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TRIP REPORT: JANUARY 11 - JUNE 28, 1984

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INTRODUCTION

This report covers a period of continuous residence in Mexico from mid-January through the end of June, interrupted by two brief trips, one in April to attend the AIN meetings (with a return to Connecticut) and one in May to attend the SCB meetings in Berkeley. The extended period of activity in Mexico was made possible because of my sabbatical leave from the University of Connecticut.

The purposes of the trip were multiple: in my role as a principal investigator a considerable portion of time was taken up in administrative activities. Financial management of the project by the staff in Mexico is excellent, and the system generally operates smoothly. However the flow of funds through the international banking system and through the large organization at the Institute often presented problems. A change of personnel at the INN business office in mid-March eased some of the problems. Administrative matters concerning vehicle use, equipment transfer, etc., continued to require time, as well. Perhaps the most time-consuming and difficult administrative chores involved getting equipment out of the Mexican customs office. We made every effort to follow their directives prior to the arrival of shipments, but the process seems to be, by its very nature, not readily expedited. Delays in arrival of equipment and supplies at the field site were responsible for

delays in implementation of field data collection.

Closely related to administration, and perhaps best regarded as an aspect of administration is the matter of communication and the need for principal investigators to serve as a communication link. These responsibilities proved to be quite time consuming. They included communicating with field project staff, with senior investigators in the project in Mexico, with project staff and consultants in the United States, with other scientists in Mexico who are not directly involved in the CRSP, and even with visiting North American researchers working on other projects in Mexico. Of course, communication between the Mexico CRSP and Management Entity is another vitally important activity. These various communication activities take multiple forms, including extensive individual conversations, discussion at group meetings, and preparation of written documents in the form of letters, memos and reports.

Another objective of my work during this period was monitoring data collection and instrument use and evaluating data collection problems during the critical period of the beginning of Phase II.

This objective was achieved in several ways. One important component of monitoring was through extensive discussions with the project field director (Dr. Mata) and the senior field staff in charge of each area of data collection. Attendance at staff meetings at the field site also proved to be invaluable for understanding the data collection process and the nature of problems encountered. Review of completed protocols was another

way in which monitored data collection.

A third objective during this trip was to begin examination of data and to carry out preliminary data analysis for th urpose of monitoring and identifying methodological probl rder to make adjustments and improvements.

A fourth objective was to participate in the design and implementation of methodological substudies, which, like the methodological "probes" referred to above, are important for the improvement of data or the analysis and interpretation of research results.

It is common in a trip report covering a short duration of time to organize the narrative chronologically. However, because of the extended time period involved in this trip and the multiple activities undertaken, this report will be organized topically, following the areas of data collection. Other project reports from the same time period cover many of the points considered here and an effort will be made to avoid duplication of information contained in those reports, particularly the semiannual report (October, 1983 - March, 1984) and the lengthy memo of June 1, 1984 concerning current and proposed design issues.

DIETARY DATA

Prior to the SCB meeting in May dietary data collection in the Mexico CRSP consisted of individual-level data, collected for two consecutive days per month for key individuals, and household-level data in the form of preparations ("recipes") for the same two days. Use of non-recipe preparations (discreet food items, such as bread or fruit) were not included at the household

level. Following the SCB meeting, additional questions were added to the household protocol to collect data on non-recipe foods consumed by household members during the same 48-hour period for which individual-level data is collected. The general procedure for dietary collection has been described in earlier reports.

In addition to food intake, per se, we felt, based on Phase I research, that the best method for obtaining data on household food (caloric) availability was through monitoring food purchases plus recording amounts and types of non-monetary food acquisition and disposition. Once each month an interview schedule is administered to obtain these data.

Two types of activities related to data quality control were carried out between January and June. One aspect of data quality control concerns on-going monitoring of data collection to ensure that the previously developed procedures are being followed by fieldworkers. The other aspect concerns substudies or activities to improve data collection and analysis.

In the first category of on-going monitoring, a series of control measures were put into place. Periodically, every data collector tapes her interview and these are later reviewed by the area head for dieta. The area head for diet also observes interviews on a regular basis. Coding recipes for computer analysis and transfering individual-level data onto sheets for computer analysis are tasks carried out by assistants with prior training in nutrition. These sheets are also reviewed by the area head.

