labor, there was no mention of it in the Planning Assistance report (14 January, 1976) section entitled 'Policy Recommendations'. That section suggested that the Conference had been primarily concerned with the improvement of general dietary standards and had not discussed particular areas of immediate priority.

More importantly, when the National Nutrition Steering Committee was formed, only the Permanent Secretaries of Agriculture, Health, Education, and Cabinet were represented. When the ad hoc National Nutrition Advisory Group was formed out of that Steering Committee, no member of Commerce and Industry or Finance (other than from the Central Planning Office) was represented. Finally, when the structure of the Cabinet Committee on Nutrition was suggested and finally approved, only Agriculture, Health, Education, and Rural Development were represented.

It will be important for Phase II planning to discuss with the GOL the advisability of including a more varied representation of government officials in the planning process.

4. A similar lack of participation on the part of Department of Works has contributed to the relative isolation of the nutrition planning process. Although the question of food storage (warehousing) and food distribution (roads) has been constantly raised, and is considered a key element in the overall food and nutrition system, no representative from the Department of Works has been an active participant in the National Nutrition Advisory Group. Although it does not seem feasible nor advisable to include such representation in the Cabinet Committee, some member of government conversant with the problem of physical infrastructure should, it seems, have been invited to participate in the ad hoc group's discussions.
5. Given the importance of food and food delivery systems in the country, a more active participation of the voluntary agencies and international organizations would have been expected in the planning process. Although CARE, CRS, World Food Programme and others were adequately represented at the '75 Conference, they

have not been active participants in the National Nutrition Advisory Group. During the last reunion of that group, held during the course of the evaluation, no member of any voluntary agency dealing with food distribution was present. Their absence was significant, because at that meeting, the Advisory Group agreed upon a list of objectives to be met during the first year of operation of the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office.

6. Little information concerning either nutrition planning and/or the nutrition system has been passed on to key government officials, potentially important decision-makers, or influential resource people. It has been the clear and consistent position of Planning Assistance that unless and until local staff had been hired to administer the proposed Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office, any training or data-gathering activity done by Planning Assistance would be considered inappropriate and an infringement on the Government of Lesotho's right to self-determination. Therefore, during the approximately one year of project operation, since no government staff has been appointed, Planning Assistance has begun no deliberate and planned attempt to advise or assist the government of Lesotho towards an increased understanding of nutrition planning. Informally, of course, a certain amount of information was transmitted to various people within government and within the international development community; but no concerted effort to present information - or collect it - in a more formalized way was made.

Although the members of the Evaluation Team understood and appreciated Planning Assistance's point of view and their desire not to interfere in what might be considered internal affairs of government, they felt that Planning Assistance could have been more flexible in their definition of 'intervention', 'advisement', and 'training'. One of the goals of the project was 'To orient and train Lesotho nationals to the level of self-sufficiency in the techniques of program planning ...', and it was felt by the Evaluation Team that had the definition of relevant 'Lesotho nationals' extended to people other than the specific Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office staff, a significant amount of information concerning the nutrition system and nutrition planning could have been collected and strategically disseminated. Following are examples of the kinds of important 'training' activities that could have been carried on:

1. Convening of the ad hoc National Nutrition Advisory Group for nutrition workshop discussions concerning various elements of the nutrition system with specific reference to nutrition planning. Discussions might have been held on functional relationships between planning elements: population growth and land reform; agriculture and migration; labor; nutritional biology, environmental health, and nutritional status; ecology, agricultural technology, and labor-intensive farming. In short, a series of planned, coordinated workshop-meetings could have been held in an attempt to raise the general levels of nutrition planning, understanding and nutritional awareness amongst the

professional, bureaucratic and official members of the NNAG. At the end of a one year period, a significant amount of information could have been transmitted to potential resource people within the Ministries dealing with nutrition planning; the process of coordination could have been begun in an unstructured but yet formal way: by indicating the functional links between systematic items, bureaucratic links would also be made clear.

2. Convening small two- and three-person mini-groups for informal discussions on nutrition and nutrition planning. Such mini-groups could have been structured according to the above-mentioned functional, systemic relationships inherent in the nutrition network. The role of the Planning Assistance Advisor could have been one of catalyst - providing the technical structure within which the participants of the mini-groups could react.
3. Preparing a series of informational papers on planning: short, concise, easily readable documents dealing with the various elements of nutrition. Based on information obtained through local international agencies, international journals, and important reference works, these occasional papers could have added to the understanding of government and quasi-governmental people who would eventually be involved in nutrition planning.
4. Collecting data on the various component parts of the nutrition system and organizing that data in a relational way. Although data collection was considered to be an activity strictly related to the establishment of the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office and appropriate only after staffing, it is felt that had the structure of the data center been set up during the first year of the project, not only would the eventual staff of the FNCO have had a clear and precise data structure upon which to base their learning, they would have had a composite collection of actual resource material to use. In addition, the *ad hoc* people related to the project and to nutrition planning in general would have had a certain, definite orientation around which to base their self-training.

At present it is felt that the members of the National Nutrition Advisory Group - the key people in nutrition planning in Lesotho have only a rudimentary understanding of the entire subject of nutrition. Each person, of course, has a certain amount of expertise within his or her particular professional specialty: health educators understand about nutrition education; nutritionists are quite competent in human biology and physiology; agriculturists are experts in agricultural production. But none of them (based on personal interviews and participation in the recent NNAG Workshop) has a sufficient understanding of relationships that extend beyond even the most traditional conceptualization of nutrition. Had there been a concerted, definitive effort to

begin the process of identification of key nutrition planning elements and to explain their implications, the next year (Phase II) of nutrition planning would look more promising. As it is, one of the first tasks of the Planning Assistance Advisor will be to undertake the rapid inclusion of the National Nutrition Advisory Group into 'training' activities.

7. The presently conceived administrative structure of the Lesotho National Nutrition Committee of Cabinet, the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office, and the bureaucratic network between them appears to lack functional authority. Since the very inception of planning (the Conference of '75), the basic official planning body has been conceived to be an inter-ministerial Cabinet Committee made up of Health, Agriculture, Education, and later Rural Development. The principle of this organizational structure - the location of nutrition planning in a body composed of many ministries and not simply one - was based on the assumption that location in one ministry would tend to create problems of self-interest, insular politics, conservative thinking, and lack of the bureaucratic coordination that was considered to be so important for any real, rational planning. Yet government in Lesotho - as well as government in many parts of the Third World - does not operate across ministerial lines. Inter-ministerial committees are often formal structures which rarely meet and less often come to any real, inter-disciplinary conclusions. Rarer still is the inter-ministerial committee which can agree on joint projects, joint activities, and joint political action. This is not to assume that effective inter-ministerial planning will not take place in Lesotho; simply that history is more on the side of unilateral, partisan development, and not coordinated, joint action.

If this assumption is correct, then a great deal more confidence and faith is being placed in the ultimate effectiveness of this Cabinet Committee than is warranted; and, at the very least, care should be taken to insure that logical nutrition planning can proceed without the active participation of the four ministers involved. It will be important to conceive of this committee as one which will convene only on matters of highest level importance on policy matters which will affect national development. All the real business of planning - the categorization of data, the analysis and ranking of priorities, the fleshing out of cross-departmental projects - will have to be done at a lower level. Ministers should be expected to approve or disapprove, little else.

