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SUBJECT: Annual Report for October 1982 - October 1983

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ANNUAL REPORT: OCTOBER 1982 - OCTOBER 1983

This report is submitted as required by my contract with TransCentury Corporation for USAID project No. 931-1054 "Structuring Nonformal Education Resources." The report will address the following areas:

- I. Relation to project and role of NFE evaluation specialist.
- II. Present status of Research and Evaluation section at LDTC.
- III. Activities of R & E.
- IV. Future plans.

I. Role of NFE Evaluation Specialist. The responsibilities for the NFE Evaluation Specialist with LDTC for this USAID project include the following:

- \* 1) Developing and implementing evaluation approaches for various LDTC sections (Service Agency, Literacy and Numeracy, Radio, Student Advice, and Formal Courses).
- 2) Developing and testing prototype NFE evaluation approaches, methods and materials.
- 3) Support of training and materials development for LDTC NFE activities in various sections.
- 4) Development of publications and dissemination of materials documenting LDTC's experience in NFE, especially as relates to in-Lesotho use of the NFE survey.
- 5) Training of counterparts and relevant LDTC staff in NFE evaluation theory and methodology.

Most efforts in the past year have gone into the first two responsibilities mentioned above--developing evaluation approaches for the Service Agency and other LDTC sections. Pre-testing of training materials for LDTC NFE activities has not yet been done in any systematic fashion, although present evaluation of training in general may lead to some modification of materials.

Publication of the results of LDTC's experience in NFE will take place during the second year of my contract. At that point, evaluations of several aspects of Service Agency work will be complete, along with an evaluation of LDTC's pilot literacy project. Training of counterparts in evaluation design is a continuous aspect of my job.

what is plan?  
handbook

II. Present status--Research and Evaluation Section. There are currently five staff members within R & E: the Section Head, two Field Research Officers, one part-time field worker, and myself, classified by the Lesotho Government as a "Senior Research Officer." The Section Head has spent part of the past year at the University of Massachusetts pursuing a Masters' degree (September-December 1982, and September-December 1983.) In June 1983 funds from the USAID Project were used to hire a second Field Research Officer on a one-year appointment. The primary reason for hiring the second field person was to enable R & E to conduct evaluations of Service Agency projects, three of which are now in progress.

all evaluation  
- no research?

With the addition of the second research officer, the Section is now well staffed to handle most of the work that comes our way. The exceptions are the occasional surveys involving extensive interviewing, as with recent studies of Assistance Fund groups and the literacy project. The pattern has been to use the personnel of the sections involved in addition to the R & E field workers, and to recruit interviewers from other sections if necessary. This has worked quite well.

There are ample opportunities for training within R & E: the design of a study, data gathering techniques (interviewing, questionnaire writing, etc.), data processing and analysis. With the new field worker and the part-time field

worker, training has focused primarily on interviewing and observation techniques, and on data coding, tabulation and summary writing. The experienced field worker has shown most interest lately in taking responsibility for field supervision and writing final reports of studies. All have indicated they are gaining a lot, a fact which can be attributed in large degree to their willingness to learn. The more experienced research officer will be attending a six-week intensive training program at the University of Massachusetts in November, where he will be furthering his knowledge of research theory and design.

*L. Pludo?*

III. Research and Evaluation Activities. I have been involved in the following activities since I came to the R & E Section in October of 1982:

A. Service Agency--Assistance Fund project evaluation. This has been the primary focus of my job, the Assistance Fund concept being a key element of the USAID project "Structuring NFE Resources." A general outline of the Assistance Fund project evaluation includes these topics:

1. project history and strategy
2. description of AF group participants
3. timing and duration of Service Agency assistance
4. training activities
5. change over time on members of AF groups
6. lessons learned from the AF project.

Evaluation of these topics will be reported in several stages. The fourth and fifth topics have been deemed the most importance aspects of the AF project so far to both the Service Agency and R & E. Baseline data on AF member characteristics (income, ability to manage income-generating activities, participation in group decision-making, and self-confidence in ability to manage and earn income) were gathered in March 1983. A summary of this data is attached to this report. Follow-up interviews six months later were conducted in September 1983. A final report on changes attributable to Service Agency assistance to the AF project is being prepared at this time. A part of this report will be

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*projects  
- NFE?*

a comparison of the three AF groups which can be categorized as "income-generating" with three other income-generating groups, matched with AF groups in structure and purpose, that receive no assistance from LDTC.

*Neither credit nor training?*

Evaluation of the fourth topic, training of AF group members, is also in progress at this time. Attached is a copy of the evaluation plan for AF training. A report on the first evaluation purpose, assessing the usefulness of Service Agency evaluation record-keeping and monitoring procedures has recently been completed and results will be presented to Service Agency trainers. The next step is to go directly to AF group members themselves and find out how training has made a difference in their lives.

