

641.0045 17
PD-119Q-083
ESM-37040

OCT 10 1980

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAM

EVALUATION REPORT

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September 22, 1980

COMMENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the findings of a four-week mid-project evaluation of the Family Life Education Program of the Ghana Government's Department of Social Welfare and Community Development (DSWCD). The purpose of the program has been to provide nonformal education that includes literacy training, that emphasizes learner participation, and that focuses on the mobilization of rural communities. To implement the project, DSWCD received technical and material support from World Education, Inc., through a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Project description

While the project has been described in detail elsewhere,* it is illuminating to review briefly its history and design. World Education became involved in DSWCD's adult education work in 1973 and provided the Department with periodic technical assistance in training and materials development for family life education. In 1975, World Education received a grant from USAID to begin a concentrated effort to assist the Department in establishing the Family Life Education Program (FLEP) in three districts of Ghana: Asamankese and Akim Oda in the

* "Community Development Staff Training for Human Resource Development in Rural Ghana", World Education, New York, March 1977; "Ghana Prefeasibility Study for Small Scale Economic Activities", World Education, New York 1979.

Eastern Region and Saltpond in the Central Region. During Phase I of the program, which took place from 1975 to 1977, the Department established a new approach to literacy teaching; developed learning materials in three languages; developed a facilitator's guide for the materials; trained Department staff in materials development, participatory adult education, and the use of the new materials; and enrolled approximately 450 villagers in 30 classes in the three districts.

Phase II of the project (1978-1980)*, under an OPG from USAID, was to achieve the following:

- extend functional literacy materials to an additional 1,100 learners in the present three languages— that is, expand the number of groups in the present districts;
- develop and apply follow-up materials so that at least 60% of those graduated from Level I have advanced materials to read;
- develop and disseminate materials in a fourth language to about 300 people;
- train present FLEP staff in materials development, training of trainers, and evaluation;
- train 30 new facilitators;
- administer a fund of \$38,000 for community self-help projects in FLEP villages;
- administer a revolving fund of \$7,000 plus additional funds from the Ghana Government for the small scale economic enterprises of FLEP groups;
- hold 12 workshops in program management and nonformal education for senior DSWCD staff;
- establish 25 new FLEP sites.

That the project has not been able to complete the objectives of Phase II is well-known to staff of DSWCD, World Education, and USAID.

Phase II was originally scheduled from July 1977 to June 1980. Because of delays in starting the second phase, the current project began in February 1978 and will end in January 1981.

Ghana's tragic economic decline during Phase II is the principal reason for this failure, a fact which has been established in two previous studies of FLEP.* The revised materials were not yet printed by August, 1980— neither Ghanaian printers nor the Department could obtain printing supplies and equipment. New materials were not developed since there was no way to print them. FLEP has been expanded only by about seven groups because of lack of materials, staff, and adequate funds for field work. New facilitators were not appointed or trained for the same reasons. Training was carried out for existing FLEP staff and for senior staff of the Department, but the latter on a reduced scale owing in part to logistic and economic obstacles in this period of rapid deterioration. Small loans totaling \$10,255 (the amounts for self-help projects and economic enterprises were reversed, leaving \$38,000 for economic activities and \$7,000 for self-help) were distributed to FLEP groups in the three districts, and approximately 25 small-scale economic projects were assisted. Self-help monies have yet to be disbursed.

Purpose of the evaluation

This study is intended to provide information and analysis of greater depth and utility than previously gathered data have yielded. The study is concerned with two broad areas of program effort: the impact of FLEP on those who have come into contact with it— villagers, DSWCD field staff, and Department head office staff; and the institutionalization of FLEP within DSWCD. In addition to these broad areas of interest,

* "Ghana Prefeasibility Study for Small Scale Economic Activities", World Education, New York, 1979; and W. Owen and R. Ray, "Evaluation Report of Ghana's Community Development Staff Training Project", USAID, October, 1979.

the evaluator had several more specific evaluation questions designed to assist World Education in particular and DSWGD in general in planning future nonformal education programs. These included:

- the effectiveness of the original design of the project;
- key decisions that affected the course of the project;
- the effectiveness of participatory training and methods in an African setting;
- the relationship of nonformal education to income generation activities;
- factors responsible for successes and failures of groups;
- the effect of loans on village groups;
- participation of women in FLEP activities.

Evaluation criteria

FLEP, in a sense, is a broad and amorphous undertaking. Originally centered on design and use of indigenously developed educational materials, the program was forced to turn to other areas of activity when the learning materials could not be procured. Thus FLEP started out primarily as a functional literacy program and was slowly transformed into an income generation project. For evaluation purposes, FLEP had to be defined in such a way as to include the basic elements of FLEP both as originally conceived and as ultimately implemented when obstacles arose. The evaluator selected the following elements to help her determine the extent to which FLEP had been implemented in any project site:

- * 1. Nonformal education relevant to the lives of rural people and based on what they perceive to be their needs;
2. A literacy component of the general nonformal education program;

3. Learning materials that speak to common experiences in rural Ghanaians' daily lives;
4. Participatory teaching and learning methods that foster the empowerment of rural adults;
5. Training of trainers and administrative staff using the same participatory methods used for the program's rural learners;
6. Distribution of revolving loans and small grants to FLEP groups for small scale economic enterprises and self-help community development projects.

In order to measure the extent to which FLEP had become part of DSWCD, several criteria were chosen as a framework for evaluating program institutionalization:

1. An understanding of FLEP goals and methods on the part of DSWCD staff;
2. A commitment to FLEP goals and methods as demonstrated by DSWCD actions taken specifically to support FLEP and promote its integration into the general program of the Department;
3. DSWCD use of project processes and approaches relating to program planning, monitoring and evaluation, training, and support for field operations.

During the following discussion, the findings of this study will be considered in the light of these evaluation criteria and of the efforts that have been made to create a program embodying these elements.

Evaluation methodology

This mid-project evaluation, which originally was to occur in 1979, was intended first to gather pre-materials baseline data and later post-materials data. Because of the long delay in printing the materials, the evaluation was postponed until now, when materials are at last being disseminated to the FLEP sites-- the first appreciable supply of

materials during the whole project. A final evaluation which will assess the impact of project materials is planned for 1981.

The mid-project evaluation was to serve as a training exercise for FLEP staff. However, to conduct such an exercise properly would require several months of planning and pre-evaluation training. This was not possible, given limited funds and staff time. Since FLEP had virtually no good baseline data, it was therefore decided to conduct the evaluation in as collaborative a manner as possible with FLEP staff but to focus on collection of good data rather than on training. Staff competence and experience in evaluation will be discussed later in this report.

In 1978, a baseline survey had been conducted by FLEP staff facilitators. This survey was carried out without much supervision of interviews, and consequently some of the data were found to be falsified or gathered unsystematically. The items themselves were not reliable, and the results of the survey are questionable. Thus it was hoped that this evaluation would yield reliable data capable of assisting planners in assessing the current state of the project and in planning future program revisions. To some extent, this expectation has been met.

The evaluator spent two weeks in Accra interviewing Department staff, former Department staff, and outside persons knowledgeable of FLEP, and reading files from DSWCD, World Education, and USAID. The next two weeks were spent in Asamankese, Akim Oda, and Saltpond interviewing FLEP groups and field staff, looking at economic projects, and studying district files. (See Appendix II for a list of persons interviewed.) The evaluator was accompanied by the project manager, Communi-

cations Unit head, and the district coordinators, assistant district coordinators, and district heads of the respective districts.

To measure the extent of institutionalization, the evaluator relied on extensive open-ended interviews with all key FLEP personnel and with persons from outside organizations who were involved in FLEP. A general interview checklist (Appendix III) was developed, some of which was administered to all respondents, and all of which was administered to some respondents.

To measure program impact, a FLEP Group Questionnaire (Appendix IV) was developed by the evaluator, the district coordinators, and head office staff. The FLEP Group Questionnaire was administered to 13 groups. Groups, rather than individuals, were the units of analysis for several reasons. First, the notion of empowerment and participation of rural people to some extent philosophically militates against conducting a standard survey of individuals where people give out information but receive little in return. Second, it was hoped that a group interview would constitute a learning experience for the group itself but even more so for head office and field staff. Third, to conduct a survey of individual villagers requires a major effort in terms of survey organization and time, and the planning of such an operation was simply not possible given the time available for the evaluation.

The project coordinators of the three FLEP districts chose the FLEP groups to be interviewed— about half of the currently active groups were visited. The evaluator had given the coordinators guidelines for group selection, and it was hoped that each district would include unsuccessful as well as successful groups. The evaluator planned to compare

groups that had had maximum inputs— such as loans, full departmental and volunteer staffs, and materials— with groups that had few inputs. The mix of groups interviewed, however, was far more homogeneous than had been intended, so rather than a quantitative comparison, this study must be viewed as a largely qualitative exploration of factors leading to program successes and failures. It is hoped that future evaluations of FLEP will continue to gather the kind of quantitative data collected in this study so that ultimately a summative evaluation can be conducted using a time-series design.

In the absence of baseline data, heavy reliance was placed on project documents and reports for pre-program information. These included files from the DSWCD head office, DSWCD districts, USAID, and World Education. The 1978 survey data were scrutinized carefully, as well as monthly progress reports, information on facilitators' and participants' backgrounds, attendance registers, group feedback forms, and trekking notes.

All data on FLEP, including those gathered during this study, are affected by the problem of unreliability. For example, four sets of data— the Prefeasibility Study, the AID evaluation, the program's evaluation system forms, and data from this study— all provide conflicting figures on group membership, participants' ages, literacy, and so on. When items from the 1978 questionnaire were used in this study, many were found to be highly unreliable— respondents did not understand an item, even after explanation, or respondents with pre-program benchmark data gave implausible answers. Because of the inevitable misunderstandings that occur in research involving translation from one language

to another and involving cross-cultural transactions, data obtained from this study, as well as all other related to FLEP, must be regarded as approximate and in no way precise.

It is hardly necessary to state that data from this evaluation cannot be regarded as statistically valid in any way. The small numbers involved and the lack of control over group selection and attendance of group members at interviews all preclude any kind of rigorous research. Nor is statistical rigor necessary in a study such as this. Qualitative data provide far more illuminating information on program processes and problems and are far more useful in informing program revisions.

A final problem was that the evaluator had no opportunity to pre-test the FLEP Group Questionnaire. Inevitably, it was revised as the evaluation proceeded with the result that all questions were not asked consistently of all groups. Although some data are therefore missing for some groups, these omissions appear inconsequential. In the course of the evaluation, the evaluator revised the questionnaire for use in subsequent evaluations (see Appendix V).

II. PROJECT DESIGN

Many of the problems encountered in the course of Phase II stemmed from the design of the project itself. Some design problems were based on an unclear understanding of the organizational setting of the project— that is, DSWCD. Others arose from a failure to provide institutional linkages or structures that would allow the fulfillment of certain long-range goals.