The key organization, then, is clearly the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office. It will do the basic groundwork for nutrition planning in Lesotho. Yet its role has not been clearly defined, and there is not yet a consensus (based on personal interviews and proceedings of the recent workshop of the National Nutrition Advisory Group) as to the exact role of the FNCO. Some of this uncertainty, it is felt, is derived from a misunderstanding of the Cabinet Committee's role concerning policy and policy recommendations. If this Committee is conceived of as more than an official, approving body, then the developmental, policy-generating role of the FNCO is diminished. In fact, this appears not to be the case. As

mentioned above, the Cabinet Committee can be expected to meet only infrequently, and therefore must not be asked to. If, once or twice a year, it has a well-prepared, thorough, and well-documented list of policy recommendations in front of it for discussion and decision, it will act. Yet it is not clear whether the National Nutrition Advisory Group conceives of the FNCO in this important, key role. The name of the Office itself - National Nutrition Coordinating Office - implies more of a liaison function than a policy-active one. Furthermore, most members of the NNAG interviewed spoke only in terms of 'coordination' when discussing the FNCO. Perhaps more importantly, they spoke only in vague terms - coordination, it seemed, was a hoped-for process which would somehow bring together factions and elements of government which had never done so before.

*very important*

The point is simply that there is an unclear distinction between the role and authority limit of the Cabinet Committee and the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office which must be made precise and well-defined before the second phase of the project. A confoundinal issue is presented by the fact that the GOL in approving the FNCO (in the 'secret' memorandum) left out Mr. Thorne's draft paragraph: "The FNCO shall be responsible for development of an integrated national food and nutrition program/policy for Cabinet consideration" and it is unclear why.

In addition - and perhaps as importantly - the administrative relationship between these two bodies (FNCO and Cabinet Committee) has not been delineated. At present the relationship has been conceived as a direct one - the Director of the FNCO answering directly to the Minister to the Prime Minister who convenes the Cabinet Committee. Clearly, according to bureaucratic structure, this direct relationship would never exist. A series of intermediate officials would have to come between the two widely different ranks of government (first rank and third rank: Ministers in the first rank, and Permanent Assistant Secretary - the proposed rank of the Director, FNCO - third). However, no such hierarchial structure has been yet delineated. Although the Deputy Senior Permanent Secretary of the Cabinet Office, answering to the Minister to the Prime Minister, has recently taken on an ad hoc intermediary role, this role has not been formalized nor has there been a suggestion to do so. No one government post has been designated as the one responsible for Nutrition Planning in Lesotho. The Cabinet memorandum approving the creation of a Cabinet Committee and a Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office makes no mention of authority; does not designate an official liaison between Planning Assistance and the GOL; does not specify who, ultimately, will be responsible for the success or failure of the project.

8. The delays in the project up to date can be traced in part to this lack of bureaucratic definition. As has been mentioned in the history section of this evaluation, the project began with only an ad hoc and informal working relationship established with the Central Planning Office - and this relationship was established by default: since the Office of Central Planning dealt with the financial affairs of all international projects, they would be responsible for the administration of this one. With no substantive operational management responsibility for development projects per se, the office could not have been expected to take an initiating role.

Since the participants of the Conference of '75 indicated quite clearly that a Cabinet Committee should be formed; and since the Steering Committee formed out of that Conference ratified that indication, it would have seemed appropriate that someone from the Cabinet Office be designated as the official person responsible. In fact, many months after the inception of the project, that is exactly what happened: Mr. L.B. Monyake, the Deputy Senior Permanent Secretary took over ad hoc responsibility. Had this person become involved in a more active way earlier in project development, the project might have proceeded more expeditiously.

Hiring for the FNCO was also delayed because of the assumed authority of Central Planning. The Director of Central Planning was asked to communicate with the Government Personnel Office to initiate recruitment procedures. Yet this Personnel Office falls within the Cabinet Office - under Mr. L.B. Monyake, the Deputy Senior Permanent Secretary. In point of fact, once Mr. Monyake became involved in the hiring procedure (immediately after the Advisory Group Workshop which he attended), postings for the jobs of Director and Deputy Director, FNCO were announced.

9. The delays in the project can also be attributed to a lack of political concern for nutrition planning. As has been mentioned above, the most critical problem facing the GOL is migrant labor - a significant number of working males are employed in the Republic of South Africa. The entire political, social, and economic stability of the country is dependant on the situation of these migrant miners. Nutrition as a general concept (overall nutritional status, nutrition education, calories, and proteins), having no dynamic inter-relationship with the labor problem in Lesotho, cannot have a high priority. It appears that the lack of government perception of the key relationships between labor, wage remittances, food supply, and nutrition, have deprived the Nutrition Planning Project of a key impetus. Without the sense of need and urgency, government officials may have felt it unnecessary to move quickly.

A second point to consider is that the Government of Lesotho is in a unique situation: due to its strategic political position as an independent black nation surrounded by apartheid South Africa, it is receiving more aid than it knows what to do with from international sources that want to bolster its position. Lesotho, it has been said, will take anything. It should be understood that the agreement to undertake nutrition planning in Lesotho on the part of the government was not necessarily a commitment to that cause. Although certainly the GOL realized to some degree the importance of planning for its food and nutrition future, it must also have been operating on its apparent operational procedure of turning down few requests.

10. The research done by the University of Colorado was generally considered good and important, but little research technology was passed on to local counterparts. Of the two major nutrition studies done in Lesotho - the UCLA Nutrition Survey and the University of Colorado Food Systems Study - the latter was generally considered superior, although they were measuring different things.

It was felt beyond the scope of this evaluation, however, to make professional judgments on the quality of Dr. Slater's work. In terms of impact, ultimate end-use of data, transference of technology, etc., some observations were made.

Firstly, the fact that Dr. Slater (Research Team Leader) has not yet submitted the final, formal research report has been an embarrassment to Planning Assistance, and a further impediment to nutrition planning in Lesotho. Clearly, without important documentation on key elements of the nutrition system within the country, the government has some reason to wait on its decision.

Secondly, it appears - although by no means conclusively - that little research technology was passed on to Lesotho national counterparts. Due to time constraints, the Evaluation Team was unable to investigate the question sufficiently to make definitive conclusions. It is only known that at the time Dr. Slater selected the National University of Lesotho (NUL) to work with him they had done no previous original research (information from Miss Elizabeth Gordon, Research Fellow at NUL involved in labor research). It is not clear, therefore, why Dr. Slater did not select the GOL Bureau of Statistics, an organization that had had previous and rather extensive experience in collecting census data. Since a secondary objective of the research project was to transfer technology - and not to build institutions - the decision to work with NUL can be questioned.

Thirdly, although the draft of Dr. Slater's report (as well as the UCLA report) had been circulated to members of the National Nutrition Advisory Group, no attempt had been made to summarize it, or present the findings in a simplified way for the non-research professionals who would read it. Therefore, not surprisingly, few comments were received. Although one can appreciate the possible reluctance on the part of an international agency to editorialize the draft document of a third-party researcher, nonetheless it was felt by the Evaluation Team that such editorialization would have allowed a greater comprehension of the findings, methodology, and approach of Dr. Slater's report. Since the University of Colorado study was investigating the nutrition system in Lesotho, and since this systematic thinking is key to a rational planning process, it would have been an important contribution to have achieved a greater degree of readership and comprehension.