*Urban?  
now?*

B. Other activities within Service Agency. R & E will also be helping Service Agency to evaluate non-Assistance Fund training, conducted with other NFE-type organizations (for example, Lesotho Cooperative Credit Union League, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Coops and Rural Development, piggery associations). The purpose of evaluation of these activities will be to establish the short- and long-term effects of training and the cost-effectiveness of Service Agency inputs.

C. Clients of Service Agency requesting R & E services. Other organizations coming to LDTC for evaluation services are as follows:

Food and Nutrition Coordinating Office. A field-test of instructional materials on basic health, food and nutrition for rural Basotho was conducted in November. The field test served to provide feedback on the comprehensibility of the individual lessons in the kit and on the accompanying teaching aids, and to determine how well learners could perform a particular skill relating to the main point of each lesson after the presentation. Results of the field test were provided to FNCO so that they could make revisions on the

materials and prepare for final distribution to development organizations in Lesotho. A final report (December 1982) summarized reactions to each of the lessons field-tested and made recommendations for future use.

CARE/Lesotho Handspun Mohair. A request came to LDTC for an examination into the productivity of mohair spinners. After preliminary research into previous studies conducted for LHM and monitoring reports, R & E decided a first step should be observation of the LHM field staff, the link between management and village-level spinners. Results of these observations have been presented to LHM (September 1983). A possible follow-up is a training program for management and field staff of LHM.

D. Research and evaluation for other LDTC sections. Requests come fairly regularly from other sections for R & E services. For example:

Literacy and Numeracy. Data for the first major evaluation of the LDTC "Learning Post" Project, Lesotho's only literacy program, were collected in February of 1983. Base-line information was obtained from literacy helpers, learners and administrators. This study served as a training exercise for members of the Literacy and Numeracy section and for R & E field workers, who designed the study during literacy evaluation workshops in Tanzania (sponsored by UNESCO and the German Development Fund.) At a follow-up workshop in March 1983 in Botswana, data collected were further processed and analyzed, and a final report is being prepared at this time.

Formal course section. R & E has developed a marketing survey for this section to help them determine the commercial audience for JC level English and Sesotho course books.

Related professional activities: I accompanied LDTC participants in the Botswana literacy evaluation workshop as a resource person from LDTC (March 1983).

Major responsibilities were helping Basotho and other participants organize data. In August 1983, I presented a paper on data collection techniques to participants in a workshop sponsored by the Lesotho Educational Research Association and the Lesotho Association for Nonformal Education.

IV. Future Plans. I hope to accomplish the following in my second year at LDTC:

1. Continue analysis of the Assistance Fund Project. This entails:

- a) Building on data already collected on the three AF groups. Pre-tests and post-tests, six months apart, have led to preliminary conclusions about the effect of the AF project on income, management ability, group participation and self-confidence of AF group members. What will be the change in their characteristics in another year? Which assistance strategies have been most effective in creating positive change?
- b) Obtaining pre- and post-test data from new AF groups. As data on AF groups accumulates, we should find out the extent to which certain findings are generalizable across all AF groups, regardless of the different reasons each group requested assistance in the first place.
- c) Comparing progress of AF groups with other income-generating groups in the country. What has been the experience of other organizations who work with income-generating groups in Lesotho? What are the distinctive features of LDTC assistance to these groups?
- d) Determining if there are particular kinds of groups (e.g., agricultural groups, craft groups, etc.) which respond particularly well to Service Agency training.
- e) As the number of AF groups increase, evaluating the cost-effectiveness of Service Agency inputs. It was widely agreed that costs were high with the first AF groups, a consequence of "pilot project" status. As the Service Agency becomes more efficient in dealing with groups, capital costs should decrease and time should be spent more efficiently.

2. Publishing results of LDTC's experience with AF project (see Betz, Annual Report, 15 September 1983, LDTC.)
3. Continue evaluation of Service Agency training with other organizations, measure results and cost-effectiveness.
4. Encourage personnel of other LDTC sections to adopt or continue using methods of ongoing program evaluation/monitoring.
5. Continue training of R & E field workers.

Goals for recently employed field worker--gain experience/skills in:

- a) problem identification, identifying sources of information on problem, developing instruments to collect data,
- b) interviewing, observing, and questionnaire design,
- c) coding and tabulating data,
- d) designing simple tables showing relationships between variables,
- e) writing summaries of tables.
- f) keeping up-to-date and easily accessible records of research conducted.

Goals for experienced field worker--increase experience/skill in:

- a) all the above areas,
- b) writing research reports,
- c) design of research studies,
- d) statistics,
- e) field supervision,
- f) scheduling phases of R & E studies.