Ambitious design

The project design was overly ambitious. In late 1976, when Phase II was designed, ~~the writing was already on the wall, so to speak, regarding Ghana's economic future.~~ ^{it was already clear that} ~~it was not bright.~~ By 1977, inflation had risen to 116%. At that point, the project proposal should have been altered either to include a drastically revised budget, even if that had meant a delay in the beginning of Phase II, or to reduce substantially the scope of project activity. Even had Ghana's economy not plummeted so dramatically, the project proposed by World Education and accepted by USAID and DSWCD could not have been carried out as planned with the few resources it had— not only money but vehicles and World Education and DSWCD personnel.

The problem of an overly ambitious design resulted in a dilution of effort during implementation. The project had two interdependent foci— the field staff and activities, on the one hand, and head office project management on the other. To achieve the overall goal of project institutionalization within DSWCD, it was necessary to focus on both areas simultaneously and as a result to dissipate already inadequate resources. The quandary of whether to concentrate on the field or on

the head office is a chicken-and-egg question. Success in one area cannot last without success in the other. Thus in order to fortify successfully both points of project activity—center and periphery—it was essential that the project have more resources and fewer tasks. (11)

Lack of staff

Another
~~A fourth~~ design problem was insufficient assignment of DSWCD counterparts to the project. A Department project manager was assigned during Phase I to administer ^{and monitor} the project, but during Phase II, when World Education provided a training advisor to FLEP, there was no counterpart trainer from the Department selected to assist the advisor and ultimately to assume his duties. At this point in the life of FLEP, the project manager assumes some training ^{duties and others are} ~~carried out by~~ ^{senior} ~~by of the training is planned and conducted by~~ a staff member who is seconded to FLEP from the Communications Unit of the Department. This secondment will end with the project, and the training, which is by far the most successful aspect of FLEP, will suffer a mortal blow.

Incorrect assumption

The project was based on ^{an} ~~a number of~~ incorrect assumptions. Regarding institutionalization of the project, ^{it} ~~the following~~ was assumed,

don't *incident*

← that the participatory approach to staff training and adult education would be ultimately integrated into DSWCD's general training program. No organizational provision was made, however, that could allow such integration to occur. FLEP remained separate from the School of Social Welfare training program, and no action was taken, or could be taken given the project mandate, to move FLEP methods into the regular DSWCD training system.

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III. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Three aspects of the process of implementing FLEP will be highlighted in this section: the development of a team approach to project implementation, adherence to workplans, and key decisions made in the course of the project.

Team building

~~With one important qualification,~~ [¶] The effort of project personnel to build a team approach to implementation has succeeded. ~~Despite the organisational setting, which is characterized by a sharp differentiation of labor and hierarchical control of information,~~ The evaluator everywhere saw evidence of FLEP esprit de corps and cooperation between FLEP staff. This is especially true of the relationship developed between the project manager and the head of the Communication Unit who serves as project trainer. Despite obstacles created by the trainer's not being a full-time staff member of FLEP, these two people plan and conduct project activities in a collaborative and productive manner, and they function in the eyes of all project staff as the FLEP head office team. ~~The team building effort, however, has not succeeded in incorporating other head office staff who are or should be involved in the project or who are in a position to support the project in the bureaucracy.~~

Adherence to workplans

Very few of the plans established at the start of each project year were actually carried out. Some deviations resulted from decisions

made by project staff (see following section), but most were due to difficulties arising from Ghana's rapid economic decline and to the failure to print the literacy materials. Project resources simply were not sufficient to accomplish project goals. During Phase II, inflation averaged between 70% and 120%, and project activities had to be reduced accordingly. For example, the first two-week workshop for FLEP field staff cost \$11,000, which was two-thirds of the first year's training budget. This necessitated a subsequent focus on cheaper (and, as it turned out, perhaps more effective) district level training and a reduction in the number of workshops held in Accra. Several training programs were cancelled or postponed because of city or national crises: water shortages or breakdowns, a national currency exchange, national petrol shortages, and three changes of government, including two coups d'etat. The major obstacle, the inability to get literacy materials printed in Ghana for three years, threw the entire project off course.

Key decisions

Having stated above that economic conditions in Ghana were responsible for the poor implementation record of the project, it is necessary to examine how certain key decisions were made, decisions that augmented or exacerbated the ill effect on the project of the general economic decline. The project inherited several weaknesses in design, and these were affected by subsequent decisions made once Phase II began.

Project focus. The first problem was one of diffused project focus. Given a very ambitious project that was provided with far too few resources (staff, money, vehicles) to accomplish its goals, the project team

decided in the first months of the project to reduce the scope of senior staff training by cutting the number of workshops and changing the target group. Even so, the project was still plagued to the end by the problem of interdependent foci— on the one hand, the periphery of the DSWCD system, or the village sites of FLEP activity; and on the other, the center of the DSWCD system, or the head office where decisions affecting FLEP were made. One could argue that the reduction in senior staff training contributed to ^{the difficulty of institutionalizing} ~~the failure~~ of the project ~~to become institutionalized~~ within the Department, and this undoubtedly is true. Nevertheless, the team had no choice but to try to adjust goals to resources. The real failure of this decision to reduce the scope of project activities, in the opinion of this observer, was that it was too mild. Given project resources, senior staff training had the least potential for impact of all project activities, even though it was and still is in the long run essential for institutionalization. Instead of expending scarce resources on minimal and thus ineffective senior staff training, the project team should probably have cut out senior staff training completely and planned a follow-on project that would focus exclusively ^{and on providing training to all senior staff.} on problems of institutionalizing FLEP in the DSWCD system. This also would have served to alleviate the problem of where to focus— field or headquarters. By reducing senior staff training only partially, the team did not manage to overcome the poor design.

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Location of project advisor

This failure to achieve a narrower focus is illustrated by the decision about where the project advisor was to live. Located in the head office in Accra, the project advisor became mired in administrative problems, and his effectiveness as a training specialist was somewhat curtailed. Had he lived in a project district, he would have been able to devote a far greater proportion of his time and energy to field training— even though he still would have had to spend significant amounts of time in Accra working with head office staff on administration and planning. As it was, the project advisor made field trips on the average of every two or three months (and once not for six or eight months, due to a combination of petrol shortage and staff leave). The evidence gathered in this study indicates that FLEP district training was the single most successful project activity, and it is clear, with the inevitable hindsight given to the evaluator, that the training could have been even more successful had the project advisor been able to spend more time at FLEP sites working intensively and extensively with field staff and providing them with the kind of follow-up they lacked between training sessions.

Project vehicle

The choice of project vehicle was a decision taken by USAID that has affected and will continue to affect the project adversely. The Ghana USAID mission refused to waive the requirement for an American-made vehicle, and therefore a Chevrolet Blazer was purchased for FLEP. The Department had wanted a Volkswagen because of its durability and

good gasoline mileage. The Ghana Government had established a nationwide policy of vehicle standardization to reduce the crippling problem of lack of spare auto parts. Land Rovers and Peugeots were and are the only vehicles permitted to be imported into Ghana. The USAID mission's edict directly violated official policy of the Ghanaian government.

The Chevrolet averages ten miles per gallon of gasoline and requires the more expensive super grade of petrol. Petrol in Ghana is now being rationed, and the Chevrolet takes a disproportionate amount of the Department's ration because its gas mileage is so poor. Recently, the Department has requested FLEP to budget staff travel in order to reduce the drain the FLEP car causes on the Department's petrol allotment. This means that staff cannot visit the field as often or as extensively as they need. That this situation defeats AID's implicit purpose of providing the Department with funds for a nonformal education project is obvious. When ultimately the car breaks down and needs repair, a fact of life on Ghana's deteriorating roads, the Department will not be able to locate or to buy Chevrolet spare parts, and the vehicle will be rendered useless. Had the car purchase conformed to official Ghana government policy, the car would now be fully utilized and eventually, when breakdown finally occurs, would stand a greater chance of being repaired and remaining in operation.

Project redesign

The final key decision was, in a sense, a non-decision. At no time during the first year of the project did there appear to be a point when all persons and organizations concerned with FLEP reviewed together the lack of progress and the inability to move the project along and then decided consciously to revamp the project.

The project could have been redesigned after eight months or so, when the effect of the crippling conditions in Ghana had become apparent. Project technology could have been geared down— that is, those concerned could have decided to abandon the slick materials and to use materials they could produce then and there— dittoed handouts, flannelgraph alphabets, people's theater, and so on. This decision also would have meant that the revised FLEP materials would not have been tested— if, by FLEP, we mean big charts with photographs and key words. But the concept of a picture and word in a self-contained unit could have received continuous testing in the form of more rough and ready materials. A decision could also have been made not to gear down project technology but to print the revised materials outside Ghana. This would have meant that at least during the last two years of Phase II, FLEP groups would have been provided with materials and project goals would have been accomplished.

Nor was there a decision to try to obtain more resources for the project to offset the problems of over-ambitious design and unexpected inflation, either through a grant amendment from AID or an additional grant from another source. ~~with additional resources.~~ A successful proposal was made to FAO for curriculum development and training, but it was too small (\$48,000) and too late (August, 1980). (Through this grant, however, printing equipment has been obtained by the Department, but the problem of obtaining paper remains.)

When the first two-week workshop used up most of the first year's training budget, and when by November, no materials were printed, the project team, including representatives from World Education in New York, should have taken these cues to redesign the project in a drastic fashion. ~~That this did not occur represents, in the opinion of this~~

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While staff in the field know best the obstacles to project implementation, far better, in fact, than any foreign organization can, it is also true that it is difficult for field staff to step back from those obstacles, to separate themselves from a course to which they have made a commitment, and to examine objectively the efficacy of that commitment. Providing this kind of objectivity should be the role of the back-up agency, even for its own staff in the field. That it was possible to conduct successful nonformal education and income generation projects during this period of time has been demonstrated by other non-governmental organizations in Ghana. But such achievements were made possible by a flexibility that FLEP apparently did not have.

IV. PROJECT IMPACT

A. IMPACT OF FLEP ON FIELD STAFF

The principal source of FLEP impact on field staff is through training, and it is training that has been the single most successful feature of FLEP. There were approximately 25 days of training during the first year of Phase II, less in the second year due to economic conditions. The longer a staff facilitator or district coordinator has been involved with FLEP, and the more training he or she has participated in, the more clearly he or she understands the messages of training-- participation, group dynamics, situation analysis, and the use of the materials. The easiest thing for field staff to understand is how to use the literacy materials, and the most difficult thing for them to understand is the notion of learner participation.