11. No community-level participation, liaison, or affiliation has been included in Phase I nutrition planning. Although the difficulty in achieving a local- or community-level participation in national nutrition planning is recognized and appreciated, it is still felt that certain efforts to do so could have been initiated during the first year of this project. Although it may be argued that the GOL did not identify this representation as a necessity or even a desirability, nevertheless the attitude of most governments in the developing world (with the exception - in theory, at least - of Socialist countries) is often one of indifference to the expressed needs of the majority of their countries' population. In such cases, despite a declared non-interventionary stance on the part of international assistance agencies, it is felt that certain

recommendations concerning the inclusion of representative 'people's' groups would not be inappropriate.

No miners' group was approached, for example, although it is estimated that between 50-70% and as much as 80% of the male labor force in Lesotho is employed in South African mines. In fact, there are miners' organizations called Miner Recruitment Agencies which are responsible for the recruitment of Basotho labor for work in the Republic. Although clearly not labor unions in the American or European sense of the term, these Recruitment agencies (according to a former Department of Labor official) are responsible for looking after miners' interests while they are out of the country. It would have been worth the effort to have investigated the possibility of achieving a certain amount of labor force participation on the National Nutrition Advisory Group through these agencies.

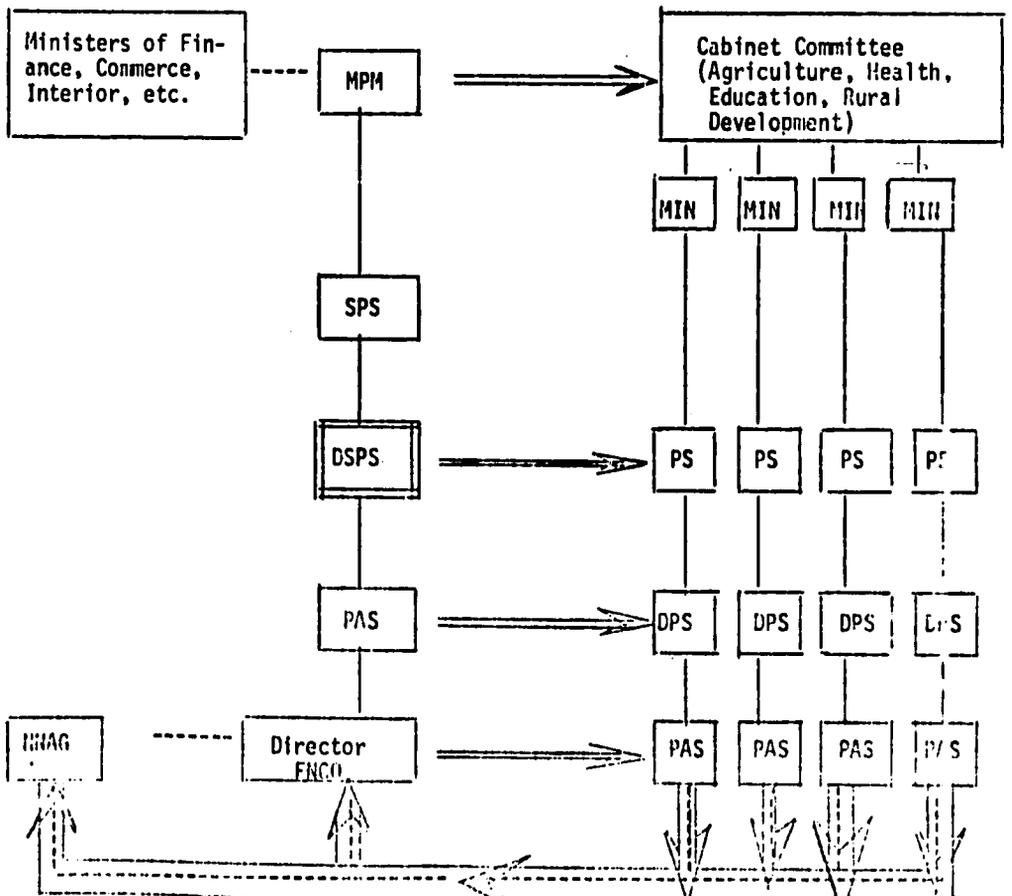
Through contacts with various government ministries operating field-level operations, contact also might have been made with other representative groups, and through a selective process, representation at the national level might have been achieved.

12. Although it was decided not to convene a Second Annual Lesotho National Nutrition Conference because of lack of progress since the First, had there been a broader conception of what such a conference could be, a Second could have been useful. Given the above-mentioned lack of comprehensive understanding of nutrition, nutrition planning, and the nutrition system on the part of both government officials and many international agency representatives, a working conference, well-structured within the internationally-accepted framework of nutrition planning research methodology, could have been beneficial. The First Conference was basically an exploratory one - one in which goals and objectives were decided upon; a general course of action delineated, and a program rational established. A Second Conference could have been (and still could be) one in which many ideas are presented for Government and international agency consideration. It does not seem inappropriate for Planning Assistance to organize and run a conference of this type. There would be no intrusion into the internal decision-making process of the GOL; there would be no attempt to impose ideas or a type of thinking on the conference participants. A conference where nutrition planning methodology is discussed, where the complex inter-relationships between various elements of a country's social, economic, cultural, and political situation and nutrition are explored, and a discussion is stimulated to encourage response to these considerations was not thought of as inappropriate and interventionary by the Evaluation Team.

Recommendations

Although recommendations are not strictly within the scope of a field evaluation, it was felt that given the nature of the project in question and the types of problems confronting it, a brief listing of recommendations -- all related to the findings of the report -- would be beneficial.

1. Define clearly and distinctly the structure of the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office, the Lesotho National Nutrition Committee of Cabinet, and the National Nutrition Advisory Group; describe ideal lines of authority and functional relationships as perceived; and present a formal organizational chart as an Attachment to the Phase II proposal to be submitted to the GOL for review and eventual approval. Following is a recommended bureaucratic structure developed by the Evaluation Team after extensive meetings with Government officials (a complete list is provided as Appendix I). This chart is only an elaboration of the basic structure agreed upon by the NNAG.



In the Cabinet Memorandum officially approving the Cabinet Committee (officially called Subcommittee), the Minister to the Prime Minister, the primus inter pares of the ministerial cabinet, convenes the Cabinet Committee (Lesotho National Nutrition Committee). This is shown in the chart as the NPM relating laterally to the Cabinet Committee. The memorandum also states that "the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office Director would report to the Minister to the Prime Minister in his capacity as chairman of the LMCC ..." What it does not state is how this reporting relationship would be established, since within the existing bureaucratic procedures a third rank official does not report directly to a Minister. Therefore the new intermediate officials who will do the official vertical liaison must be identified.

It is recommended that the key position in this hierarchy be the DSPS -- the Deputy Senior Permanent Secretary, presently staffed by Mr. L. B. Monyake. Since this position has been the one dealt with in an ad hoc way in the last few, important months of the project; since it is a key position in terms of both vertical responsibility (the DSPS answers to only one intermediate officer before the most powerful minister in the Cabinet) and lateral responsibility (the DSPS relates directly to the PS's -- the Permanent traditionally important as well as theoretically important-- it should be the clearly identified source of government responsibility.