The Food Intake Case Studies

In the category of activities undertaken to improve data collection, a major task was the initiation of a study of 30 households, in which a 24- hour weighed record of intake was collected, together with full notes on food-related behavior. All of these 30 households were part of the basic longitudinal sample, but more than 100 households were approached before we had a sample of 30 who would agree to the intrusion of the 24 hour weighing procedure.

Data collection was completed in early May and full analysis of the results will continue through the summer. Apart from the more formal (quantitative) analysis, a great deal was learned from this study.

Measurement of maize intake, in the form of *tortillas*, continued to be problematic *for some households*. While some some families used the paper circles to tabulate individual consumption, others (perhaps as many as 25-30%) used them only irregularly. From comments made to Alba (the researcher in the 30-families project) it appears that some of the non-use stems from a simple confusion about where to the place the circles on the record form provided to families. The form had sections corresponding to main meals of the day, with the expectation that it would be easier for families to record tortilla intake at *almuerzo*, *comida*, and *cena*, the main meal divisions. However, for non-literate women this may be a source of confusion and, failing to understand where on the sheet to place the circles, they apparently chose to ignore the circles all together. Following

this discovery, the decision was made to change the recording form and to work harder with each women to explain the importance of careful recording of tortillas.

Prior to the SCB meeting, other types of data from the 30 families was carefuly examined, and, in some cases, additional interviewing was carried out to help "fill out" the picture of family life in these case study households. A qualitative description of a number of these households was presented at the Berkeley meeting and is available in written form in the documents brought to that meeting.

Recipe Preparation and Food Composition Study

Another activity related to the food intake area was the development of a study of food preparation (of selected important, staple "dishes") together with a study of weight change (through water absorption) of the basic grain staples, apart from tortillas. These are beans, pasta and rice.

As discussed in earlier reports, the nutrient and caloric values for the Mexican food composition tables are all based on raw foods, whereas, at the individual level, our intake data are collected in the form of cooked portions. Thus it is necessary to "convert" these data back to raw equivalents in order to use the available tables. Although standard "conversion factors" are available, based on studies at INCAP, we felt it was important to develop our own data base of average weight gain (water absorption) of the products in regular use in the Solis Valley. Furthermore, it was possible to use this study as an opportunity to take food samples for drying and later shipment to the

University of Connecticut for nutrient analysis.

Another feature of this study was the systematic observation of recipe preparation. As we suspected from earlier work, the treatment of cooking oil in the preparation of pasta and rice sopas varies considerably from one household to another. Prior to adding water or other liquid, some women "brown" the grains in oil and then return the "excess" oil to the oil storage container. Others do not remove the additional fat, so that it remains in the finished dish. As a result of this finding, the diet interviewers were instructed to be particularly careful when collecting the recipes for the day's food to ask about and record the disposition of oil used in cooking.

In the preparations selected for this study, differences in the use of oil (or other fat) are a primary source of intra-community variability. Amount of water or level of liquidity is another important factor in familial differences. When data collection and analysis of this substudy are completed, we will examine the degree of variation in caloric value of these "staple dishes" and then make the decision about whether or not we will be able to use a "standard recipe" to calculate their caloric value.

As was true of the "The Diet Case Studies," the nutritionist who is carrying out the food composition study will use the results for her university thesis. Therefore, an additional element of teaching and protocol development was involved in the design of the study. Each project was written up as a small proposal, which was then discussed with the students' preceptors at their home university. Of course, in both cases the students,

and their advisors are well aware of the publication agreements and restrictions of the Nutrition CRSP and understand that they must abide by these.

Food Expenditures in Case Study Households

As part of the analysis of the case study families, I examined, in some detail, the data on weekly food expenditures for the first three months of Phase I. As noted in earlier reports, women do most of the food purchasing in the Solis Valley, and there appears to be little or no reluctance to report food expenditures. Furthermore, these seem to be well known and readily recalled by informants.

