

PD-AAL-101
ISN 2107

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CLASSIFICATION
PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (PES) - PART I

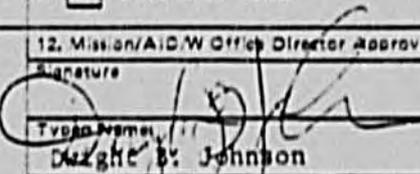
Report Symbol U-447

1. PROJECT TITLE Radio Schools of Latin America			2. PROJECT NUMBER 598-0588	3. MISSION/AID/W OFFICE LAC/DR/HR
			4. EVALUATION NUMBER (Enter the number maintained by the reporting unit e.g., Country or AID/W Administrative Code, Fiscal Year, Serial No., beginning with No. 1 each FY) <u>3</u>	
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR EVALUATION <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL EVALUATION	
5. KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DATES			6. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING	
A. First PRO-AG or Equivalent FY <u>76</u>	B. Final Obligation Expected FY <u>78</u>	C. Final Input Delivery FY <u>80</u>	A. Total \$ <u>1,085,000</u>	7. PERIOD COVERED BY EVALUATION From (month/yr.) <u>1/78</u> To (month/yr.) <u>12/81</u>
			B. U.S. \$ <u>806,000</u>	Date of Evaluation Review

8. ACTION DECISIONS APPROVED BY MISSION OR AID/W OFFICE DIRECTOR

A. List decisions and/or unresolved issues; cite those items needing further study. (NOTE: Mission decisions which anticipate AID/W or regional office action should specify type of document, e.g., airgram, SPAR, PIO, which will present detailed request.)	B. NAME OF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	C. DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
None - Project Completed		

9. INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVISED PER ABOVE DECISIONS			10. ALTERNATIVE DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF PROJECT		
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	A. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Project Without Change		
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/T	_____	B. <input type="checkbox"/> Change Project Design and/or		
<input type="checkbox"/> Logical Framework	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/C	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Change Implementation Plan		
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P	_____	C. <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue Project		

11. PROJECT OFFICER AND HOST COUNTRY OR OTHER RANKING PARTICIPANTS AS APPROPRIATE (Names and Titles)		12. Mission/AID/W Office Director Approval	
Richard Martin, Education Specialist LAC/DR/HR		Signature 	
		Typed Name Dwight B. Johnson	
		Date	

Project Evaluation Summary (PES)
Part II
"Radio Schools of Latin America" (598-05~~88~~⁸⁵)

13. Summary

"Radio Schools of Latin America" was an LAC regional project begun in 1976. The project provided grant funding to Florida State University to do an extensive field survey of Accion Cultural Popular (ACPO), the biggest, oldest, and best-known adult nonformal education program in Latin America. Information from the field study was intended to help ACPO improve its services and show non-formal education programs in other LAC countries how ACPO became successful.

The project has been completed. A draft final report from Florida State University was received on December 14, 1981. Additional outputs are not expected.

14. Evaluation Methodology

This is the final routine project evaluation. The evaluation was prepared by the AID/LAC/DR/HR project monitor, based on a review of the final project document; all previous project documentation; and consultations with AID/W, USAID/Bogota, Florida State University, and ACPO staff familiar with the project.

15. External Factors

The project was hindered by unforeseen problems. The first FSU field director did not adapt to life in Colombia and had to be removed. His replacement became terminally ill and died.

16. Inputs

Planned inputs were delivered in a timely fashion. The quality of project-supplied technical assistance, however, was marginal. The core project activity on which other project outputs depended was an ambitious and complex field survey of ACPO coverage and impact. The project technical assistance staff, unfortunately, did not have adequate expertise in survey research methods, sampling, questionnaire design, or social statistics. The consequences of these deficiencies are discussed in the next section.

A weakness in the design of the technical assistance component was the fact that the contract evaluation team was based inside ACPO, largely using ACPO people. As a result, the FSU evaluators became highly committed, intellectually and emotionally, to ACPO. The independent, objective quality of an outside evaluation may have been compromised.