The Director of the FNCO, however, cannot relate directly to the DSPS, however, since there are other officials in between. Although Mr. Thorne, the Planning Assistance Advisor has been able to deal directly with Mr. L. B. Monyake, it is felt that this relationship was only possible because of Mr. Thorne's status as representative of an international funding agency. This special situation will change once a Lesotho national has been hired as Director. Therefore it is recommended that in the formal agreement document between Planning Assistance and the GOL the PAS (Permanent Assistant Secretary) position under the DSPS be identified as the recommended contact point between the Director, FNCO and the DSPS.

It is also recommended that the Director, FNCO, relate laterally and formally to the PAS's (Permanent Assistant Secretaries) of other ministries. This will be a key functional relationship because it will be the PAS's who will be responsible for ground-level administration of projects and for transmitting appropriate ideas up to ministerial level. The PAS's will also be in a key position to identify resource people from their ministries who will be seconded the NNAG (National Nutrition Advisory Group).

In short this suggested administrative arrangement is meant to indicate the kinds of bureaucratic analyses that should be done before finalizing the Phase II proposal. It is by no means a definitive construction of the critical network of government relative to nutrition planning, and should be looked at as only a suggested plan and analytical methodology.

2. The role of Planning Assistance Advisor should be made very clear before Phase II begins. There should be a definite understanding between Planning Assistance and the GOL as to the nature of the advisement. There appear to be three types of advisement possible:
  - (1) Nutrition consultancy. The Phase II Advisor -- a nutrition expert -- would be required to work closely with his/her counterpart staff in specific areas of nutrition planning and would be required to be an active participant in the data collection, training, and information dissemination process. Although the Advisor might not actually do the work, he/she would be responsible for the structuring of methodologies as professional tools.
  - (2) Systems analysis. There have been a number of cases in nutrition planning where a Systems Analyst not particularly trained in nutrition has been the key project person (e.g., INCAP Instituto de Nutricion de Centro America y Panama). A Systems Analyst -- or a person skilled in this field -- would be able to offer an important service in training and data collection, for he/she, understanding the functioning of a complex system (nutrition) would be able to identify key need - and intervention - points to be dealt with in planning.
  - (3) Management consultancy. This activity would be similar to that which the present Advisor has provided.
3. There should be evaluation standards set for this Planning Assistance Advisor, since it cannot be known for what period of time his/her services will be required. It appears that the criterion presently established relates directly to project objectives: i.e., when an FNCO has been established, when a data base has been structured, and when Lesotho national counterparts have been trained. It is felt that these general guidelines need to be expanded and given more detail -- particularly with regard to training.
4. There should be evaluation standards set for the project itself beyond simple, procedural objectives. Although not a simple task, the definition of a 'nutrition planning capability' should have some objectively identifiable indicators. These indicators should be both realistic and broad enough in their definition to include qualitative considerations.
5. The specific duties of the FNCO, Advisory Group, and 'resource people' should be clearly spelled out and the following questions answered: Does the FNCO develop policy guidelines? Will the resource people be expected to work on a part-time basis for the Director, FNCO, and will he/she have authority over them? If not, how will they relate? Can a work schedule be set for the Advisory Group, stating for example, that it will meet monthly, and that attendance will be monitored by the DSPS? Or will their participation in the planning process continue to be ad hoc? Can the Advisory Group be convened for formal 'instruction sessions' whereby the technology of nutrition planning can be presented for their information?
6. The definition of the coordinative function of the FNCO should be elaborated and made more precise. How will inter-ministerial

coordination be achieved on a day-to-day basis? What, specifically, are the kinds of coordination to be expected, and how will success in coordination be measured? Does coordination mean the joint development of nutrition projects, or simply keeping all ministries informed of each other's developments? In short, does coordination mean information or programming?

7. The programming role of the FNCO -- if any -- should be explored. Will the FNCO be able to undertake its own projects? If so, how will this function take place? Can budgetary arrangements be made? Can its members (FNCO staff or members of the Advisory Group) advise other ministries in the development of nutrition projects? Is technical assistance, in fact, a role of the FNCO?
8. The membership of the National Nutrition Advisory Group should be re-assessed and expanded if necessary. Possible new participants would come from:
  - (1) the Department of Labor, to present government's inputs on behalf of the migrant laborers;
  - (2) the Department of Works, to present key issues and projects concerning the development of physical infrastructure in Lesotho;
  - (3) the Ministry of Finance, to be involved in discussions of miners' remittances, deferred payments and the possible use of labor-related tax revenues;
  - (4) members of Miners Recruitment Agencies, to explore ways in which their links to the male labor force and indirectly to their families can be maximized;
  - (5) members of any other organizations that might insure a representation of the people;
  - (6) officials of key international agencies to insure effective liaison with major food and aid donors.
9. Meetings of the Advisory Group should be broken down into two or more sections. At present, with the participation of both high - and low - level government officials, discussion is kept to the lowest common denominator to insure professional security. In the future the Advisory Group should have Plenary Sessions in which summarized discussions of policy might take place and commented upon by top government authorities; and Working Sessions in which all participants of the same rank could have a chance to speak openly. Furthermore, it is recommended that the Director, FNCO and/or the Project Advisor convene mini-groups of the Advisory Group for the purpose of more specific information transfer.
10. A public information campaign concerning the FNCO, Advisory Group, Cabinet Committee, and nutrition planning in general should be initiated at an appropriate time to help:
  - (1) raise the levels of nutrition awareness in the general public;
  - (2) generate support amongst all sectors of the population for nutrition planning;

(3) to alert potential resource people within and outside of government.

11. A determination should be made as to the policy-making role of the Cabinet Committee. What is a ministerial level definition of 'policy'? Does it only relate to broad planning trends which might be too general to implement? Or does it imply specific programming directions? What does the FNCO expect of this Cabinet Committee and does it coincide with the Committee's conception of itself?
12. A determination should be made on the source of nutrition-related policy decisions within government. How can the FNCO find out what government policy is with regards to migrant labor, for example? Is it to try to stabilize the miners' situation within the Republic of South Africa to try to forestall a massive return? Or is it planning for a gradual, planned re-entry? What is the Government policy on political refugees coming from the region? Allowing wide-range entry has food-and-nutrition implications.
13. An attempt should be made on the part of the Director, FNCO and the Planning Assistance Advisor to encourage the Advisory Group and all other people concerned with nutrition planning to consider key priority issues first before proceeding to a more general and more traditional approach. They should consider the question of food imports, for example; government policy and future commodity needs; storage and transportation; coordination between interstorage and transportation; coordination between international organizations and Department of Labor personnel -- in an attempt to raise nutrition planning to a higher government priority and more consistent with existing problems.
14. The Director, FNCO and the Project Advisor should immediately begin a program of data collection and information dissemination. It is considered a critical step to quickly bring nutrition planning-related people up to a basic level of understanding concerning the nutrition system and nutrition planning methodology. In other terms, it is necessary to give these officials the structure within which to make their own decisions and determinations about the country's nutritional future.
15. Care should be taken to identify research resources within Lesotho. Since it is not known the degree to which those people at the National University worked with Dr. Slater and the University of Colorado team and the degree to which they gained a research capability; and since it is not known what research infrastructure presently exists or is planned; and since little investigation has been done into the operation of the Bureau of Statistics (the GOL's primary research agency), no additional funds should be programmed until a thorough investigation has been made.
16. Planning Assistance should decide clearly whether its funding role vis a vis the Government of Lesotho should include any non-management inputs, such as the provision of technical equipment or financial assistance for the development of separate, specific, nutrition intervention projects. This will depend to a large degree on the determination of the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office's role

and whether or not it expects to become involved in program development. It is recommended at this preliminary stage that Phase II budgeting be restricted entirely to technical advisement and support for that activity.