Participation

People who had worked in the program the longest, and who presumably had therefore had the greatest number of exposures to training, understood participation best. Everyone who had been in FLEP since 1975 understood the participatory approach, but it is impossible to determine whether the initial 1975 training, a cumulative effect of training, merely the length of program involvement, or some combination of these three is responsible for this phenomenon. People who had

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been involved with FLEP for only Phase II of the project did not seem to place as much value on participation as staff who had worked in FLEP for longer than two and a half years. (This may be because, during Phase II, the economic projects received more emphasis than the materials-centered participatory approach for the simple reason that there were no materials, and the materials reinforce participation.) Newer staff sometimes did not perceive participation as a feature of FLEP. But of all staff questioned about participation as a unique feature of FLEP, staff and volunteer facilitators far more often perceived participation as a distinct, unusual, and valuable feature than did any other level of staff, ~~including head offices. (Head office staff frequently observed participation in the field.) This reinforces other evidence indicating that the impact of FLEP has been greater on the target group—that is, facilitators as well as village participants—than on the institution itself. Even the district coordinators not committed to participation did not appear to treat their own staff any differently or with any greater respect than elsewhere in the Department, and they did not seem to encourage their staff in organizational participation. Participation thus may be perceived as a learning/teaching method rather than an ideology or an organizational style.~~

Training methodology and content

World Education views its training methodology, based on small group discussion and analysis, as ~~radically~~ different from the kind of professional training usually offered in community development training schools, ~~with lecture, demonstration, and case study.~~

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Therefore, it was of interest to see whether FLEP staff also perceived the same difference. Unfortunately, this question was addressed neither uniformly nor consistently to all staff respondents. Among facilitators, slightly more found FLEP training different from regular DSWCD training than did not. The ways they mentioned that FLEP differed included the emphasis on participant self-expression and generally the opportunity to learn how to teach adults. District coordinators and assistant district coordinators saw FLEP as different from DSWCD training, but this was not a uniform opinion. Participation, program management, and the literacy method were mentioned by coordinators as ways FLEP differed from the usual training.

Not one respondent felt that FLEP staff, at any level, should have special training in small business management. All felt confident that they or their staff were well-enough versed in market analysis, pricing, and management to guide the groups' economic ventures. The evaluator did not share this perception; this will be discussed later in the report.

Turnover

FLEP's high staff turnover (see following section) reduces the impact on training. In Asamankese, for example, four facilitators who had been in the program since the beginning left in early 1980. Three posts are still vacant, and one has recently been filled by a facilitator who is untrained and inexperienced in FLEP methods, although she is a well-qualified community development assistant with good experience. Similar situations pertain in Akim Oda, where newer

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facilitators, replacements for FLEP staff who have left the district, do not seem to understand fully the objectives of FLEP and therefore appear less effective in their work. Since FLEP training has been a singularly successful project activity, the high staff turnover and lengthy periods of time when posts are vacant actually undermine the effects of training and serve to impede program success.

Local training

Training held in the districts is preferred by all levels of staff to training held in Accra or some other urban center. District training allows practical on-the-job experiences, and these are perceived by all as beneficial. District training is also less expensive than training held in Accra.

Facilitator training should be held using the local language. Many facilitators, especially women, do not speak English well enough to understand complex notions like participation, organization of economic projects, and so on in English. This impression was corroborated by a senior staff member who said that in a recent district training program, some participants noted that because they were learning in Twi, they understood the material completely for the first time. Many volunteer facilitators especially have a very rudimentary grasp of English and will benefit enormously from training held in their own language.

School of Social Welfare

FLEP training has had a very small but potentially valuable impact on the School of Social Welfare. FLEP facilitators who have left their

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jobs to enter the School are perceived to do well at the School and to take a more dynamic— that is, a more participatory— role in their training than students who have not worked in FLEP. This may merely mean that FLEP facilitators were specially selected for the pilot project and therefore could be expected to do better anyway than other community development assistants. Nevertheless, it is an interesting sidelight and should be examined in the final evaluation.

Many senior DSWCD staff are also part-time tutors at the School, and it is expected that they may have altered their teaching style as a result of FLEP exposure. The FLEP trainer has certainly incorporated the participatory style of FLEP into his teaching at the School.

Factors contributing to success

Why, in the face of all other program obstacles, has the training of field staff been so successful? In the opinion of this observer, training has succeeded because it had a relatively narrow focus— the front line worker, and the resources and organizational abilities necessary for the task were available. Training is something World Education knows how to do, it is something World Education is set up to do, and it is something the Department is set up to do. Furthermore, training is something that all concerned both wanted and believed was needed.

Impact on senior staff

The project proposal called for training of all DSWCD senior staff in nonformal education and program management. When the project advisor

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arrived in Ghana, he and the project manager saw that this plan was too ambitious for the resources at their disposal, and they decided instead to offer training to senior staff at the Senior Community Development Officer level only. Although these SCDO's included the FLEP district coordinators, most had no involvement in FLEP.

In the project proposal, 12 workshops were scheduled during the course of two years, but only four were actually carried out— two in nonformal education, one in planning, and one in evaluation. The number of workshops were so drastically reduced in part because there was not sufficient money to conduct the number originally planned, and in part because, with heavy administrative burdens (such as trying to get materials printed) and with a concern for intensive FLEP staff training, there was simply not sufficient time to hold a senior staff workshop every two months. But also economic conditions in the country forced the cancellation or postponement of one after another of these workshops, and the result was relatively low attendance at those that were held, and little interest among participants in continuing with the workshops. There was neither money nor time to follow up senior staff workshops at participants' posts, which were scattered throughout all the regions of Ghana, so the return on the heavy investment of time and money necessary to hold such a workshop yielded a very low return in terms of changes in professional practices of the participants or in promotion of FLEP-like activities. This was solely a problem of faulty design, and to reduce and de-emphasize the senior staff training was a sensible decision that conserved resources. As suggested earlier, senior staff training is such an important and demanding activity t

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it deserves a project in its own right and should not have been an appendix to an already over-loaded plan of work.

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B. IMPACT OF FLEP ON PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Number of groups

There are about 45 FLEP groups in the three districts-- 23 in Saltpond, 14 in Akim Oda, and eight in Asamankese. However, only about 37 of these are really active, and only 26 have been established for some time. The FLEP Plan of Work for 1980 calls for an increase in the number of groups in all three districts, and district teams are currently pursuing this goal. However, with a shrinking staff and inadequate travel funds, such an expansion would be difficult if not unimaginable.

The evaluator visited 17 groups and interviewed 15. The 15 groups represent a membership of 243 people, 121 of whom were present for the interviews. Table 1 of Appendix I lists the groups visited and their estimated memberships.

Membership numbers

Table 2 of Appendix I shows the composition of the FLEP groups interviewed. Groups averaged 16 members but ranged in membership from as few as seven to as many as 23. About 50 percent of the members were present for the group interviews, or an average of 8 people per group.

Defining membership in FLEP is very difficult, and the above figures should be taken as rough estimates only. Membership figures vary from one set of data to the next; the figures gathered in this study did not agree with those given in DSWCD monthly reports, and both differed

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from those obtained in the two earlier evaluative studies of FLEP. One reason for this discrepancy is that groups may want to please an outside interviewer and to appear as active as possible. Another is that membership is slightly fluid, with a few people leaving, a few joining, and a few only peripherally active in group activities. For example, the Nkwantanang group in Asamankese gives a membership figure of 20. Eight of these, however, are participating only in the literacy aspects of FLEP, while 12 are not doing literacy at all, ^(they are already literate) but are working on the economic projects. Memberships of church groups, which accounted for one-third of the groups visited, are even more difficult to estimate, since the demarcation between church members who are FLEP members and church members who are not is very vague. Often the church group is the FLEP group, but some church members may only assist the FLEP groups on the economic projects and attend certain FLEP activities, such as a visit from an agricultural extension agent or a public health nurse, but not otherwise participate in FLEP.

The point of this difficulty in ascertaining correct membership numbers is that one can be sure that FLEP is reaching more people than the membership figures indicate, since a certain number of people drop in and drop out of FLEP and are exposed to its methods and messages without ever being a formal part of a group.

Age of membership

It is difficult to gather accurate age data from African villagers, and questions about age were omitted since they are so unreliable. Instead, the evaluator estimated the age of the members present at each

group interview. Three groups appeared somewhat older— between 40 and 65 years of age; five groups were composed predominately of younger people, aged 20 to 40; and four groups were represented by members of all ages. While any generalization about FLEP membership is impossible, since not all members were observed, one can conclude that FLEP generally appears to attract the economically productive members of communities and people who are currently involved in raising children.

Sex of membership

Nearly 60 percent of the FLEP membership is female. Even in groups that are known as women's groups, male members constitute at least 10 percent of the membership. Female participation in FLEP is discussed at the end of this section.

Church groups

One-third of the groups visited were church groups and had existed as such long before FLEP was offered. Asamankese and Akim Oda had the most church groups; Saltpond had only one. This does not reflect greater church activity in the first two districts but rather indicates that the Saltpond groups are all newer. FLEP policy at the beginning of the project was to choose already existing groups for program participation, since it was assumed that the motivation of such groups would be higher and the program would more easily succeed. The groups in Asamankese are all very old groups, often dating from 1975 or before, while most Saltpond groups have been organized for two years only. While the decision to choose existing groups does alleviate problems of attrition and lack of organization, it also denies the chance to participate in

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FLEP to people who, by virtue of no membership in a church or no opportunity to join a secular group, desire and need FLEP services. It is no longer FLEP policy explicitly to choose existing groups, and new groups are being organized by the staff facilitators.

There seemed to be no relationship between whether a group was a church group and the degree of its success, either in economic activities or adult education.

Organization of groups

Fourteen of the 15 groups had elected officers. The only exception was a group formed six weeks earlier which had not yet chosen its leaders.

Elected officers included a leader or chairperson, secretary, treasurer, or financial secretary. The volunteer facilitator served as secretary to most groups. Some groups had additional officers, such as vice-chairmen, vice-secretaries, and so on, and some had executive committee members in addition to officers. The village chief or church minister was often patron or president of the group.

In short, group structure follows the model of British voluntary organizations.

Group history

On the average, groups have existed for a little more than eight years-- an average of 8.3 years. The range was six weeks for the newest group to 20 and 21 years for four of the oldest groups. In all, 10 groups were active before they began the Family Life Education Program, and five groups were formed specifically for FLEP.

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Groups have been enrolled in FLEP for an average of three years. The newest group has participated for six weeks, the oldest for five years, when the project began.

At least 60 percent and perhaps more of the groups had participated in the mass education and literacy programs of DSWCD before FLEP was introduced. Thus they already were, in a sense, "Social Welfare groups" in that they had for years been the focus of Department attention and had received benefits from other Department programs. This is an important factor in considering the establishment of the revolving fund in the Department and is discussed later in this section under "Loans: Discussion".

Group stability

From data on 12 groups, one can conclude that drop-out is relatively low. In nonformal education programs in general, drop-out can be as high as 70 or 80 percent, but among FLEP groups, it averages 30 percent. Forty-two percent of the groups had almost no drop-out whatsoever. Drop-out ranged from zero to 74 percent of group membership. The main reason for drop-out was that members left the area. Less important reasons were dissatisfaction with the program (for example, one group of women wanted to learn cookery and were not interested in working on the group's farming project) and internal difficulties between members.

Seventy-three percent of current members began with their groups, or to put it another way, 27 percent of the members are new-- that is, they joined sometime after the group was established but not necessarily after FLEP was introduced.

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Thus the groups are stable, with relatively low drop-out and some growth. One might expect to see a relationship between group stability or dropout and success of nonformal education, but no such relationship could be identified here, nor could one be found between group stability and success of economic projects. The numbers are very small, and the data are not precise. The question is worth pursuing in the final evaluation: does stability of membership influence group success?

Staffing

Fourteen staff facilitators were interviewed, six men and eight women. This was an overrepresentation of female facilitators, since there are fewer women staff than men in the project.