Report on Preliminary Interviews With Assistance Fund  
Group Members: Questions and Recommendations For  
Follow-up Interviews

In the evaluation of the Assistance Fund project, one primary question is being asked: are rural income generating group members any better off for having asked LDTc for assistance? We have defined "better off" in four different ways:

1. The income of individual group members should increase.
2. Members' ability to manage activities leading to income should increase.
3. All members should participate in the decision-making as well as other activities of the group.
4. Members' self-confidence in their ability to manage and earn income should increase.

These goals can be considered as LDTc's "Criteria for success" of the AF groups. There may well be other kinds of successes and failures that will surface as the project continues, but these four were chosen as areas where LDTc wanted to have an impact. Interviews conducted in March were designed to create baseline information from which progress in reaching these goals could be measured. # Following are summaries of the information received so far from three of the AF groups. No conclusions can be reached at this point about either the progress of individual AF group members in achieving these goals, or the effectiveness of LDTc assistance. Questions are raised, however, along with a few recommendations, regarding ways in which follow-up interviews could be structured to accurately reflect this progress and LDTc's assisting role. The few recommendations made here about the structure of the follow-up interviews will undoubtedly be increased when members of the Research and Evaluation section sit down with interviewers to design the instrument and during the course of other discussions about evaluation of the AF project.

Income of individual group members

We measured both personal and household income. The average personal income for KUC members was between M0 - 30.00 per month, for MPA members approximately M30.00 per month, for KPA members M90.00 per month.

month. For the KPA group personal income was split between the highest and lowest groups - three earned between M0-30, three earned M151 and above (see Table R.)

Household income was higher, obviously because of the increase in "earners" per household. The mean household income for KUC members was M90, for MPA members between M61-90, and between M121 and 150 for KPA members (although four of the total respondents didn't know their total income - thus the figure may not have been too reliable.) Obviously we will want to observe the change in both personal and household income over six months.

Other issues arise from this data:

1. Six of the 24 KUC members were not sure of the amount of Maloti they personally earned in a month. The same was true for two of the eight KPA members. Likewise, six of the 24 KUC members did not know their monthly household income, nor did four of the eight KPA members. This raises a question for measurement of income level on the follow-up interview: Can these questions be asked in another fashion so that they will get answers?
2. The KPA had three members earning more than M151 per month, both in personal and household income. On the other end of the scale, three earned M0-30 per month in personal income, one earned between M31-60 in household income. A question is raised: What is the role of these higher income members in group leadership? It is recommended that this role be monitored. The follow-up interviews should also seek information on changes in the sources of personal and household income (Tables S and V). Are previous sources of income being intensified or abandoned? What are the new sources?

### Indicators of Management Ability

The extent to which AF group members felt they possessed any of the eight management skills varied considerably among the three groups: All members of the Maryland group said they did not possess any of the skills to any extent. Most members of the Koloni group felt that they did not possess any of the skills. The two categories receiving the highest ratings were "group work" (4 - high, 3 - average, 5 - low) and "leadership" (3 - high,

5 - average, 1 - low). Responses of the Khabotle group were spread more evenly over seven of the eight categories, perhaps due to the fact that they had already taken part in some Service Agency training sessions on management skills.

Follow-up interviews will establish any change in how AF group members perceive their own ability. We recommend that this data be combined with more objective measures of members' management skills, for example, test scores or observations of trainers, etc.

#### Indicators of Group Participation

Measures of participation used were time, resources contributed to the group and each members' perceived share in group decision-making. The measure "time" spent per week on various activities was not productive because of the range of responses given (for example, responses for category time spent on physical work ranged from 2 hours per week to six days - See Table F). It is recommended that if the measure "time spent on activities" is used for follow-up interviews, interviewers ask the question in several different ways in order to get a valid answer.

The resources contributed most frequently by members of the three groups were extra labour and food, and money (in the form of dues). One of the resources contributed the least was "knowledge". It will be interesting to see if there is any change in this category as a result of LDTC assistance.

Seven out of the eight members of the KPA felt they contributed at least a fair amount to decision-making, whereas 67% of group members felt they contributed nothing to the decision-making process. MPA responses ranged evenly along the four categories. Again, the Khabotle group is an older one and had already been working with LDTC at the time of the interviews. Follow-up interviews will measure change in these perceptions but might also go a step further in trying to determine the nature of participation in decision-making. This might not be possible though interviewing - observations of the decision-making process, as one example, might yield better information.

### Indicators of self-confidence

The reason for asking questions about self-confidence was to determine not only members' confidence in their abilities to contribute to the success of the group and to increase their own income, but also to see if LDTC assistance has led to increased confidence in other areas. These areas include money-saving arrangements, office-holding, and other learning and income generating efforts.

Many AF group members were engaged in other learning and income-generating activities. While members of the KUC and KPA were office holders outside their group, none of the MPA members were office holders, not even in the MPA (was this due to the newness of the group at the time of interviews?) Bank accounts were generally a more common way of saving money than membership in credit unions. Both were popular with KPA members, with three possessing both a bank account and credit union membership. This indicates that the idea of saving money is not completely foreign to AF group members.