17. Although there has been a verbal agreement on the part of the Deputy Senior Permanent Secretary (DSPS) of Cabinet (Mr. L. B. Mnyake) that the GOL would commit financial resources for the project as of April 1, 1978 -- primarily in the form of salaries for the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office Staff -- steps should be taken to formalize that agreement to the maximum degree possible and to delineate precisely what the amount will be. In view of the above-mentioned 'privileged position' of Lesotho in terms of foreign assistance and its problems related to incentive, priority, and commitment for nutrition, it cannot be expected with total certainty that cash contributions will be forthcoming.
18. One specific recommendation that can be made with regards to the GOL's financial commitment to the project is to insure the inclusion of the posts of Director and Deputy Director, Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office, in the official 'Establishment List'. This list of official government positions -- a key personnel and budgetary document -- indicates exactly which are the permanent posts within the bureaucracy. Once a position has been listed in Establishment List, it can be assured of budgetary recurrent expenditures. If the positions of Director and Deputy Director, FNCO, are not listed, the Government can consider their appointments as only temporary.
19. Another recommendation is to insure a section on nutrition in the next Five Year Plan, preparations for which should begin in 1978. Little consideration, it seems, has been given to GOL stated priorities within the present Plan and how they related to nutrition. Not only is it essential to do this during the next Plan period, but to insure that the GOL formalizes its commitment to nutrition planning as a matter of public record. Since historically it is clear that the GOL is very careful what is included in its written statements concerning the Nutrition Planning Project (reference its deletion of any mention of the FNCO's program/policy role from Mr. Thorne's draft), it will be necessary to encourage the Government to be more formally explicit in the future.
20. Once the Director, FNCO, is hired, and administration of the project becomes the formal responsibility of the Cabinet Subcommittee (and its deputed representatives), it is assumed that most ad hoc links with the Central Planning Office will be discontinued. It is recommended, however, that a new, more professional relationship with that Office be established. Through informed sources at the Ministry of Finance it was learned that the Director, Central Planning has considerable power relating to Government projects and priorities. Administratively falling within the Ministry of Finance, the Central Planning Office has certain authority for determining the disbursement of funds. For example, it has the power to determine to which capital investment projects surplus recurrent cost moneys are to be allocated. Under this arrangement, the Central Planning Office could be a critical link in the continuing process to institutionalize nutrition planning in Lesotho.

APPENDIX I

List of people interviewed in the course of the project  
evaluation:

1. Jonathan Fisher, Yale University Research Fellow attached to the Ministry of Health's Education Section
2. Mr. Mota, Permanent Assistant Secretary, Cabinet Office, GOL
3. Mr. W. Dlangamandla, former Deputy Director, Department of Labor
4. Miss Jonathan, Nutritionist, Nutrition Section, Ministry of Agriculture
5. Mrs. Mpita, Nutrition Section, Ministry of Agriculture; former participant in the UCLA Nutrition Survey
6. Elizabeth Gordon, Research Fellow, National University of Lesotho, working on a research project dealing with migrant labor financed by the ILO of the United Nations
7. Mrs. C. Phafane, Education Officer, Ministry of Education
8. Dr. S.E. Mohale, Senior Medical Health Officer, Ministry of Health
9. Thomas Tyler, Agricultural Officer, United Nations Development Programme
10. John Gray, Financial Advisor, Ministry of Finance
11. Dennis O'Brien, Director, Catholic Relief Services
12. Brice Atkinson, Director, CARE, Inc.
13. Allan Jones, Country Director, World Food Programme
14. James Anderson, Nutritionist-Teacher, Mt. Tabor School
15. Mr. Michael Phalange, National University of Lesotho
16. Mr. Joseph Bofelo, Lecturer, National University of Lesotho
17. Mr. Thabo Motsopa, Chief, Education Sector, Central Planning Office
18. Mr. L. B. Monyake, Deputy Senior Permanent Secretary, Cabinet Office
19. Mr. John Figueira, Director, USAID, Maseru
20. Christopher A. Thorne, Planning Assistance Advisor, Maseru
21. Mildred Pollard, Planning Assistance, New York

## APPENDIX II

### Evaluation Team Description and Evaluation Methodology

#### Evaluation Team

##### Ronald Parlato

Mr. Parlato was contracted by Planning Assistance, Inc., New York to lead a team of independent evaluators to assess the Planning Assistance, USAID-funded Lesotho Nutrition Planning Project. As Team Leader he would have overall responsibility for the evaluation and for presenting verbal findings to both Planning Assistance and to USAID. He was instructed by Planning Assistance to work as closely with Lesotho government personnel to the maximum degree possible within the short time-span of the evaluation.

##### Sonny Fong

Mr. Fong, an American, is presently working within the Ministry of Health as a government employee. As such he was identified as an ideal person for this evaluation -- a part of the Lesotho bureaucracy with the perspective of an expatriot. Mr. Fong participated in all phases of the evaluation: collection of information, analysis, development of findings and recommendations.

##### Connie Collins

Ms. Collins, a USAID staff member, is presently in charge of all Health programs for the Maseru Mission. She was to be included in the Evaluation Team as a third participating member, but due to her absence from the country, was affiliated with Mr. Parlato and Mr. Fong only during the last few days of work. Nevertheless, she was present in all the final discussions concerning findings and recommendations, and concurred with them.

#### Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation methodology was straightforward. It consisted of meeting as many people as possible connected either with the Planning Assistance project or with nutrition-related activities in Lesotho. It consisted also of as thorough review of the Planning Assistance files as was possible -- many of the files relevant to the history of the development of the project had been temporarily misplaced and were unavailable at the time of the Evaluation.

At critical points in the evaluation, particularly during the second week, meetings were held between Mr. Parlato and Mr. Fong to review all related developments and begin to work out an evaluation report design. On Tuesday the 23rd of August Mr. Fong, Mr. Parlato, and Ms. Collins made an oral presentation of key findings of the evaluation to Ms. Pollard of Planning Assistance. On Thursday, the 25th of August Mr. Parlato and Ms. Collins made an oral presentation of findings to Mr. Figueira, Director, USAID, Maseru.

1

PAGE 01 MASERU 01273 241248Z  
ACTION AID-31

7408

*Asst. Sec. State*

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 LB-08 OES-07 IGA-02 /059 W  
-----032477 241812Z /53

R 241215Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY MASERU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7459  
INFO AMEMBASSY MBADANE

UNCLAS MASERU 1273

AIDAC

FOR ROSE MARIE DEPP AFR/DR

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: N/A

SUBJECT: PLANNING ASSISTANCE INC - OPG (AID/AFR-C-1270)