Of the 15 groups interviewed, one had no staff facilitator. This actually is an underrepresentation of the general staffing situation, since in Asamankese, there are only three experienced facilitators where there were seven and should be 10. Three left for the School of Social Welfare in April, and one resigned in January. One vacancy was recently filled by a female facilitator, who, although well-qualified and competent, has little training and no experience in PLEP methods and approach. In Akim Oda, there are seven facilitators where there should be 10; and the same in Saltpond. The number of groups assisted by each facilitator varies from one to three: in Asamankese, facilitators generally work with one group, in Akim Oda with two, and in Saltpond with three. Saltpond eventually hopes to expand each facilitator's group work to five groups. In fact, facilitators actually help far fewer groups than this indicates, and they see groups much

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less often than they would like to because of the severe limitations imposed by inadequate travel funds. This is discussed in Section V.

Twelve of the groups had full-time volunteer facilitators who lived in the groups' villages. Two groups had none, and one group had two. The volunteers meet more often with the group than do the staff facilitators, and the volunteers essentially do the same things with the group that the staff facilitators do. Volunteers are initially selected in several ways. In church groups, groups usually already have leaders who then become the volunteer facilitators. In non-church groups, the chief may assist the group in selecting a volunteer, but there are Department criteria that must be met-- the volunteer must be literate, flexible, tolerant, and ready to share and discuss ideas. The Department has historically placed great emphasis on the role of volunteers in community development, but this emphasis has declined of late due to the economic condition of the country. People no longer feel they can afford to do volunteer work but must spend their time and energy in financially profitable activities. FLEP has relied on volunteers to a great degree, but it has proved difficult to monitor their work and thus to insure that the kind of education provided by volunteers is consistent with the overall quality of FLEP.

Volunteers have been with the groups an average of 5.1 years and staff facilitators an average of 2.3 years. This indicates that volunteers have a very low turnover-- in fact, that many were with the groups well before FLEP was introduced-- and that staff facilitators have a very high turnover and joined their groups well after the beginning of FLEP. Thus FLEP has in effect relied on volunteers for continuity of the program, and this arrangement has not always proved successful.

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Group activities

It was not possible for the evaluator to observe actual FLEP classes because of last minute changes in schedule and time limitations. In the final evaluation, a sample of classes should be observed.

Two-thirds of the groups said that they meet two or more times a week, and one-third said that they meet once a week or less. In fact, groups meet much less often than this. Staff facilitators do not have enough travel funds to visit their groups regularly, especially facilitators with two or three groups. Furthermore, because groups have had no materials, and because there are insufficient travel funds, so that facilitators find it difficult to get resource people (that is, outside experts such as nurses or extension agents) to speak to their FLEP groups, there is often no reason for a group to meet except to work on the economic project. Such work can be handled without meeting or assembling as a class. Field staff said that funerals, rainfall, and farming work usually prevented groups from meeting regularly. Three groups were asked when they last met; two replied that they had last met two months earlier, and one had met the week before.

About half the groups said they meet with their facilitator once a week, and half reported meeting more than once a week. Because of the reasons outlined above, it is more reasonable to interpret this answer as an expression of the ideal situation-- that is, groups should meet with their facilitator weekly but in fact rarely do.

When groups do meet with their staff facilitators, half spend between one and three hours with him or her; 20 percent spend less time with the facilitator; and 14 percent spend more.

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Forty-seven percent of the groups claimed that 90 to 100 percent of their memberships attended meetings; 27 percent claimed 70 to 79 percent attendance, and the rest less. This is a questionable finding. If groups do not meet often, for example, if they meet every two months, it is possible that attendance could be rather high. However, with no materials and few resource persons, it is doubtful whether participants would find reasons to attend meetings in such numbers. Attendance is probably high at work sessions on the economic projects, since this is an important activity to members.

Groups were asked what they did at meetings, and by far, the greatest proportion of their meeting time is absorbed by either discussion of or work on the economic projects (87 percent of the groups cited the economic project as their first response to this question). The second most frequent response was literacy, and the third was adult education—health, child care, homemaking, family planning. This confirms that the economic activities of the FLEP groups have become the focus of group activities.

Groups were asked about their literacy activities. Fourteen of the 15 groups interviewed were not learning to read and write at the time of the interview. Three had never undertaken literacy lessons—these were new groups who had joined FLEP at a time when there were no materials. Six groups had finished the FLEP materials long ago and had no follow-up materials. Five groups gave answers to this question that led the evaluator to believe that literacy learning had been discontinued, either because of poor attendance or lack of materials.

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Groups and their communities

Fourteen of the 15 groups had good relationships with their Town Development Committees (TDC's). Seventy-one percent had interlocking memberships— that is, one or more FLEP participants also sat on the TDC. Three TDC's had donated land to FLEP groups, and two TDC's had requested FLEP group assistance on community projects. Thus there is a healthy interaction between Ghana's development establishment and FLEP, and FLEP is viewed as relevant to Ghanaian development goals and valuable to rural communities.

Self-help projects

Although no groups have received money for self-help activities from the FLEP program, 60 percent have initiated self-help projects on their own and 40 percent have not. Sometimes self-help activities were undertaken as FLEP projects; other times they were undertaken as village projects together with other non-FLEP villagers.

The kinds of projects range from building primary schools and cleaning up the town (the two most frequently mentioned) to building latrines, school lunch and day care programs, and building a postal agency. The problems these self-help projects encountered are symptomatic of the national economic crisis: building materials such as cement and iron roofing sheets could not be obtained, even when people were prepared to pay for them. People appeared to depend greatly on the Department to help them solve the problem of building materials supplies and to be disinterested in local solutions such as traditional housing materials. The Department ^{did not} seem to promote the notion of traditional materials for self-help building.

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The Department has \$7,000 in FLEP monies which is earmarked for distribution to self-help projects of FLEP groups. This is, however, not even enough money for one good project in each district-- a market, for example, which is the kind of project most groups want. Furthermore, it is not feasible to single out only one project of the whole program to receive the entire grant; this would create a sense of injustice that has not so far been part of the FLEP granting process. There are small projects that could be selected so that several groups in each district could receive grants, such as pit latrines and Anderson water supplies. But as yet the head office has not released the money nor selected criteria for projects. This means that \$7,000 is tied up and not being used for any purpose whatsoever. The demand exists for self-help grants, and a concentration on sanitation projects using traditional materials could benefit FLEP communities substantially.

Small-scale economic projects

Thirteen of the 15 groups interviewed have small-scale economic projects (SSEP's). More than half of the groups (54 percent) have only one project, but 15 percent have two projects, another 15 percent have three projects, and 15 percent of the groups have four projects per group. This makes a total of 25 SSEP's. In addition to these 25, groups mentioned five SSEP's begun before FLEP which had failed, making a grand total of 30 projects undertaken.

Agricultural projects are the most common, and of these, 14 or 64 percent produce cash crops, while the rest produce food crops. Food processing is the second most common project. See Table 3 of Appendix I for a list of SSEP's among the groups interviewed.

Of the 30 projects with which the groups had accumulated experience, 22 are currently in operation. Four (soap, handicrafts) had failed completely, three (bread-baking) were suspended indefinitely because of national shortages of flour and sugar, and one (rabbitry) is failing. The soap-making and handicrafts projects failed because people could not get the raw materials-- caustic soda, thread, cloth, beads, and so on. The rabbit-raising project appeared to be failing because the hybrid rabbits required special food that could not be obtained in Ghana. (Another rabbit project, using local rabbits, was thriving.)

Of these 30 projects, 16 (or 53 percent) were begun independently before FLEP and without any help from FLEP, either financial or motivational. Fourteen (47 percent) were begun as a result of the FLEP program. Many of the latter began long before FLEP revolving funds became available to groups. For example, in 1976, Akim Oda had eight FLEP groups with economic projects, yet loans were not available until late 1978. The Ministry of Economic Planning used to direct some funds through the Department to women's projects-- handicrafts, food processing, and so on-- but these enterprises were not well organized and the sums very small. Thus FLEP represented the first opportunity for community groups to borrow substantial amounts of money.

Respondents were asked about the origin of the ideas for their economic projects, for the evaluator was curious to know if the ideas were generated by the groups themselves, and if so, by whom within the groups. The answers were not enlightening. Of 12 groups, 25 percent said they arrived at the idea by consensus, one-third said that the leader had thought of the idea, another one-third said that the idea had

emanated from their staff facilitator, and one group (8 percent) said that the idea had come from Technoserve, a Ghanaian voluntary organization operating in the FLEP area. The process of creating income generation ideas may become clearer later in the project's history, when the revolving fund actually begins to revolve. In any case, the Department will benefit from further examination of this question in the final evaluation.

Eighty-five percent of the problems faced by SSEP's derive from the economic crisis in Ghana. Obtaining supplies— agricultural chemicals, tools, raw foodstuffs for processing, spare parts for machines— are the single most pressing problem and one to which there appears no solution at present. Transport to market is another problem. People are prepared to pay for materials and transport, but they simply cannot obtain what they need. Shortages of cutlasses (big knives used for clearing brush), wire and cement are all national problems. Technoserve, in the projects in which it collaborated with FLEP, solved this problem by obtaining cutlasses and agricultural chemicals at the official, not black market, price for FLEP groups. But without the intervention of some intermediary such as Technoserve or the Department, small community enterprises will continue to be unable to get what they need to carry out their projects. Other problems included stealing, a lack of expert help, and heavy rainfall. See Table 4 of Appendix I for a list of problems.

Loans

Thirteen of the FLEP groups interviewed had received loans from the revolving fund. One group, organized six weeks earlier, did not yet have a project, and another group had refused a loan because members were not really committed to working on the economic project.

The amounts of the loans ranged from ₵500 to ₵4,000:*

<u>Loan</u>	<u>Number</u>
₵ 500	1
1,000	4
1,500	1
2,000	6
<u>4,000</u>	<u>1</u>
₵ 9,000	13

Nine of the groups, or 69 percent, had had money before they received a loan, and four had not. The nine with money had obtained it largely from contributions by members (see Table 5, Appendix I, for a list of contributions). One group had obtained credit from the Ghana National Reconstruction Corps for sugarcane shoots. The group with the largest investment— ₵23,000— was an unusual group which had been working together for seven years. When this group is not taken into account, the average investment that each group had before they received the FLEP loan was ₵1,135. The average loan, not including the ₵4,000 that went to the group with the ₵23,000 investment, was ₵1,500. This means that each group, on the average, received slightly more than an amount equal to what it already had. In a poor community, doubling one's resources in this way can mean the difference between success and failure of a small business.

* Official rate: (U.S.) \$1.00 = ₵2.75; black market rate: \$1.00 = ₵17.00 (August, 1980).

However, there is some evidence that loans were given to groups that already had ample resources as well as the ability to get more resources. The FLEP group that had a previous investment of \$23,000 over a seven-year period is an extreme case. This investment came from contributions from members. The group was very dynamic and hard-working with an unusually energetic and well-organized leader, and they probably could have progressed at the same rate without the FLEP loan simply by getting the money from other sources. Furthermore, some people were excluded from participation in this group because they could not contribute to the USM's of the group. To lend money to such a group represents a bolstering of the rural elite and not by any means a redistribution of income. Several other FLEP groups appeared to the evaluator to be able on their own to muster resources for economic self-improvement. The Department should carefully examine its criteria for lending and should aim not to lend to privileged groups who are capable of garnering resources on their own. Rather loans should go to groups to whom a FLEP loan represents something that they would not be able to have in any other way. Group selection seems, on the basis of this evaluation, one of the weaker points of the revolving fund scheme.

