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PROJECT: 879-0251

GRANT NO: 879-0251-6-00-1006-00

A REVIEW (annual evaluation)

OF

THE FIJI YMCA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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FIJI YMCA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
(AID Grant No. 879-0251-G-00-1006-00)

The Operational Program Grant made by AID to the National Board of the YMCA of the USA provides \$44,986 over a three year period to cover certain costs of a rural work and vocational training project directed by the Fiji YMCA. As of October 31, 1983, \$23,975 was spent covering the period beginning August 17, 1981. It is expected that an additional \$2,500 was spent by January 31, 1984. Thus about \$18,400 remains in the grant which has about 7 months until expiration on August 17, 1984. (See Appendix C)

The activities supported by the AID/YMCA funds are part of a larger program which began in 1971. Total program cost is estimated at \$597,569, of that \$200,000 represents monetized in-kind contributions from YMCA clubs. Other participants in the program have been Canada, (Vancouver YMCA and CIDA) CORSO (the Council for Relief Services Overseas) of New Zealand, ICCO of the Netherlands, the Fiji government, the New Zealand YMCA and the Fiji YMCA. This grant supports the work of rural workers in Koro Island, Wainibuka and Laselevu, and vocational training that takes the form of instruction in sewing machine repair and chain-saw repair. (Appendices A and B indicate progress made in various aspects of the program.)

Given the Fiji context: the stage of development, the size and nature of the land-holding, the so-called "Fijian way-of-life," the resources available, and a host of other considerations, this project has to be viewed as a bold innovation and an exceedingly helpful activity. This appraisal holds true notwithstanding the fact that the realizations of the founders have not been fully met, and that there are wide swings in the results from year to year.

Recent months have been unfortunate. Hurricane Oscar destroyed farms and homes. It takes three years of cultivation to realize a product from some of the cash crops, and it takes a large proportion of a farmer's income to rebuild his house. This has affected club memberships and club incomes negatively. There is a drive to get the number of clubs up; it has risen to 73 from a low of 67. There are now 15 paid rural workers and 4 volunteers (there were 19 paid at the peak).

There was a proposal to lease 100 acres of land from a senior rural worker to raise crops for income. It has since been decided that the land is not suitable, nor is it accessible since the government has postponed building a proposed road to it. Another proposal has been made to make available 30 acres of fertile land on Ovalau Island to the rural works program. The Fiji YMCA board is to consider this item at a board meeting late in February.

From the very outset, this project was subjected to many forms of quantification and measurement. Base line data were established for activities, and progress has been measured by an increase in the members and the application of benefit - cost analyses at every step along the way. While the validity of some of the numbers then and now - is subject to question, the discipline of requiring them as part of the exercise is healthy and promote a seriousness of purpose that might otherwise be lacking. But as a measure of income estimating and projection of self-sufficiency, they turn out to be less than reliable. Some numbers can be accepted - members of clubs; number of club members, dues collected, moneys spent. How many kilos were produced, how many went to market, how much was earned (gross and net) are often at best educated conjecture. More time, more effort, more education will be required before reliability can be taken for granted. Nonetheless, the process of collecting data is itself educative, and should be continued.

For a project with relatively modest financial input, it has been subjected to more than its share of evaluations and examinations by external forces. The founder and one time general secretary of the Fiji YMCA has spun off at least three monographs/books on the subject, leading him to state his own general theory of development. A report prepared by anthropologist Pamela Peck for the Canadian YMCA and the Canadian International Development Agency is a very thoughtful and analytical piece. And this present report represents the third examination by US YMCA (in response to an AID requirement). Other individuals and groups are continually coming to look. One would hope that the sum total of the observations and recommendations made could be turned into useful approaches on the part of the donors as well as improvements on the part of the project authorities. There is no immediate evidence, however, to suggest that this abundance of material has caused any changes to occur in the execution of the project since its initial formulation.