REF: A. STATE 186407, B. MASERU 1215,

1. HCO COLLINS MET WITH PARLATTO AND POLLARD TO REVIEW DRAFT EVALUATION ON AUGUST 23.
2. PARLATTO EVALUATION POSITIVE IN TERMS PROGRESS MADE BY PAI IN ESTABLISHING FOOD NUTRITION COORDINATING OFFICE (FNCO)
3. PROGRESS CONFIRMED THIS WEEK BY MEMO FROM PRIME MINISTER ESTABLISHING FNCO AND NUTRITION COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM MINISTRIES OF HEALTH, AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT. GOL ALSO CIRCULATING PERSONNEL NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR POSTS DIRECTOR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FNCO. DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS SEPTEMBER 9. POLLARD INFORMED AT LEAST DIRECTOR WOULD BE SELECTED BY MID-SEPTEMBER.
4. POLLARD REVIEWED BUDGET FOR YEARS II AND III WITH GOL. YEAR II 1978 BUDGET PROPOSAL \$139,208. GOL CONTRIBUTING \$17,000 CASH AND \$27,000 IN KIND CONTRIBUTION OR 32 O/O OF TOTAL. GOL WILL CONTRIBUTE 45 O/O OF YEAR III BUDGET AS NOW PROPOSED (TOTAL \$140,990).
5. IN VIEW OF SERIOUS COMMITMENT OF GOL THIS PROJECT, AOO/MASERU RECOMMENDS OBLIGATION ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR PROJECT COMPLETION SUBJECT APPROVAL OSARAC.
6. POLLARD PLANS HANDCARRY PAI PROPOSAL AND FINAL EVALUATION TO AID/W SEPTEMBER 12. STOKES

UNCLASSIFIED

*Attachment 1*

Grant No. : AID/afr-G-1270

Project Title: Lesotho Food and Nutrition  
Planning and Research Assistance

Total OPG  
Request: (1 October FY76-79)

OPG Request  
Years II and III: \$188,639.00

GOL Contribution  
Years II and III: \$109,633.00

PVO Name and Mailing  
Address of Central  
Headquarters: Planning Assistance, Inc.  
141 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10010  
United States of America

Contact Person: Mildred Pollard

Telephone: 212-677-4372

Cable: PLANASSIST, New York

Project Contact: Christopher Thorne, Program Advisor  
Food and Nutrition Coordinating  
Office (FNCO)  
P.O. Box 630  
Maseru, Lesotho  
Phone - 3811

Date of Submission: 29 August, 1977  
(AID/Maseru)

### Summary

As of 30 September, 1977, the Lesotho Food and Nutrition Planning and Research Assistance Project will have completed the first year of a three-year operation to assist the GOL in establishing an institutionalized national food and nutrition coordinating mechanism. The purpose of this document is to seek AID funding in support of Years II and III of this effort. This proposal describes progress to-date, as well as proposed refinements in project direction which are instructed by first-year experience. The proposal provides a detailed plan of work for Years II and III.

## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Project Background\*

Over the past 20 years, the GOL has employed a variety of program approaches aimed at improving the nutritional status of the population.

During the period 1956-60, WHO conducted a national nutrition survey and, based on that study's findings and recommendations, a Permanent Bureau of Nutrition (PBN) was established by the GOL under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture. The PBN's purpose was to coordinate nutrition-related activities within Ministries, and to direct the operation of a large-scale, multi-faceted Applied Nutrition Programme (ANP), which began operating in 1962 with support from FAO and UNICEF. The ANP remains a vital operation within the Ministry of Agriculture. The PBN, however, enjoyed only moderate success as a coordinating agency and, by 1975 had become essentially defunct. The PBN's single function at this time is to administer the FAO/UNICEF funds which support the ANP.

Currently, in addition to the ANP, some type of attention is given to food acquisition, consumption, or nutritional impact, within the Ministries of Health, Education, Rural Development, Commerce and Public Works. Food and nutrition-related activities within the GOL are partially supported, or augmented by international donor and voluntary agencies, notably, World Food Programme, USAID, Save the Children Fund and Catholic Relief Services.

---

\* Refer also to APPENDIX A Grant Proposal submitted to AID 12 May 1976.

This was the general extent of food and nutrition-related activities in the country when, in December, 1975, a National Nutrition Conference was held under the joint auspices of the GOL and Planning Assistance, Inc., involving relevant Ministries, international donor and voluntary agencies. That conference resulted in a substantial revitalization of GOL initiatives to establish nationally - coordinated food and nutrition policy and program implementation. Policy Guidelines drafted during the 1975 Conference\* provided national goals and objectives in the areas of:

- Food Production
- Food Distribution
- Food Consumption/Utilization
- Nutrition Education
- ~~Food and Nutrition Research~~
- Policy Management

Policy Management included the establishment of village, district and national level coordination of all efforts related to food and nutrition, and called for the establishment of a central nutrition coordinating office within the government, whose responsibilities would include:

- a) formulation of nutrition policy and recommendation of nutrition laws and regulations,
- b) planning of integrated programs,
- c) providing follow-up implementation of nutrition programs,
- d) monitoring and evaluation of nutrition program effectiveness.

\* A complete account of the proceedings of the Conference is contained in APPENDIX B, "First Annual Lesotho Food and Nutrition Planning Conference".

**MISSING PAGE**

**NO.** 29

The work of Planning Assistance, Inc., and the charge of this Project now under consideration for second and third year funding, is to assist the GOL in establishment of the central nutrition coordinating office.

Project\* -  
Summary -  
Year I

The nature of the assistance role played by Planning Assistance changed significantly during the course of the first project year. Goals and objectives spelled out in the first year assistance project proposal made little distinction between the project's developmental charge and the activities that would be carried out by office staff (under PA guidance) once the office became fully operative.

---

Explicit in the first-year approach was provision for interim operation of the office, allowing for orderly transition - in by GOL (including complex policy decisions regarding the organizational position of the office within the government structure, identification of appropriate civil service personnel and location of permanent office quarters). At inception the assistance project operated as if it were the office. Under this arrangement, a major objective of the office's first year plan of work was accomplished - namely completion of a comprehensive study of the nation's food system. (See Appendix C).

---

\* An independent year I evaluation was conducted 15-26 August, 1977. Report available through USAID.

This study responded to policy guidelines regarding food and nutrition research drafted at the 1975 Nutrition Conference, and was carried out with technical input from the University of Colorado, in cooperation with the National University of Lesotho. About the time of completion of the basic research activities, two factors entered into the operation of the "interim office":

1) the ad hoc National Nutrition Steering Committee\*, which was concerned with directing the government's activities in establishment of the office, took a particularly strong position regarding the organizational level and the operational powers with which the office should operate. The Committee was very keen not to repeat errors that had been made in establishing the now defunct National Bureau of Nutrition. (The major difficulty of the Bureau apparently had stemmed from placing it within a Ministry while charging it with responsibilities that would require inter-ministerial coordination, and no policy-maker (program director linkages). The conclusion was that authority for a Lesotho National Nutrition Council (LNNC) should originate from Cabinet level. A Cabinet Committee on Nutrition would be primarily concerned with national policy formulation. Policy

---

\* An outgrowth of the 1975 Conference.

administration and coordinative functions\* would be delegated to a Secretariat, the Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office (FNCO) which would have the additional benefit of routine operational and policy guidance from an Advisory Group made up of tertiary-level Ministerial representation as well as delegates from international donor and voluntary agencies. The work of the FNCO would be further facilitated by the appointment of Resource People from within Ministries who would serve as intra-ministerial liaisons, and technical advisors on policy implementation. This was a significant development: a highly desirable task on the part of GOL, which it would have been reasonable to expect would take one-two years to evolve, was very early on in the project being clearly articulated by GOL decision-makers;

2) given the structural level of the office, as determined by the GOL, and the government's moves toward early institutionalization of the coordinative mechanism, any but the most minimal, interim office operations would have been inappropriate prior to staffing of the office by the GOL Civil Service Commission. Accordingly, a major aspect of the Assistance Project work during its first year in Lesotho has involved advice, support, and facilitation to expedite Cabinet approval of the LNMC, followed by appointment of staff and physical location of the office.