With all of these self-confidence indicators, the value will lie in measuring change in individual behaviour and attitudes. It is recommended that enough open-ended questions be asked to note changes in other areas that members attribute to the group's association with LDTC.

### Final Note

This paper has raised a few thoughts on the role of this particular piece of the Assistance Fund evaluation and on the role of the four evaluation objectives mentioned on the first page.

Some of the data collected through these interviews will tell us about the effectiveness of Service Agency training of rural groups--an important aspect of our assistance--and can be combined with the data that is collected regularly by the project monitors. We may find that even with these two sources of data on training--baseline and follow-up interviews of group members and group monitoring records--the picture of training is incomplete and other measures of effectiveness are needed.

The source of the four evaluation objectives, or "criteria for group success", was LDTC's ideas on the impacts the AF projects should have on members of the rural groups we are assisting. As we review the evaluation procedures used thus far by project monitors, we will try to determine if these procedures are producing information that reflects progress made by AF group members in reaching these four objectives. Since they are actually "our" (LDTC's) objectives, we should also be open to members' criteria for success as participants in the AF project. In other words, these criteria should not be viewed as static, but as guidelines which will be modified as learn more about the project.

19/8/83 (revised)

FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION OF SERVICE  
AGENCY TRAINING

This brief paper includes some guidelines for planning an evaluation of Service Agency training.

Assumptions about what the Service Agency might want from a training evaluation are as follows:

1. feedback on training design, content and methods
2. feedback on trainee reactions to training
3. feedback on change in trainees' attitudes, practices and skills
4. feedback on change in trainees' income.

This evaluation can be used to:

1. signal the need to make changes in
  - a) training design,
  - b) training methods,
  - c) training content.
2. provide management/outside donors with information about training results.

The focus of the evaluation will be both training done with Assistance Fund groups and training done with clients of the Service Agency.

Attached is the revised training evaluation framework.

Research & Evaluation Section  
LDTC

19-8-83

1. EVALUATION PURPOSE: To evaluate the usefulness of Service Agency Evaluation procedures for improving training methods, content and design.

OBJECTIVE	WHAT INFO. NEEDED	SOURCE OF DATA	INSTRUMENTS
1. To determine the Service Agency's purpose for collecting data.	Objectives/purposes of various training activities	S.A. records, logs monitors	Interaction with monitors Record analysis
2. To categorize different kinds of data collected by S.A. on training of AF groups.	S.A. data on AF groups	S.A.	Monitors Record analysis
3. To determine if the data collected tells trainers if their training objectives have been accomplished.	Various kinds of data collected Training objectives	Monitors Data collection instruments	Monitors Record analysis

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2. EVALUATION PURPOSE: To evaluate the effects of S.A. training in income-generating group management on AF group members.

OBJECTIVE	WHAT INFO. NEEDED	SOURCE OF DATA	INSTRUMENTS
1. To determine how training changes practices in group money management and group skills.	What are practices pre- and post-training Nature of group participation.	Group members Monitors	Group financial records (S.A.) Attendance records Preliminary and follow-up interviews (S.A.)
2. To determine how training changes attitudes about income-generating practices and about working in groups.	Attitudes toward participation in groups and income-generating practices.	Group members Monitors	Preliminary and follow-up interviews (R & E) S.A. records Post-session evaluations (S.A.) Observations (R & E and S.A.)
3. To determine how training changes knowledge/skills.	Member skills pre-training and post-training	Group members Monitors	Preliminary and follow-up interviews (R & E) Observations (R & E and S.A.)
4. To determine how much income gained by group and individuals.	Level of income pre- and post-training.	Members Monitors	Preliminary and follow-up interviews (R & E) Treasurers' reports. (S.A.)
5. To determine the reactions of trainees toward S.A. training.	Reactions of trainees.	Group members	S.A. records Interviews (R & E)
6. To determine how groups' communication with LDTC changed over six months.	Patterns of communication pre- and post-training	Group members Monitors	Record analysis (S.A ) Conversations with monitors
7. To determine changes in intergroup communication related to AF matters over six months.	Patterns of communication pre- and post-training	Group members Monitors	Record analysis Conversations with monitors

3. EVALUATION PURPOSE: To evaluate the effects of Service Agency training on members of client organizations.

OBJECTIVE	WHAT INFO. NEEDED	SOURCE OF DATA	INSTRUMENTS
1. To find out from trainees a) their reactions to training topic; b) their practices in training area before and after training.	Same	Trainees	Questionnaires Interviews
2. To analyze evaluation data collected by Service Agency on training sessions.	S.A. evaluation data	S.A. records, evaluations	Record analysis

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