Internally, the absence of communication, faulty communication, or simply misunderstanding concerning the uses to which the YMCA/AID grant could be put, as much as anything else, are responsible for some of the lack of more outstanding results in the project. Rural workers have used their own scarce funds to travel from village to village. Since their annual (unindexed) salary is \$2,000 a year and since they also had households to support, they did not do much travel. The director of the rural development has been unable to get out to the field, or to bring his workers in as often as is necessary. All of this because "there was no money." Yet not all the money that has been allocated for travel has been spent and, even if it had been, there is also authority to make shifts among budgeted items (with the approval of YMCA/Chicago) when the need occurs. Lack of money, then is not the problem. A clear statement on this matter should issue from Chicago to Suva, encouraging the Rural Works program to do what it needs to (in a responsible manner, of course).

When the Rural Works Director took on the functions of the Vocational Training Director when Solomon Guana resigned, it was suggested that an assistant be hired. This has not occurred, again, because of a lack of funds. I would recommend that Fiji be authorized to use the grant for that purpose.

The Director is also of the opinion that he has no funds for equipment and supplies, yet the financial records show an allocation and expenditure for this purpose. Clearly a number of self-imposed restraints were unnecessary.

Much is made in Mr. Dennis Oliver's writings about the participative nature of the program and the elaborate ritual used to determine the needs and desires of the villagers to bring about their engagement in the effort. Yet at the headquarters level responsible persons were apparently not aware of grant agreements, reports, correspondence, etc. which related to their work and the resources available for it. It is fair to assume that communication with villages and outlying islands is equally poor. The Fiji YMCA has to work harder at sharing information, sharing responsibility and taking action.

I conclude with the impression that this is a good program that can be even better. I concede that there is a strong pull to coast, to succumb to drive toward communal labor and redistribution through traditional methods. There are however, Fijians who are prepared to resist these and to provide the leadership toward new goals. Like it or not, life is changing in paradise, and no one will be shielded from the change. The YMCA's approach is an accommodation to the past as well as a realization of the future. It merits support - material and moral.

The present grant has about seven months to run, and, given the present rate of expenditure money for a year or more beyond that. An extension of the grant seems to be in order.

At this time the contribution of the US (AID and the YMCA), while modest, is significant. Expectations of other resources have not materialized. Private donors are not responsive; what were thought to be commitments on the part of the government of Fiji have not materialized, the Canadian contribution (CIDA and the YMCA) is declining. The dominant role here nonetheless seems to be Canadian: much is made of the partnership with the YMCA of Canada. (The Peck study is subtitled: An Evaluation of the YMCA Partnership Model; the able and dedicated Public Relations officer of the Fiji YMCA is the Canadian Ms. Kathie McGrenera). It would appear that some consultation between the important donors is in order: sorting out among the present donors about who does what in the future.

It would be a shame to allow this project to perish. Despite the thinness of YMCA leadership, the paucity of resources beyond those provided directly to this project, and the absence of strong board leadership, support and intervention, this particular activity is showing startling results. To assure the realization of its fullest potential both the project and the Fiji YMCA will require support.

It should be noted that there are two distinct aspects to the situation. There is the project itself. It appears to be flourishing (as the results in the appendices indicate). Rural workers are doing an effective job, the vocational educators are conducting training classes to even larger numbers of people. The rural community is moving into a market economy with little friction.

The other aspect involves the institution: the YMCA of Fiji. It seems to be weak in management controls; its fiscal and financial reporting is inadequate; communication is poor. The General Secretary is affable and congenial, the Director of the Rural Program is knowledgeable and dedicated. The Public Relations officer - a young Canadian is efficient and energetic. But an "electricity" was not evident at the office - which is physically dreary and inadequate. (Some of the grant funds could well be directed toward supplies and equipment for the management and control of the project - file cabinets, and a typewriter for example.)

I would conclude that the present grant should be extended until expended. A new budget should be prepared by the Fiji YMCA which should be the basis for amending the grant and determining the spending pattern for existing balances as well as the duration of the present grant. The Fiji YMCA should start giving thought to its requirements for an additional grant.

There was considerable feeling that the Fiji YMCA should seek registration as an indigenous voluntary agency with AID's South Pacific Regional Development office. I think ultimately this is the appropriate course. At present, however, I do not believe the Fiji YMCA has the administrative capacity to manage a grant. Ms. McGrenera is scheduled for departure in the Fall of 1984.