---

\* Components of the Office would be: Management; Conference Administration; Policy Development; Program/Organizational Development; Information Services; Continued Research.

As of this submission, the LNHC structure has been fully authorized by Cabinet. Office positions have been posted, job descriptions developed and submitted to the Cabinet Personnel Officer, along with a short list of potential candidates. Staffing awaits final processing and selection by the GOL Civil Service Commission. The office remains for the time being housed within the building occupied by the Central Planning and Development Office (CPDO). The office - temporarily referred to as the "Lesotho Nutrition Project" until such time as staff comes aboard when it will take on its permanent designation of the "Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office" (FNCO) - receives day-to-day GOL support and access through a Liaison Officer designated by CPDO.

In addition to its contributions to the organizational structuring of the LNHC, and completion of the "first generation" research studies, the Assistance Project has conducted meetings to review and discuss the research findings; has commissioned a study of the state of the art of nutrition education in Lesotho, as a preliminary step in technical development of national nutrition education strategies; and has begun the coordination of a multi-ministerial/agency project which will determine the effect of nutritional supplements on the productivity of road construction

workers, test the feasibility of using lay data collectors and will ultimately provide guidance on improving the cost-effectiveness of food-for-work schemes. Objectives of the first-year plan which relate to the office's information services (i.e., library, newsletter, etc.), and its program and organizational development services (i.e., revamping of ministry reporting formats and program monitoring) will not be undertaken until office staff has been brought on-board.

With the prospect of a fully-staffed office on or about the commencement of program Year II\*, it is now possible to clearly define those duties that will be carried out by the Assistance Project (e.g. Program Advisor) as opposed to those activities that will be performed by office staff under guidance of the Advisor. At a meeting held 17 and 18 August, the Chairman and members of the ad hoc Steering Committee, as well as candidates for office staff appointments (several of whom have been involved with the LNNC and the Permanent Bureau of Nutrition), all came together to develop operating guidelines for the FNCO. Their recommendations are reflected in the Plan of Work which follows.

---

\* This milestone is approximately 10 months behind original projections.

## SECTION TWO: PLAN OF WORK

### Project Purposes

The purpose of the Project is to assist the GOL in establishing an institution-alized mechanism for policy guidance and coordination of all developmental activities relating to food and nutrition in Lesotho. The structure and scope of operation of the coordinative mechanism is to be determined by the GOL, with advice and support of the Project, and assistance is to be carried out in such a way as to ensure governmental status and support for these activities by Project end.

### Project Goals:

1. To finalize with all due speed, all structural matters relating to establishment of the LNNC\*. These include final selection of staff, identification of permanent office quarters, appointment of permanent Advisory Group and ministerial Resource People as well as refinement of directive and response processes within the LNNC (between Cabinet, FNCD and Advisory Group).
2. To work closely with the Office Director and staff in establishing operational procedures, and to conduct formal and/or on-the-job training with all personnel, to a level of self-sufficiency in the techniques of policy development (preparation of policy package for review by Cabinet) program planning and management including administration of second-generation research, program monitoring and evaluation, program coordination and technical assistance (i.e. planning/management assistance, conferences, and information services).

\* The LNNC to be totally staffed by GOL commencing Year II, with cost-sharing in Years II and III (USAID/PA and GOL) totally supported by GOL thereafter.

Project Objectives and Associated Work Tasks

Goal I - Objective I

To provide any appropriate and necessary services to the GOL to finalize FNCO staffing.

- Task 1. Through inquiry clarify and document (for future reference), the steps involved in GOL job creation, civil service processing and selection.
- Task 2. Follow-up on any processing details that may have been overlooked; provide additional information, if necessary.
- Task 3. Assist the Director as necessary in initiating any future request for staffing modifications.

Objective II

To facilitate the convening of meetings between the Sub-Committee and FNCO, to finalize LNNC appointments, and to refine the procedures by which the Sub-Committee, the Advisory Group and the Office and Resource People will interact.

- Task 1. Provide technical input at a meeting in which those persons who have been identified as Resource People during Year I discuss the feasibility of carrying out their roles as generally defined and determine changes that would have to be made (either in the criteria for selection of Resources People, or in Ministry operations) to ensure effectiveness.
- Task 2. Assist the Director in formulating guidelines for the identification of Resource People and Advisory Group members, and in securing written communication from relevant Ministries and agencies on the nomin-

ation of each individual who is to serve permanently as a member of either group.

Task 3. Assist in preparation of a nominations list for review and approval by the Sub-Committee.

Task 4. Once permanent members of the LNCC are identified, conduct one or more meetings in which the operational charge of each component of the LNCC is clarified.

### Objective III

To assist the Director in working with appropriate GOL units in finalizing office location, and in acquisition of necessary supplies, equipment and materials.

Task 1. Working from the Project Plan of Work and Budget further specify office space and equipment requirements.

Task 2. Make request for office space to appropriate GOL units.

Task 3. Determine if any in-kind resources, (related to facilities) other than space are available.

Task 4. Assist Director in expediting purchases of supplies and equipment.

### Goal II - Objective I

To provide management and administrative guidance to the Director and serve as the key technical resource in all matters related to organization of tasks and performance of tasks by office staff.

Note: At the meeting held 17-18 August, 1977, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee has recommended that the FIICO Plan of Work

be submitted to the Cabinet Committee for approval. If staff begins operating about 1 October, 1977, this approval will likely occur within the following six weeks.

---

Task 1. Organize and conduct a detailed, formal orientation of office staff. This will include history of the development of the LNNC, familiarization with Year I activities and the Plan of Work for Years II and III, and technical instruction regarding nutrition planning (the research and its implications, food systems concepts, the nature of policy development, the principles of program planning, monitoring and evaluation, etc.).

Task 2. Serve as group facilitator in a session in which office staff refines and further specifies the FNCO Plan of Work.

Task 3. Participate as a technical backstop at all progress briefings between the office and the Sub-Committee.

#### Objective II

To serve as a key technical resource and on-job trainer in implementation of the Office's program/organizational development functions.

Note: These functions include:

- Monitor Ministries/Volag/Donag impact and stated goal achievement.
- Compare and coordinate Ministry reporting procedures.
- Initiate cross training, team building and other management assistance activities.
- Develop methods of improving inter/intraministry communications systems.

- Specifically define FNCO resource persons for circulation to involved Ministries.
- Produce background/position papers stressing importance and benefits of food and nutrition program planning and coordination.
- Develop core curricula for formal and non-formal nutrition education.

At a meeting held 17-18 August, 1977, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee recommended that the following general steps should be followed with regard to establishing a monitoring system.

- 1) The Cabinet Committee will later decide the decision-making process by which monitoring/evaluation criteria will be established.
- 2) The office will expand these criteria into instrumentation, working closely with the Bureau of Statistics and relevant Ministries and agencies to develop a standard data-base for measurement purposes.
- 3) The monitoring/evaluation system should be reviewed/approved by the LNNC.

Task 1. Following development of the FNCO detailed Plan of Work, meet separately with each staff person to determine those areas in which specific training or support will be required.

Task 2. Carry out training/assistance on a routine basis.

Task 3. Conduct a review at least once monthly with the office Director, to review FNCO progress and staff performances; increase or reduce assistance activities as necessary.