The Department did not want loans to be spent for renting land or hiring labor. Data from all groups on loan expenditures were not collected, but the greatest number of expenditures were for agricultural supplies (seed, fertilizer), tools and equipment, and hired labor. More careful questions should be asked in the final evaluation about how the FLEP loans have been spent. See Table 6, Appendix I, for a list of expenditures.

Size of loans

FLEP has given \$28,200 to 18 groups. The size of the loans were determined by the size of the FLEP budget, and an effort was made to distribute loans evenly. Although it is difficult to make such a judgement in any case, and next to impossible to do so without careful analysis of the SLEP records, this observer felt that of 13 loans, seven were too large, five were about the right size, and one was too small. The criterion for such a judgement was that 18 months after receipt of the loan, some money from the original loan, not from profit, was still unspent. Because this interesting information began to emerge only during the course of discussion of loans, questions were not asked uniformly or consistently of all groups. Three groups had as much as 20 percent of their original loan left over, in addition to profit that they had made. One group had 25 percent left, and one group, a group in the midst of an organizational crisis, had spent only 50 percent of their loan. The problem with granting groups too large a loan is that it ties up money that some other group could be using. Therefore, it is in the interest of everyone to grant groups loans according to their actual needs. The Project Estimate Form, used by groups and their facilitators in applying for FLEP loans, usually depicts SLEP needs accurately. But loans often exceeded the amount requested, so the revolving fund has not been used as efficiently as it could have been. This use of revolving fund monies should be a major focus of the final evaluation.

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Record-keeping

All groups keep records of their economic enterprises. Most had learned through a district course held in 1979 by a World Education consultant. Elected leaders, usually the secretary, keep the books, and two leaders, usually the chairperson and the secretary, plus the district head are signatories to the bank account.

Repayment

At least three groups are ready now to repay their loans and have been for a year or more. (Other data indicated that in 1979, four groups were ready to repay their loans.) Seven could repay within the next 12 months, and one group will not be ready until 1982. This is the single most severe problem with the revolving fund-- that repayment procedures were not established before loans were disbursed. If three or four groups have been ready for repayment for one year or more, but have not been able to repay because the head office has not established the procedures through which they may do so, then the purpose of having a revolving fund is defeated. Not only will recipients ultimately begin to view the loan as a gift, but money that could be used by other groups is not available. FLEP has no dearth of loan applicants-- every district has four or more applicant groups with viable projects who could receive loans immediately were the money available. The Department should immediately establish the repayment mechanism, perhaps with the assistance of an outside consultant, and allow the groups that are ready to repay their loans, thereby making new monies available to groups who have not yet received loans.

Relationships with lending institutions

One purpose of the revolving loan scheme was to help villagers establish relationships with local lending institutions— commercial banks, the Agricultural Development Bank, the Rural Bank— so that they could depend less on the Department for assistance and more on local resources. This has not happened. FLEP members have all opened bank accounts, but very few feel that they would be able to obtain loans from those banks at some future time. Groups were asked where they would seek credit in the future, and all replied, "Social Welfare". When told that Social Welfare might not always have funds to lend, 10 said they would try a bank, one said the Agricultural Development Bank, and one said they would not try a bank. One group had no idea where to look. Nine of the 10 who said they would try a bank thought they would have problems. Two groups had actually tried and failed to get loans at the Agricultural Development Bank and the Rural Bank. Almost all groups felt they would not succeed unless they had assistance from some intermediary like DSMCD or Technoserve.

There are two reasons for this. First, although banks have small business credit programs, local branches apparently are not always allocated money for such loans by the main branches. Second, even among DSMCD staff, there are misconceptions about who is eligible and who is not. The fact is that these groups generally are eligible but that to get a loan takes great persistence, some sophistication, and a long time. One informant described a successful loan application by a small farmers' group that took nine months to be completed. There is no question that the sponsorship by some intermediary such as Techno-

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serve or DSWCD would assist groups in getting loans. But education is also needed, not only for participants and potential borrowers but for staff, who must learn exactly what criteria are for lending and how to proceed with loan applications.

Relationships with other organizations

Eight of 12 groups had received help from organizations other than DSWCD; four had not. Most (5) had received assistance from the Ministry of Agriculture, and many in Saltpond (4) had received advice and purchasing assistance from Technoserve (Technoserve and FLEP deliberately collaborated in Saltpond, FLEP supplying nonformal education skills and Technoserve business and agriculture extension expertise). Two groups had help from their churches, one from the Ghana Assembly of Women (a \$1,000 grant), one each from Family Planning, the Department of Rural Development, and a local Farmers' Council. There seemed to be no relationship between group success and assistance from other organizations.

Profit

Six groups had already made a profit, two had not, and no data were available for the remaining five groups. The average profit was \$733, and the range was \$200 to \$1,700. Asked how they have spent or will spend their profits, five groups reported that they would use the money to invest in or expand their SSEP's. Five said they would repay members' contributions, share profits among members, or use profits for loans to members. Other groups planned to use profits

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for community enterprises (2), for church (1), to pay rent on the land (1), and one planned to bank the profits. One group did not know what it would do with the profits.

Groups are now in the process of seeing just how much they can earn from their projects. They observe their small successes and feel it important to expand the projects at this early stage. Care must be taken, however, that the profits are also used to benefit the families of the MIEP members and particularly that money earned is used for the nutritional needs of young children.

Loans: discussion

World Education and DSWCD have both embarked on a new project-- the fostering of small scale economic projects. Although the Department had a history of making small grants through its women's extension program, it had never been involved in giving sizable amounts of money or providing technical advice on small businesses. Neither has World Education had much experience in the development of income generation activities, although both the Department and World Education seem to believe that such activities are the logical outcome of family life education and conscientization.

The Department has had ^{some} managerial problems in administering a revolving fund. Although there was a precedent for Departmental grants to small projects, there has been none for loans, and in many ways, the Department, through no fault of its own, was ill-prepared for the advent of a full-fledged loan scheme. It was difficult for the Department to develop funding criteria and to get the money to

the recipients, and the Department has not yet established a repayment system, a problem which is jeopardizing the future of the program.

World Education, as the technical assistance partner in the collaboration, did not supply enough expertise to the Department either in developing its own internal mechanisms for handling the credit scheme or in advising the FLEP groups who wanted to start SSEP's. For example, many groups have encountered problems that could have been avoided. The rabbit project, where hybrid rabbits are dying because they cannot apparently survive on local food, is only one example. Another example is a citrus farm which promises a wealth of tangerines and oranges but is in danger of drastically lowering its profits unless it can obtain transport to get the produce to an urban market. Another example is a soap-making project where the cost of caustic soda makes soap production unprofitable. All of these difficulties could have been avoided by having the right kind of advice at the right time. That this is so is borne out by the fact that the Saltpond projects, where Technoserve and FLEP are collaborating, have avoided such problems by focusing on one or two kinds of agricultural production schemes based on high-return crops that are eminently suited to the locale. Technoserve has supplied the agricultural and business advice, FLEP has provided education and motivation.

It is worthy of note that not one staff member in field or head offices felt that FLEP staff needed special training in business management or organization of SSEP's. Perhaps these enterprises are not seen as businesses, or perhaps businesses are seen as operations not requiring special knowledge of marketing, pricing, and planning. If World Education is going to continue to support income generation activities in Africa,

it must not only educate its own staff in such enterprises but it must have at its disposal the kind of expertise to do the job properly. It must also be prepared not only to provide advice to SSEP's themselves, but to institutionalize the ability to support small enterprises in the local collaborating agency. The partial failure of World Education to do both tasks here has created an overall program that promises only partial success.

Finally, the Department must also examine whether it should be in the business of providing credit to rural entrepreneurs. Sixty percent of the FLEP groups who got loans were already "Social Welfare groups" before the introduction of FLEP. This implies a long relationship of trust between groups and Department, and it also raises the possibility of creating a dependency relationship that can sap the initiative of local groups. Many groups expressed the belief that the Department should help them in a variety of endeavors and even felt irritation that it was unable. Groups who cannot get money because no money is available grow distressed; and the Department can thus suffer a loss of prestige and further demoralization. Groups could grow competitive with each other for scarce Departmental funds and engender an atmosphere of hostility, thereby defeating the excellent capability of the Department to effect rural outreach. It may in the end be in the Department's interest to remove the revolving fund from the Department but to locate it in a bank or other technical institution geared toward business, and to develop with that institution a permanent collaborative relationship in much the way it has with Technoserve. This way, the Department is left to do what it does so well-- education of rural adults and community

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development— and its record of success is not compromised by the possibility of failure in areas of which it has little experience.

Literacy

Many groups had finished all the FLEP literacy materials in 1975 or 1976— the materials consist of 50 lessons which are estimated to take six to eight months to finish, if a group works diligently. Groups who have finished are either using nothing or else Bibles and hymnals or in some cases Standard Department materials, although there is a severe shortage of these too.

Of the 15 groups interviewed, three apparently had never done any literacy at all, whether because group members were already literate, because of the lack of materials, or because of general group disarray. One additional group has just started. Of the 11 remaining groups, all claimed to have members who learned to read and write.

Survey figures from 1978 indicate a 30 percent literacy rate for Saltpond and Akim Oda; no figures are available for Asamankese. In this study, 31 percent of the membership claimed to have learned to read and write through FLEP— 30 percent of the female population and 22 percent of the male. Many members, especially men, were already literate or partially literate when FLEP was introduced, but there are no baseline figures to verify this.

Of the 11 groups, eight groups, or at least 72 percent, had mass education and literacy instruction from DSWCD before FLEP was introduced, some as long ago as 15 years before FLEP was introduced. Thus it is very difficult to say with any certainty that reading ability

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in these eight groups is due solely to the influence of FLEP. It is undoubtedly due to the Department's efforts but as a result of the combination of FLEP and the Department's mass education/literacy program.

It appears that in five groups of the 11, FLEP played a major role in teaching people to read. Moreover, it appears that in two Saltpond groups, Mpatoako and Gyabankrom, FLEP may have been the only program through which people learned to read. Because of the absence of baseline data gathered in 1975 at the program's inception, it is impossible to determine the impact of FLEP on literacy learning. Furthermore, in most groups, FLEP has not been used— if by FLEP we mean literacy training as well as other kinds of nonformal education— since 1977 or 1978. In the final evaluation, some attempt should be made to separate the effects of other literacy training influences from those of FLEP.

At the outset of the evaluation, it was anticipated first, that people would not be particularly interested in learning to read, and second, that the main reason people would have for wanting to read was religious— that is, to read the Bible and sing hymns. Neither of these expectations was borne out. People were in general very emphatic about the value of literacy, and the main reason they gave for wanting to read was to write letters and insure privacy in their correspondence and personal record-keeping. The second most cited reason was to read the Bible. The third was to be able to sign their names instead of giving a thumbprint at the bank and to lessen their feelings of inferiority. Other reasons cited were to shop with a market list and to be able to plan, to read signs, and to inform themselves on areas related to farming or of general interest.