Mr. Jovilise Cavuka, Director of the rural program, is over-extended. Other than the General Secretary, there did not appear to be others involved in management of the project or accountability for the funds. Until that gap is filled a supportive intermediary is in order.

In the report on Samoa, I suggested that Samoa YMCA financial staff arrange a consultation with AID's people in Suva concerning grant administration - particularly the financial aspects. It would serve the Fiji YMCA well if it joined in those discussions.

If the Canadians do not expand or even continue the partnership that they enjoy with the Fiji YMCA, then some thought should be given to a close fraternal relationship with a generous rural YMCA from the United States.

I have no wish to be critical of the technical and substantive aspects of this project (and lack the qualifications for the task in any case). I do feel that the Agricultural College of the University of the South Pacific is a resource to be exploited, and that a program as extensive as the Fiji rural works effort could benefit from some of the expertise in Apia. Conversely, the University could benefit from the network offered by the YMCA Club system. I would encourage contact and exploration.

To Summarize:

- (1) The Fiji YMCA rural works program is thriving despite the fact that it has not drawn down all the resources available to it at a given time;
- (2) if the program were to really blossom it requires better and more management interest from the Fiji YMCA;
- (3) immediate improvement in internal communication is required;
- (4) more frequent less formal communication externally is desirable;
- (5) an extension of the grant is in order;
- (6) another grant should be considered; whether directly to the Fiji YMCA or through the intermediary of the YMCA of the USA depends on an appraisal of the management capacity of the Fiji YMCA when such a grant is made.

Summary of 1983

RURAL WORK AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

1. Present Situation - 71 Villages Served
 - 15 Rural Workers (paid)
 - 4 Volunteer Rural Club Leaders
 - 4 Vocational Schools Operating
 - a) Outboard Motor Repair
 - b) Sewing Machine Repair
 - c) Chainsaw/Sawmilling
 - d) Motor Mechanics (on loan to BOMAS)

2. Staff Movement -
 - New Motor Mechanics Instructor - John McKellar from Australia (January)
 - New Replacement Rural Worker to Gau - Kolinio Gio (March)
 - Resignations from Worker to Gau-Semisi Loco - to further his education (February)
 - Tailevu-Akuila Tuibureta - area not ready (May)
 - Labasa-Adriu Tumuri - family problem (July)
 - Bega - Epeli Drightibau - area not ready (July)
 - Resignation from Carpentry Instructor - Esala Vula - to work in his home village
 - Appointment of Motor Mechanic Apprentice (YOP) - Peni Delai (February)
 - New Volunteer Club Leaders - Jone Kali - Vanuabalaru - (January)
 - Lepani Roko - Tailevu, Naitasiri (June)
 - Penaia Rainima - Serea (December)
 - Neimani Kobakoban - Sote (November)
 - Applications to join also received from Nausori Highlands, Vunidawa and Nabulini

3. Training -
 - Director and Meli Senokonoko attended a 2 week course on supervision
 - 1 Rural Workers Training held in May
 - 1 Rural Workers/District Chairmens meeting held in November

4. District Contributions - This new system of receiving a district contribution instead of collecting club fees has proved very successful. Last year (1982) a total of \$524 was collected. This year (1983) \$1,024, an increase of \$500.

5. Community Halls - Two new community halls have been constructed, a very important community aspect of village life. These were built of Daliconi, Vanuabalavu, out of all local materials and Naiveicovatu out of timber sawn by the club.

6. Rural Workers Development Fund - This idea has been revived and is currently being looked into by the committee.

7. Duivosavosa YMCA Workers Club - Out of loans that workers made from this club, 4 Rural Workers built houses for themselves and 2 others paid for their childrens school fees.

8. First Donation to Old Peoples Home - The Koro YMCA held their First Annual Agriculture Show in July. Over 350 kilos of yams entered in the show were then donated to the Old Peoples Home in Samabula. The Old Peoples Home was very pleased as they said this was the first donation of its kind.

9. Rural Work Budget - Control of the Rural Work Budget is now with the Rural Work Committee and Director. This is a big improvement as now the Rural Work Department can be responsible for its own funding situation.