Task 4. If necessary, perform or confer with the Director to engage short-term outside resources to support staff in accomplishment of discrete assignments.

Objective III

To provide advice to the Director, train staff and assume specific task assignments in organizing and conduct of all LNNC meetings.

Note: These meetings include:

- Interagency/interministry coordination meetings.
- Meetings of the whole Lesotho National Nutrition Council (LNNC).
- The Second Lesotho National Nutrition Conference.

- Task 1. Participate in decisions regarding Year II meeting and conference schedules.
- Task 2. Develop a standard job task analysis for administration of large and small-scale meetings/conferences.
- Task 3. Assist staff in carrying out standard procedures for administration of large and small-scale meetings/conferences.
- Task 4. Making reference to the job task analysis, conduct a joint evaluation with Director and/or staff persons to determine the level of self-sufficiency that has been developed within the office to organize and conduct large and small-scale meetings.

Objective IV

To serve as a key technical resource and on-job trainer in implementation of the office's information service functions.

Note: These functions include:

- Develop and staff Food and Nutrition Data Center.
- Develop and staff Food and Nutrition library.

- Develop an information directory of nutrition-related resources, activities and locations.
- Publish a monthly Food and Nutrition Newsletter.
- Compile comparative analyses of current nutrition policy in other countries.
- Write a history of the development of the LNNC.
- Produce a directory of nutrition-related resource personnel.

At a meeting held 17-18 August, 1977, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee recommended that the establishment of a Data Centre proceed cautiously until better information could be developed regarding the scope and physical requirements. It was recommended that a thorough investigation be made of already existing documents, books and housing within various ministries and agencies. The investigation should also look at future possibilities for housing a comprehensive collection of food and nutrition materials in the new National Library (now under construction). In the interim, it was recommended that part-time consultant services be budgeted to do the necessary developmental work (resource assessment, acquisition and cataloging) and if a full-scale facility operated by FNCO seems warranted, the Government will make budget provisions for it during FY79. On another point, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee stressed the importance of the office developing a capability to serve as a manpower clearing house for nutrition-related programs in Lesotho (program planning, research, education, administration, etc.). It was suggested that the Office's capability might include personnel training in those skills areas.

Task 1. Following development of the FNCO detailed Plan of Work, meet separately with each staff person to determine those areas in which specific training or support will be required.

Task 2. Carry out training/assistance on a routine basis.

Task 3. Conduct a review at least once monthly with the Office Director, to review FNCO progress and staff performance; increase or reduce assistance activities as necessary.

Task 4. If necessary, perform or confer with the Director to engage short-term outside resources to support staff in accomplishment of discrete assignments.

#### Objective V

In collaboration with the Director assume total responsibility for further structuring of the office's research capability and provide on-job training and orderly turn-over of these responsibilities to designated office staff by end of the Year III Project.

Note: At a meeting held 17-18 August, 1977, the Ad Hoc Steering Committee recommended that both the Bureau of Statistics and the National University of Lesotho (NUL) be utilized as research resources. It was felt that the University had particular contributions to make, given its previous involvement in food and nutrition research work, its cadre of trained and/or available manpower and its place in the long-range picture for large-scale research capability in Lesotho which includes an Institute for Southern Africa Studies at the NUL and its eventual incorporation into a National Research Institute. On the other hand, there was concern that the Bureau of Statistics become more integrally involved in the food and nutrition research. The Bureau can, as it has in the past, play an important role in research design. It also has the capability for tapping into data collection manpower which is available within the government and at times when NUL may not

be able to respond because of academic schedules. Additionally, 2903 computer equipment is available for data reduction and analysis and should be used to its fullest extent.

- Task 1. Conduct needs assessment within LNNC (questionnaire to each individual, to determine interests and projected requirements on the part of Ministries and LNNC-related organizations during the next 1-2 years.
- Task 2. In concert with the office Director, convene a meeting with the Bureau of Statistics and National University of Lesotho (NUL) to develop criteria for division of work and responsibilities so that each can develop its capability to respond to ad hoc requests.
- Task 3. Develop a formal task order agreement between the LNNC (on behalf of the GOL) and NUL. (NUL budget to be supported by USAID/PA in FY78 and 79).
- Task 4. Acquire necessary Advisory Group and Cabinet Committee reactions and Cabinet Committee approval of NUL agreements.
- Task 5. Incorporate research recommendations of the 2nd National Nutrition Conference into the research program.
- Task 6. Hire and monitor as necessary, consultant resources to support either NUL or Bureau of Statistics research activities.
- Task 7. Once research component is organized, involve designated office staff in research administration (orient and provide on-job training to ensure transfer of capability to administer research efforts).

<u>PERSONNEL</u>							
Program Advisor*			19,260		20,225		
FNCO Director			4,118	4,118		8,237	
FNCO Deputy Director			3,120	3,120		7,591	
Program Officer			1,837	1,837		3,800	
Secretary			1,532	1,532		3,162	
2 Research Advisors*							
2 Research Coordinators			1,800	(1,800)	1,800	(1,800)	
2 Research Assistants			1,100	(1,100)	1,100	(1,100)	
Research Interviewers			2,150	(2,150)	2,150	(2,150)	
PA Officials			2,538		2,664		
GOL Officials				(14,000)		(14,000)	
Sub Total	80,251	(14,000)	37,455	32,867	27,937	42,736	
<u>FRIINGES @10% of Salaries</u>			2,179		2,288		
<u>CONSULTANTS</u>							
Librarian (Data Center)				(3,000)			
Management Trainers			(2,580)		(5,160)		
Other Technical Assistants			9,000		6,000		
<u>*Expatriate</u>							

	Year I		Year II		Year III		TOTAL	
	PA	GOL	PA	GOL	PA	GOL	PA	GOL
<u>TRAVEL</u>								
International								
- Air Fares	35,193		12,000		12,000			
- Per Diem			2,000		2,000			
Local								
- Transport			1,660	2,334		4,000		
- Per Diem	8,018		1,312	1,838		3,150		
Subtotal	<u>43,211</u>							
<u>OTHER DIRECT</u>								
Project Vehicles			195					
Vehicle Maintenance			500		500			
Office Rent		(1,058)		(2,500)		(2,500)		
Equipment & Furnishings		(505)		(500)		(500)		
Materials & Supplies			2,000		500	500		
Data Processing			2,000	(2,000)		(2,000)		
Project Evaluation					3,680			
Staff Development			12,000					
Staff Relocation					5,000			
Meeting Costs				(500)		(500)		
National Conference			(2,500)			2,500		
Reproduction			1,500					

45

	Year I		Year II		Year III			
	PA	GOL	PA	GOL	PA	GOL		
Telephone/telegraph			480	(180)	480	(160)		
Storage Fees			2,000		2,000			
Subtotal								
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	22,218		86,281	14,779	62,385	32,940		
INDIRECT COST	48,601		17,256	2,956	12,477	6,498		
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	194,281.		103,537 (85%)	17,735 (15%)	74,862 (65%)	39,438 (34%)		
in-Kind Contributions)		(15,563)	(5,080)	(27,730)	(5,160)	24,730		
TOTAL BUDGET		15,563	108,617 (70%)	45,465 (30%)	80,022 (55%)	64,168 (45%)		
		194,281		154,082		144,190		

Actual and estimated  
to 9/30/77

416