The difficulties they noted with learning to read are common to all literacy programs: poor eyesight, especially among older participants, and poor light in the evening. The difficulty they cited relating only to FLEP was, of course, the lack of materials.

Adult education content

The evaluator used seven questions from the Participant Background Form and from the 1978 survey as post-program measures of learning material relating to health and community problems. Only eight groups were asked these questions; seven groups were not asked because attendance at those interviews was too low to make responses in any way meaningful. Table 7 of Appendix I shows the proportion of correct group answers.

Participants clearly had had a thorough background in hygiene and in community organization. The ideal family size of 4.8 was significantly lower in these groups than that obtained in Ghana's 1960 and 1965 censuses and sample surveys (about six or seven). Either FLEP has made its mark, or economic conditions are so severe that people feel they are truly unable to support large families.

While participants demonstrated a good theoretical knowledge of nutrition, the evaluator felt that this knowledge was not put into practice. Malnourished children were observed in every group interviewed; often these were children of parents who answered nutrition items correctly. It is clear from the interviews that people understand the relationship between diet and severe malnutrition-- kwashiorkor or marasmus. But they do not seem to relate the signs of incipient malnutrition, which are present in their own children, to nutritional intake.

In groups where women are the staff facilitators, there is obviously great emphasis placed on nutrition education, but this does not appear to be the case with groups with male facilitators. People are relatively ignorant of home measures that can be taken to treat infant diarrhoea, and because diarrhoea is so intimately related to malnutrition, these two topics should be addressed together.

Future programming

Asked what kinds of topics and issues they would like to discuss in future, group members resoundingly replied that they were most interested in the SSEP's (64 %). The second answer (14%) was that they would like to involve their whole communities in FLEP and not keep the benefits of the program only for their group. Other answers included more literacy training, health education, and making soap for personal use.

Perceptions of FLEP

Of the many positive comments made about FLEP, people appreciated most the opportunity to work on the economic projects and to raise their standard of living. The second most cited benefit was various educational aspects of FLEP-- learning about health, farming, and family planning. Literacy was the third most mentioned benefit, and the beneficial effects on the groups as groups-- the growth of self-understanding and group unity-- were also important to members.

The overwhelming negative comment pertained to the lack of materials. Also mentioned by group members was inadequate staffing of posts. One group complained that their loan had been too small.

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Participation of women

Slightly more than half of the FLEP membership is female-- 59 percent. Even in groups known as women's groups, at least 10 percent of the members are male. The women's group with the highest percentage of female membership that was interviewed was 83 percent.

Group power is in the hands of men. Of a total of 47 officers elected by the groups interviewed, 13 or 27.6 percent are female, compared to a total membership of 59 percent. Of 14 groups with officers, eight have male officers only, three have one female among their officers, and one group has five female officers (this is a women's group which also has two male officers). Two groups have only female officers.

Of the 13 groups for whom there are data, men control the money. Among officers who keep the financial records, 12 or 92 percent are male and one is female. Of officers who are bank signatories, 21 or 88 percent are male and three or 12 percent are female. One informant explained that the position of secretary is considered more appropriate for men than for women. Men are felt to be more experienced and therefore more competent in such a role.

Of the 14 staff facilitators interviewed, eight were women and six men. This is actually an overrepresentation of female staff, since in reality there are far fewer women than men among the facilitators. Of volunteer facilitators for the groups interviewed, 12 or 80 percent were male and only three or 20 percent were female.

It was not possible to get reliable data on the participation of women in SSEP labor or in planning of SSEP's. Responses that were obtained indicated that more women than men actually labor on the SSEP's

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and that planning is divided about equally among men and women. These data, however, are by no means reliable.

The major problem facing women members of FLEP is that they find it difficult to get time to participate in learning activities. Most of the women in these areas are farmers. After a day of farming, either on their own farms or on group farms, they must return home to prepare food for their families. They are often simply too tired to spend the evening learning to read and write. Special provisions for women might be made to take FLEP to them at their places of work, a tactic which has been successfully used in a number of programs.

Differences between districts

Two kinds of differences between the three districts became apparent in the course of the evaluation. First, the groups in Saltpond were all noticeably newer than the groups in Akim Oda and in Asamankese especially. Asamankese groups had nearly all begun in 1975 or 1976, but most Saltpond groups were organized in 1978. Akim Oda had both old and new groups. Apparently, the older groups in Saltpond, which had been the very first FLEP site, have grown disgruntled with FLEP because of the lack of materials and also possibly the inability of the program to do very much materially to better the lives of the villagers. These groups still exist but the Department maintains only very infrequent contact with them. No old groups were visited, but a selection of them should be interviewed in the final project evaluation.

A second way the districts differed lay in the focus of group activity. In Saltpond, many groups had apparently abandoned literacy or at least were learning literacy at an excessively slow pace-- that

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is, those groups that had materials. In Saltpond, FLEP emphasis was on the small scale economic projects, and perhaps because of Techno-serve collaboration in this district, the SSEP's appeared better thought out and potentially more successful. In Asamankese, on the other hand, despite the dearth of FLEP materials for much of Phase II, adult education and literacy training had not appeared to suffer. Only in one group in Asamankese, where the staff facilitator and volunteer facilitators all were new and therefore inexperienced, did there appear to be less adult education taking place. While the Asamankese SSEP's seemed to be doing well, there was an equal commitment to retaining the participatory aspect and the more general focus of FLEP activities. This is demonstrated by the evaluator's observation that in Asamankese and Akim Oda, staff and FLEP participants alike seemed to separate the notion of the SSEP from FLEP, but FLEP was not separated from the context of the Department's mass education and literacy programs. In Saltpond, however, FLEP had come to be identified nearly exclusively with the SSEP and hardly at all with literacy and not at all with mass education.

Although it is easy to see why the small scale economic projects are so attractive to FLEP groups, it is necessary to remember that FLEP is primarily a program of nonformal education. Financial assistance is only intended to be an ancillary aspect of the program. While a scarcity of printed materials may make it difficult for facilitators to maintain the interest of participants, the use of alternative kinds of materials might do much to spark group activity. The Department has recently promoted the use of such materials and intends to do so to an even greater extent in the future. This is a worthwhile effort that should be supported in every way possible.

V. PROJECT INSTITUTIONALIZATION

General factors

The ultimate goal of the project was to strengthen the capacity of the Department to deliver integrated nonformal education programs to rural adults. The broad outcomes expected of the project were that the Department would continue to deliver FLEP in rural areas, that it would replicate and/or modify FLEP for use in new areas, and that it would apply the educational techniques and strategies embodied in FLEP in its other community development and training activities. While the project performed well at the field level, *there have been difficulties which have impeded institutionalization efforts.* ~~it has succeeded but in its attempt to institutionalize the FLEP and FLEP materials by adding them to the DSACD.~~

~~There were a number of reasons for this failure.~~ ⁹⁹ There can be no doubt that the general economic environment adversely affected the institutionalization process. The fact that project materials could not be printed and project resources dwindled almost beyond belief in the face of inflation and black market prices certainly affected the importance which DSACD accorded FLEP. In the end, FLEP was rendered a relatively insignificant program, both in terms of the resources it gave to the Department and the recognition it drew from outside. Furthermore, FLEP was implemented in a setting of organizational malaise, where people were expected to work hard for salaries on which they could not survive and even to pay some travel and work expenses from their own pockets. The catastrophic economic situation in Ghana is the backdrop against which all that follows must be set.

~~roles equal to those of staff, that junior staff assume collegial roles with senior staff, that new relationships are established between bosses and subordinates that allow the latter more say in things that affect them. Everything in the entrenched bureaucracy works against this goal. There is, in short, no organizational desire and now governmental mandate to change from a system of tight hierarchical control where decisions are made at the top and passed down to the bottom to one of participation.~~

Executive actions: Staffing

At the inception of the FLEP project, there was a tacit understanding between World Education and DSWCD that FLEP posts would be kept fully staffed, and that if transfers or resignation occurred, measures would be taken to make sure the vacancy was filled as quickly as possible in order not to cause project activities to lose momentum. The present high rate of FLEP vacancies (Asamankese, 60%; Akim Oda and Saltpond each, 30%) plus the average length of time each facilitator in the project has been at his post— 2.3 years— indicates not only a high turnover but that the Department has been unable ~~to fulfill its agreement~~ to keep FLEP posts staffed. This is not only a problem for FLEP but for all Department programs. In 1978, the Department employed 1,000 people. In 1980, it employs 800. The Department needs— that is, there are field posts for—630 community development assistants; of these posts, 400 are currently filled. In Asamankese, the project posts were to number 10. Seven initially were filled, but three of those seven have now been vacant for five months. One was vacant for four months but was filled in April by a ODA inexperienced in FLEP.

Akim Oda had 10 posts but has had only seven filled since January, 1978; that is, three vacancies for two and a half years. Saltpond once had nine facilitators but now has only seven.

What are the reasons for such a sketchy staffing pattern? First, it is difficult to recruit GDA's and junior officers. The GDA makes between \$2,514 and \$2,742 a year, which is low compared to salaries earned by peers in other fields with the same qualifications. Secondary school leavers especially exhibit high turnover because of the low salaries. Moreover, the requirements for field staff were raised several years ago, so recruitment became even harder. Requirements have now been slightly lowered, but there has been no improvement. One informant told of a young man who had been recruited and had passed his interview in January, 1980. By late August, he still had not received a letter of appointment. ~~Despite assertions to the contrary, the informant has concluded that the Department is not fully staffed because there is no money to hire additional personnel. What the Department does have is that the money is allocated for staff housing by the Ministry, for example, and the money is not used for staffing other than to begin with or has been used for other things in this time of shrinking resources and escalating costs.~~

Because staff posts are vacant, the program has had to rely on volunteers for continuity and leadership. While the Department has had a history of utilizing volunteers heavily in its outreach, this reliance comes at a difficult time. Especially in Saltpond, when PLEP began, volunteers were used almost exclusively. With the economic slide, the Department felt it could no longer depend on volunteers, who needed paid employment or to do farming in order to make ends meet.

Neither the program nor the Department emphasizes the use of volunteers any longer, but every FLEP site has a volunteer facilitator, and these volunteers are sometimes the only leadership FLEP groups have.

Volunteers in Asamankese and Akim Oda felt that their contribution to FLEP had largely been overlooked and that they needed incentives of some kind that showed the Department's recognition of their work. Such incentives might be merely a certificate or a special outing; the gesture seemed more important than the monetary value. ~~Apparently this has been discussed at length by the Department but no action has been taken.~~

All FLEP staff are doing FLEP work as well as carrying their normal community development work load. This means that in some cases, particularly at the head office, FLEP does not get as much attention as it requires. For example, the project trainer is seconded to the project for 75 percent of his time, and the remainder he spends doing his usual communications activities. But since there is no one else to fill in for him while he is partly assigned to FLEP, in practice he must do all his old duties plus his FLEP work. (He was unable to make field trips with the evaluation team the first week.) This secondment arrangement, in any case, will end in January, 1981, at which time the trainer will presumably be taken off the FLEP project.