10. FCOSS Grants Received - The YMCA Rural Clubs received a total of \$26,471.48 in grants from FCOSS in 1983. These grants were:

	- 4 Gau goat projects	\$20,637.78
	- Waibau ginger project (water pump)	484.50
	- Naloto (Wainibuka) Housing Project (chainsaws)	2,674.60
(Laselevu)	- Nasalia (Naitasiri) Housing Project (chainsaws)	2,674.60

All four of these projects are very healthy and we are grateful to FCOSS for their continuing support. A direct link with USAID, where FCOSS receives its funds, is currently being looked into.

11. Ministry for Rural Development - A meeting was held with the Minister for Rural Development and a funding proposal submitted to him. It looks hopeful that the YMCA Rural Work program might receive funding from the Ministry.

12. Rural Projects for Self-Support - Two ideas for YMCA Income Generating projects of Yaqona marketing and leasing of agricultural land have been looked into. The board is currently responsible for these suggestions.

13. Rise in Vocational Fees - The rise in Vocational Training fees suggested by the Rural Workers has been in place throughout 1983. This has proved very successful and covers all instructors travel costs over the year.

14. Vocational Training Utilization Table

<u>Program</u>	<u>1982</u>		<u>1983</u>	
	<u>Courses Held</u>	<u>Training Weeks</u>	<u>Courses Held</u>	<u>Training Weeks</u>
Carpentry (ended in March)	3	9	2	5
Outboard Motor	6	12	6	15
Chainsaw	11	21	8	16
Sewing Machine	8	15	13	19
Motor Mechanics	-	-		BOMAS

BASELINE INFORMATION

Villages	No. of People	No. of Houses	No. of Farmers in Survey	(Taro) DALO	(Cassava) TAVIOKA	Banana Trees	(Fava) YAQONA Bushes	Cocoa Bushes	Yams	Cattle	Pigs	Goats	Chickens
Laselevu Area													
R.W. Paula Waga - April '83													
Nasalia Village	106	35	20	16,000	20,000	11,000	7,900	20,000	2,000	200	20	-	100
Wainadi Village	53	10	5	3,000	5,000	1,000	2,000	3,000	500	50	-	-	13
Area Total:													
Koro Island													
R.W. Sairusi Q - April '83													
Mudu Village	230	37	27	13,500	1,800	no new 124	22,900	100	9,400	4	27	18	22
Kade Village		10	14	566	100	-	3,464		400	-	-	-	-
Nakodu Village	330	50	30	12,898	4,510	no new 580	27,718	-	14,820	5	-	-	-
Namucu Village	357	60	4	2,500	700	no new 80	2,900	no new -	400	-	-	-	-
Area Total:													
Wainibuka Area													
R.W. Viliame Tamani - April '83													
Naivicula Village													
Naveicovatu Village	133	17	15	15,000	15,700	400	500	10,000	400	3			
Nasau Village													
Area Total:													

FIJI GRANT

(Grant AID/879-0251-G-00-1006-00)

Amount of Grant	\$44,986.00
Expended Through 10/31/83	21,375.00
Requested for Period 11/1/83 - 1/1/84	2,228.00
Estimated Expenditure 11/1/83 - 1/1/84	2,500.00

	<u>Total Budget</u>	<u>Expended To 10/31/83</u>	<u>Expended 08/01/83 - 10/31/83</u>
I. <u>Rural Work</u>			
Personnel (3 workers)	14,960	8,125	750
Training	1,540	1,100	100
Equipment	2,000	1,450	100
Other Costs	<u>2,000</u>	<u>1,250</u>	<u>100</u>
Sub-Total:	20,500	11,925	1,050
II. <u>Vocational Training</u>			
Personnel (2 + partial)	13,960	7,000	600
Training	2,300	1,300	100
Travel	<u>1,365</u>	<u>1,150</u>	<u>150</u>
Sub-Total:	17,625	9,450	850
III. Administration *	4,575	2,337	228
Monitoring *	<u>2,286</u>	<u>263</u>	<u>193</u>
Sub-Total:	6,861	2,600	421
Total Request:	44,986	21,975	2,321

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