USAID/Bogota, which helped monitor and implement the project, consistently complained that the project was overfunded, that the technical assistance staff was underqualified, and that management of the project by the contractor was indifferent.

17. Outputs

(a) Evaluation Data and Analysis

The major evaluation study is useful mainly as a descriptive review of ACPO's different programs and services. The field survey was finally completed, but because of methodological flaws its conclusions are of questionable validity. An excessive amount of time and money were spent on preliminary in-depth interviewing, the results of which were never fully processed. Then there was not enough time and money left for a careful field survey. Critical methodological flaws include the following:

(1) Sampling

Only communities that have the full range of ACPO services, including the textbook service, were sampled. Results, therefore, overestimate public exposure to ACPO services, if projected to the full rural population of Colombia.

(2) Measurement

Some critical questionnaire items did not produce adequate variance in responses and therefore failed to discriminate among ACPO users and non-users. For example, 71% of respondents got high or perfect scores on a test of reading and writing ability, indicating that the test itself was too simple to discriminate among different respondents' levels of competency. Given the intensive effort that went into preliminary interviewing and pretesting, it is difficult to imagine why items were included in the questionnaire that were not adjusted to adequately measure the full range of possible responses.

(3) Analysis

Large numbers of variables were added together to form summary indices, which were then correlated with other summary indices. However, since some of the individual variables had insufficient variance and since the summary indices were not tested for internal consistency nor validated against other indicators, the summary indices that were used in the analysis are probably inappropriate for correlational statistical operations.

The practical consequence of these methodological flaws is that the analysis presented in the evaluation may seriously underestimate the magnitude of ACPO's impact on important development indicators.

(b) Evaluation Modules

A series of draft training modules for evaluators of nonformal education services was developed. These modules do not appear to be based directly on the ACPO studies. A reading of the twelve modules gives the impression that they are more academic than practical. The emphasis is clearly on teaching the jargon of education evaluation.

(c) Guidelines

The final report presents some guidelines for other NFE programs based on ACPO's experience. These recommendations are interesting, although they contain no surprises (e.g., NFE programs should be sensitive to the political environment; active client participation facilitates learning; client expectations should not be raised to unreasonable levels, etc.).

18. Purpose

The project purpose was, "To provide systematically-developed guidelines for effective utilization of radiophonic learning systems toward project goal."

Since the results of the field evaluation study were inconclusive, the guidelines that are presented are more impressionistic than "systematically developed." The guidelines do not really advance that state-of-the-art of nonformal education by providing new insights or findings about successful or unsuccessful approaches.

19. Goal

The goal is, "To improve health and agricultural practices of campesinos." The subgoal is, "To utilize radiophonic learning (more) efficiently in promoting improved health and agricultural practices of campesinos."

Since the project did not engage in any publication or other formal dissemination activities, it is unlikely that any significant impact on other NFE programs will result. ACPO has expressed its disappointment that more specific and useful evaluation information did not emerge that could help revise and update its own services to campesinos.

20. Beneficiaries

Potential beneficiaries were rural agricultural families throughout Latin America. However, the likelihood of even indirect impact on this group is low.

21. Unplanned Effects

None

22. Lessons Learned

The project apparently began as an unsolicited proposal to help ALER, the

Latin American Radio Schools Association. The ACPO study emerged after a period of conversations and revisions involving many people in AID. It is probably best in most cases to either accept or reject unsolicited proposals, rather than to negotiate complicated compromises that leave objectives and accountability unclear.

In research projects, study design and methodology should be specified and reviewed in advance to avoid improvisation in the field and misallocation of time and funds on inappropriate research approaches. The technical credentials of contractor research staff should be studied critically by AID before individuals are assigned to the field.

Survey research studies can easily become elephantine and difficult-to-manage if they become too big. In most cases, it is preferable to undertake smaller studies than this one, investigating specific, clearly-defined research issues, based on small, carefully-selected samples of respondents.

23. Special Comments or Remarks

None