~~Related to the problem of incentives for the extra burden imposed on staff by FLEP is that of the project manager. Nothing was built into the project to serve as an incentive to him.~~ *has perhaps shouldered the heaviest burden.* *yet* He received no promotion, no extra pay, and no special professional recognition as a result of his work. He had one study tour outside of Ghana during Phase I.

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~~In short,~~ nothing has accrued to him professionally ~~or personally~~ as a result of working on FLEP, ~~although~~ he has been the key person in the entire program and has labored diligently and conscientiously in difficult circumstances.

~~Departmental activities~~ Transport and travel allowances

The program suffers from a shortage of funds to pay for transport and travel (T & T) both for field and head office staff. The problem is a Departmental one. With soaring costs for petrol, general inflation, and a shortage of road-worthy vehicles in Ghana, the cost of public transport has shot up, and DJWCD allowances for travel have not been able to keep pace. FLEP staff receive more T & T than other Department staff, but even this is not sufficient. For example, FLEP facilitators receive \$ 10 or more extra per month; district coordinators receive \$20 or more extra. In Saltpond, for example, where the monthly ceiling for FLEP staff is \$60, \$60 will buy eight gallons of petrol, enough to operate a facilitator's motorcycle for two or three weeks. Sixty cedis spent on public transport by facilitators who do not have motorcycles will last two weeks. The district coordinator receives \$100 per month, which will last one week if he does his job diligently. Reimbursement for T & T can take up to six months, which means that expenses are met out-of-pocket.

In another example, one facilitator's FLEP group is 10 miles from Akim Oda. The public transport charge should be \$1.50 but is actually \$5.00. The facilitator's monthly ceiling is \$50. Thus five trips to this village-- which she is supposed to visit twice a week-- will use up her T & T for the month. She is also responsible for another village

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in the opposite direction from Akim Oda. Expansion of the project by giving facilitators more villages in which to form groups is impossible. They are unable to see their present groups as often as they should.

Facilitators received motorcycles through UNICEF, which in part solved the transport problem. (The female facilitators, however, did not want motorcycles and remain dependent on public transport, which places enormous constraints on their mobility.) There are no spare parts available at the Department for motorcycle repair. Once district coordinator needed pistons for his motorcycle. He paid for the parts from his own money-- the cost was four months of T & T. He has not been reimbursed, and the bike is not yet on the road. In Saltpond, only one of three motorcycles is operating.

Another way that travel funds affect program success is that the Department has no money to pay the travel expenses of resource people who are invited to speak to FLEP groups. These people also have insufficient or no T & T from their own employers, and eventually, because they cannot continue to pay travel from their own pockets, they no longer accept invitations.

Head office staff should visit field sites every two weeks in order to monitor the project. They cannot even manage to go once a month, because of insufficient T & T. From January to July, 1980, they were not able to make a single field visit.

~~While FLEP staff have complained repeatedly to the Department, the fact is that the Department does not have the money to increase T & T. Furthermore, because FLEP receives extra T & T from project funds, there is already some resentment over this on the part of non-FLEP field staff.~~

~~The increase in the number of field staff would be a major factor in the cost of the project. The ability of staff to perform their work is severely impacted by lack of funds. The execution of the project is not possible.~~

Disbursement of project monies

FLEP has suffered ~~serious~~ problems related to project monies. The banking system originally established for project money was inefficient and cumbersome and meant that it could take a month or more from the time an amount was requested to the time it was received by the project team. ~~The amount that~~ Activities frequently had to be cancelled at the last minute due to lack of funds. ~~This became a constant issue in the Department because the project team insisted on establishing a separate bank account for FLEP money in order to avoid the lengthy delays in disbursement of funds, but department management resisted.~~ Ultimately, a ~~convenient~~ system was established whereby the FLEP money was put into an old commercial account of the Department along with other special funds. This new procedure has reduced the time it takes to obtain money but still may not be as efficient as is desired. This should be a major focus of the final evaluation.

~~There have been periods when it was not possible to obtain project funds through the regular system. At one point, project activities could not be stopped for six months. This is probably because the Department, critically short of money and crippled by the economic depression, uses FLEP cash for immediate needs, forcing FLEP to wait until cash flows permits money to be drawn out of its account. This problem should not arise under the new system.~~

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Money has been a major problem throughout the program. Not only have inflation and the black market drastically reduced what the project budget could purchase, but because the flow of funds was so uneven and unpredictable, money was not used efficiently. Consequently, there is a large balance in the project account now. ~~Whether that money is actually there or not is another question; it is, in any case, on the project books.~~ World Education cannot send any more quarterly payments to the Department until this surplus is used. Thus we see the ironic situation of a project that has not had enough funds unable to use the funds it has.

Another money problem experienced by the project has been the inability of the Department to establish a repayment scheme for the revolving loans to FLEP groups. As noted above, three or four groups are now ready to begin repayment, but no mechanism has been established for them to do so. The Department has maintained control over the revolving fund, despite the original plan that loan monies were to be deposited in local banks at district headquarters, and the district coordinators, villagers, and banks were to handle the loan disbursement themselves in a decentralized fashion. This would have given a greater chance to villagers to establish relationships with banks and have done less to foster the image of DSWCD as a give-away program. ~~The Department rejected this plan. Not because money is a sensitive issue in Ghana and in government agencies in particular, no one has made the move to arrange resources enabling groups to repay their loans. This situation endangers the future of the loan program.~~

~~World Education could have administered project funds in other ways. For example, the project could have been funded through the~~

~~Central bank mission. Of a separate bank account in a commercial bank
 could have been established on which the project fees could have been
 paid. The project goal was to strengthen the Department, as the grant
 was made to the Department itself to disburse in the usual way, to
 disburse the money from outside the Department could have guaranteed
 been acceptable to the Department and to World Education.~~

Project processes: planning

Planning was an integral part of FLEP training from the beginning. The few workshops given for senior staff, for example, involved planning and evaluation. Workplans were developed for the project, for the districts, and for individual staff members. The effort to institute good planning practices seems to have succeeded at the local level, ~~but to be less successful at the central level.~~ For example, in 1980, workplans were developed in the districts by facilitators together with the district coordinators. This appears to have been a successful activity and plans are, within the constraints imposed by the Ghanaian environment, generally being followed. ~~At the head office, however, plans appear to be unrealistic and therefore impossible to carry out.~~ For example, despite the fact that FLEP is now not fully operational because of staffing and T & T problems, head office staff discuss plans to expand FLEP to a fourth language group as if it were a real option. Because there is no support for planning in the environment of the Department, it is likely that the few activities that pass for planning in the head office will quickly disappear, and ultimately, with no pressure from the head office, district planning will follow.

Project processes: evaluation

~~Department remains unchanged in the Department, even though it had originally designed a system for evaluating its activities.~~ The Department evaluates its activities in two ways— through monthly statistical reports and at annual staff regional training sessions. These reports are ~~not used to make decisions about the program but rather to~~ monitor the performance of field staff. The regional workshops are used for planning, ~~but they are based not on any regular or objective data but rather on staff discussions and only within limits set by the head office.~~ The FLEP evaluation system relied on no less than seven forms. This system ~~was used and later abandoned because it was too complex. For another, it was stated that the forms would be filled out and not used for planning. Not many people connected with FLEP really understand the uses of evaluation, so into the system that will have some benefits in the field, including those in key positions, have had rather extensive knowledge of evaluation in the past, but because of the hierarchical nature of hierarchy and rigid control of information, no one developed the system.~~ Evaluation was to have been a major focus of Phase II, but because the entire project was thrown off course by the lack of materials, evaluation never was really carried out. The original evaluation forms were never used during Phase II. A village survey was carried out in July, 1978, but without enough surveillance, so that ^{many} data were ~~substandard~~ ^{are invalid} and the training exercise itself was largely useless. Narrative and statistical reports are submitted by facilitators to their district coordinators each month, who in turn compile a report for the head office. ~~These reports, however, contain little information.~~

~~tion that can be used for planning and decision making. Despite the fact that evaluation was to have been a major focus of Phase II, evaluation and the Department's view of it has been little affected. Unless the information collected through evaluation has a real use, that is, for program revision and planning, evaluation will be a waste of resources. The DSEAB system and will not be maintained.~~

Project processes: training

As noted in the discussion on training, training has been a consistently successful program activity. Not only has the emphasis on greater participation of trainees in training had an impact, but the project team traveling around to do district-level and on-site training has clearly been an improvement over the way training is normally carried out in the Department. While field training has succeeded, there was no way of institutionalizing the FLEP approach to training because no link was created between FLEP and the formal training body of the Department; the School of Social ^{Work} ~~Work~~. Thus, the training will have an effect on program activities only so long as those people trained under Phases I and II are on the job. The effectiveness of training will die when they are replaced by new people, trained in the regular Departmental way but unexposed to FLEP training.

Project processes: field support

While staff in the field had many ~~such~~ complaints about T & T and understaffing, not one person complained that the head office project team had failed to respond to their needs. All field staff felt that they got the kind of support they needed from the head

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office FLEP staff, and relations between the two seemed excellent.

Project processes: discussion

The processes advocated in the course of FLEP implementation—
 bottom-up planning, evaluation for decision-making, participatory train-
 ing, and responsive field support— are ~~difficult to implant in a large~~ ^{difficult to implant in a large} ~~organization, in the context of~~
~~the highly bureaucratic~~ bureau-racy. To effect such a change in one pro-
 gram is impossible unless the whole ~~system~~ ^{organizational approach} is changed, an effort which
 requires ~~massive~~ ^{much time,} retraining, and lengthy consultation. FLEP ~~simply~~ did
 not provide enough exposure to these processes and reinforcement of them,
~~to counteract the forces of entrenched bureaucratic practices and the~~
~~poor training of staff, project and non-project staff alike.~~ This
 kind of attention to management aspects is ~~absolutely~~ ^{absolutely} needed. ~~and~~
~~only by FLEP but in order to insure that the training of the staff is~~
~~adequate.~~ Project implementers recognized the importance of the management
 training component, but resources were simply too few to allow them to
 pay this critical area adequate attention.

~~Program continuation or expansion~~

~~It quickly became clear to the evaluator that project expansion~~
~~is impossible, regardless of the presence of outside funding.~~
~~UNED cannot even fulfill its present commitments to its districts~~
~~nor can it overcome the organizational problems created by the project:~~
~~disbursement of funds, establishment of loan repayment schemes, or the~~
~~resource problems— materials, travel allowance, and staffing. But the~~
~~evaluator was concerned to know if the project would be continued once~~
~~World Education's involvement had ceased. The unanimous feeling on the~~

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VI. CONCLUSIONS

Successes

Although most objectives of the Family Life Education Program were not reached, certain aspects of the project have been successful. That these successes have occurred despite the phenomenal problems facing the country, the Department, and the project is truly commendable.

The most successful part of the project has been the training of FLEP field staff. While it is difficult to distinguish the influence of training from that of longevity in the program, it is clear that the longer facilitators and district coordinators have been in the program, and the more training in FLEP methods and approaches they have had, the better they understand the underlying purposes of FLEP, the more committed to the program they are, and the more effective they are with their village groups. Facilitator training is undoubtedly the single most important factor in determining group success.

While positive comments were given on all types of training offered in FLEP, the district training in local languages was probably the most effective since it insured that techniques and ideas learned in the classroom could be put into effect immediately in the field.

Although it was not possible to print the revised literacy materials during Phase II, as had been scheduled, the materials nevertheless are a strong feature of FLEP. They are appreciated by all who come into contact with them—facilitators, participants, and head office staff. That the revised materials have not had an opportunity to be tested

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is regrettable. Not only do they appear to be an enormous improvement on any adult education materials available in Ghana, but it appears that they represent a genuine contribution to the field of literacy teaching materials. It is hoped that the Department and World Education will persevere with their attempts to test the materials and that these materials will ultimately be widely disseminated throughout Africa as models of what local creativity can produce.

A third successful feature of FLEP is that ~~within the constraints set by departmental procedures~~, the project staff have ~~largely~~ worked together as a team to implement the program, and there now remains a core of people used to working together who share the same commitment to the project. This team includes district and assistant district coordinators and head office staff in charge of program implementation.

While some programmatic criticisms can be made of the small scale economic projects (SEPs), there is no doubt that FLEP financial and moral support to village-level projects have enabled many rural people to do what they could not otherwise have done or to do in a relatively short period what would have taken several years to accomplish. Most of the projects are in operation and are making a profit. At least three groups are ready to repay their loans. All groups intend to use profit to expand their projects.

Problems

The problems faced by the project have been severe. The overwhelming limitation on project success has been the disastrous economic condition of Ghana. This is the single greatest factor in the failure of the

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focusing more on the economic projects, another emphasizing educational aspects more, and the third falling somewhere in between. It is difficult to isolate the effects of FLEP on group activity, since at least 60 percent of the groups have been working with DSNCD since long before FLEP was introduced, and another third were church groups organized prior to FLEP by church memberships. While the number of groups has expanded by only a few since Phase I of the project, it is clear that FLEP is reaching many more people than official enrollment figures indicate. One-fifth of the groups interviewed have never undertaken literacy learning, and most, because of the lack of materials, are not doing literacy now.

The SSEP's are doing well on the whole, and this progress probably could not have been achieved without the help of FLEP loans. Several problems have been observed in the SSEP's: Because obtaining basic supplies and tools for economic activity is so difficult in Ghana, careful project planning and expert knowledge are required in order to avoid failure. Field staff need special training in small business management, ^{Credit} marketing, and in the planning of economic enterprises. Another problem is that in some cases, groups receiving loans are already advantaged groups who would have made the necessary investment through some other means if the FLEP loan were not forthcoming. The problem of group selection and the necessity of reaching the poor are two factors that require careful examination by the Department. The process of disbursing loans also needs examination: some loans appear too large, which ties up money that could be used by other groups. Several groups have been ready for more than a year to repay their loans, but the

Department is unable to decide on a repayment mechanism. No relationship has been established between village groups and regular lending institutions, which perpetuates the dependency of groups on DSWCD.

Content of the educational program itself, aside from literacy, appears effective, but there appeared a noticeable incidence of ~~child~~ ~~had~~ malnutrition among the children of group participants, and it seems that nutrition education in FLMP has not been adequate. Greater attention is needed to the participation of women, who make up nearly 60 percent of the membership by only 27 percent of the group leadership.

Institutionalization

The difficulties encountered in trying to institutionalize FLMP within the Department arose in part from the effect of Ghana's economic crisis on the government agency, ~~in part from the difficulty of being~~ ~~anything more than a~~ ~~departmental~~ ~~business~~ ~~and~~ ~~department~~ ~~from~~ ~~back~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Department~~ ~~the~~ ~~problems~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Department~~ ~~in~~ ~~keeping~~ ~~FLMP~~ ~~posts~~ ~~fully~~ ~~staffed~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~Department~~ ~~in~~ ~~providing~~ ~~a~~ ~~travel~~ ~~allowance~~ ~~sufficient~~ ~~for~~ ~~field~~ ~~staff~~ ~~to~~ ~~do~~ ~~their~~ ~~work~~ ~~is~~ ~~merely~~ ~~illustrative~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Department's~~ ~~general~~ ~~problems~~ ~~of~~ ~~resources~~. Both of these, ~~problems~~ ^{problems}, however, have had the unfortunate effect of undermining training, which as noted earlier is the most successful part of the program. ~~The~~ ~~problem~~ ~~of~~ ~~keeping~~ ~~to~~ ~~do~~ ~~some-~~ ~~thing~~ ~~new~~ ~~that~~ ~~calls~~ ~~for~~ ~~flexibility~~ ~~and~~ ~~creativity~~ ~~is~~ ~~a~~ ~~very~~ ~~high~~, ~~his~~ ~~creation~~ ~~of~~ ~~innovation~~ ~~is~~ ~~hampered~~ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~rigid~~ ~~structure~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Department~~ ~~which~~ ~~is~~ ~~unable~~ ~~to~~ ~~change~~ ~~its~~ ~~structure~~ ~~and~~ ~~procedures~~. While the project has been a relatively

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successful at the field level, both in terms of processes and outcomes, this success will be short-lived unless there is ~~some overall~~ ^{also overall} change ~~in the system, the level of the~~ ^{in program processes.} It is too much to expect such a ~~system~~ change in two short years, especially when the project was so diluted in terms of focus and resources. It is not yet too late to provide the center of the system with the help it needs to institutionalize FLSP. ~~Whether this can be done is another matter, but such change is seen as desirable, it quite another matter.~~

Future directions

Both organizations involved in the collaboration represented by FLSP need to examine some critical directions of their work. As noted earlier, the economic aspects of FLSP outweighed all others in the eyes of the majority of participants, field staff, coordinators, and head office staff. This is a new direction for both the Department and for World Education. Is this, in fact what the two organizations want to be doing, do they have the expertise and resources to do it well, and how does this new direction fit the solid approach to adult education and rural outreach that both organizations have developed already? Instead of having to develop a new kind of knowledge and experience, might it be better instead to venture into collaborative arrangements, such as the one between Technoserve and FLSP in Saltpond, where one organization supplies the expertise in small scale economics and marketing while the other provides expertise in education and social change?

~~A second question is the conditions under which the center of the system can participate in the decision-making. It will be~~

~~does not depend on already existing rural education, and in fact cannot
 does the notion of rural education, as it is used in the development
 circles, combine both traditional and modern concepts of literacy
 and representation in Africa? How much does the ability to bring
 about literacy depend on the political and social environment,
 not only the level of literacy but also the quality of the literacy?
 Clearly, this each deserves a study in its own right, but it is
 not that the goal of political and social development in
 rural Africa and in part is
 inappropriate in many settings.~~

~~Similarly,~~ Both organizations need to examine the place of depen-
 dency in their relationships both with each other and with their clients.

The Department, in this time of scarce resources, ~~has a limited~~
 should examine its ^{perhaps} relationship with World Education and ~~perhaps~~ explore other
 options for funding or expanding FLEP, if FLEP is really desired by
 the Department. World Education has assisted the Department in making
 some contacts with other funding and development organizations but
 perhaps should do more. The Department, at the same time, must examine
 whether it really wants to continue with FLEP and if it does, must be
 prepared to take the steps necessary for its continuation and perhaps
 expansion.

Similarly, the Department must examine the relationship between
 itself and its community development groups. For years, these groups
 have looked to DJUCD for assistance, and for years the Department has
 done whatever it could to help these groups. The time has come when
 the Department no longer has the resources— not just money but as
 basic a thing as staff— to assist in the way it did previously. One

way to lessen the dependency of village groups on DSWCD is to help them strengthen their relationships with other local institutions, thereby giving them the means to solve their own problems. One way such a relationship might be developed and strengthened is to take the revolving fund out of the Department and put it in a more experienced institution-- either a non-governmental private agency, such as Technoserve, or a commercial bank. This would assist the Department by allowing it to concentrate on the work it does so well-- rural outreach and education-- and not become mired in administrative details that siphon off its energy and talent from the important tasks at hand.

Final note

Finally, it should be remembered that it is very easy for a stranger to take a slice of a lengthy experience, observe it selectively, and write an analysis. Whether that observation actually conforms to the reality as it has been experienced by all the people involved is quite another issue. The Ga Adanse people in Ghana have a proverb,

Gbɔ̃ hɪnmeɪnɛi kplɛkplɛi ɛkɛnɔ̃aman nɪi

which means, "The stranger comes to the village with big eyes but sees nothing." May this report and the following recommendations be accepted in the light of that wisdom.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. For the remainder of the program:

1. That the effect of the literacy materials now being disseminated to FLEP sites be evaluated and that a baseline survey of participants' reading skills be taken now.

2. That the possibility of establishing a printing cooperative between Ghanaian non-governmental organizations and government agencies involved in adult education and rural development be examined. A consortium could more easily find support and would better be managed than each organization having its own inadequate printing facilities and supply systems.

3. That nutrition content, particularly relating to the signs of incipient malnutrition and to oral rehydration of diarrhoea be added to the content of FLEP; this would require retraining of FLEP facilitators and incorporating male facilitators into nutrition education.

4. That special attention be given to the role of women in FLEP groups; not only should they be viewed as beneficiaries of and workers in FLEP activities but as leaders.

5. That the Department demonstrate its commitment to FLEP by fully staffing present FLEP sites and that no expansion of FLEP, either in present sites or new sites, occur until these posts are filled.

6. That the problem of T & T be discussed with World Education, taking into account the sensitivities of non-FLEP field staff, and the possibility be examined of increasing FLEP T & T; that there be no increase in the number of villages per facilitator until there is adequate T & T for him or her to do the job.

7. That a repayment system be established immediately for the revolving fund, and that the possibility be investigated of taking the fund administratively out of DSMCD and arranging a collaborative project with an institution experienced in small scale credit and business management.

8. That remaining self-help funds be disbursed immediately or else put into the revolving fund.

9. That the Department take a stronger stand on using traditional housing materials for self-help projects in an effort to cope with the economic difficulties of providing assistance for such activities.

10. That World Education and the Department consider the possibility of collaborating on a major training effort located in the School of Social Welfare, whereby all Department staff would be trained in FLEP methods and approaches and whereby institutionalization of FLEP would be enhanced.

~~sa~~ T)

11. That World Education and the Department consider the possibility of collaborating on a major management training effort directed to senior Department staff, and that a link with USAID's management training program in Ghana be explored.

B. For the final evaluation

1. That a major focus of the final evaluation be the expenditure of the small-scale economic project loans: the rate at which loans were expended and the way that rate tied up money which could have been used for other groups; data are group records and district files.
2. That the effects of the literacy materials being disseminated now be tested; this would require a baseline survey of participants' reading skills now and one later, perhaps in June or July. This would also necessitate the observation of literacy classes.
3. That the new accounting procedure for FLEP disbursement of project funds be examined for efficiency and speed.
4. That the effect of FLEP on the School of Social Welfare be examined, including the influence of former FLEP staff who are now students and of FLEP trainers who are also tutors.
5. That certain aspects of this evaluation be followed up:

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- that New York staff be interviewed and New York files be studied;
 - that attention be paid to the problem of who initiates FLEP activities in groups;
 - that other voluntary organizations and government agents not visited during this evaluation be interviewed;
 - that factors contributing to group success be further explored.

G. That planning time for the evaluation include one initial day in each field site to draw a sample more representative of FLEP groups than the sample obtained in this study.