A main purpose of analyzing the food expenditure data was to determine the variability present in the sample. As with the caloric intake data (and the anthropometric data) we were reassured to find a very wide range of variation in this important food intake - related measure. The lowest reported expenditure was a mere 115 pesos per week, while the highest value was 2,936 per week. (Although the value of the peso changed during the three-month period from January to March, an average of 165 pesos to the U.S. dollar provides a good approximation of these expenditures in dollar terms.)

One problem with using household food expenditure data is that we expect it to vary with household size, so that it is not necessarily a good reflection of food availability for the individual. Calculation of "per capita" expenditures is helpful but requires decisions about what weights to assign to different types of persons.

One of the most striking features of the analysis of the 30 cases is that there is apparently <u>no relationship</u> between household size and food expenditure during the first three months of the year, as the following table shows:

<u>Household Size and Weekly Expenditures for Food</u>

Family Size	Expenditures for Food HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
SMALL (<7)	4	2	4
MEDIUM (7-8)	2	4	1
LARGE (>8)	3	3	4

On the other hand, household food expenditures are very strongly related to economic status. To document this relationship I have examined expenditures in relation to the Material-Style-of Life Index (MSL) described in earlier reports. Dividing the index into thirds, we find that the average weekly expenditure for the highest economic group is $3,047 (pesos) per week, for the middle group it is $1,715, and for the families with the lowest MSL scores it is $797.

The following table shows the differences in allocation of food expenditures for different types of food products. (All values are means)

EXPENDITURES FOR TYPES OF FOODS BY ECONOMIC LEVEL

Food Type	Economic Level High	Middle	Low
Fruits & Vegetables	867	433	308
Animal Products	1281	562	243
Grains & Legumes	180	247	180
Bread	185	72	50
Soft Drinks	98	38	10
Coffee	28	74	41
Sugar & Snacks	168	135	76
Fats & Oils	174	149	108

From this table we see that the middle economic group spends only half as much as the highest group for fruits and vegetables and not quite half as much (44%) for animal products. In comparison the poorest families in the case study sample spend only 1/3rd as much on fruit and vegetables and 1/5th as much on animal products.

Correspondingly, there are interesting differences in similarities in the proportion of the food dollar devoted to different types of foods, as can be seen in the following table.

PERCENT OF EXPENDITURES FOR TYPES OF FOOD PRODUCTS

Food Type	Economic Level High	Middle	Low
Fruits & Vegetables	29%	25%	39%
Animal Products	42	33	31
Grains, Legumes & Bread	12	19	16
Fats & Oils	6	9	14

The fact that the poorest families spend more than twice as much proportionately as the better off households over fats and oils suggests that there is a minimum level that is regarded as essential for food preparation. Similarly, some vegetables are so basic in the diet that there is little room to decrease their purchase, hence a greater proportion of the food dollar is spent on vegetables in poor families. In a later analysis it will be important to express purchasing patterns in terms of calories in order to assess the adaptational significance of these patterns.

The relationship of food purchase to food intake would be less direct if poor families were supplying more of their food directly from their own farming and animal husbandry activities. However, a qualitative examination of home-produced foods by economic status suggests that this is not the case. In fact, the reverse may be true. Some of the better off families have milk cows and produce their own cheese. Virtually all of the families use home-produced maize, but the families with greater economic resources are more likely to report consumption of other home-produced vegetables, such as chard and potatoes.

Finally, concerning the food dollar, we also calculated the reported expenditures for pulque and proportion of food dollar spent on pulque. As noted in the trip report of P.J. Pelto, this variable appears to be related to a number of factors, and it will be important to explore it more fully in future analyses. Although some households produce pulque for their own consumption, many families buy all of their pulque, and we think that the reports on weekly pulque expenditures will be an important quality control check on reported consumption.

ANTHROPOMETRY

At the beginning of Phase II we faced several serious problems with the collection of anthropometric measurements: adults were extremely reluctant to have measurements taken, and would agree to be measured by physicians. Taking measuring equipment to the households was very difficult, particularly with families who live on the higher trails up in the hills. Thirdly, we had some difficulty in getting good standardization among the field staff.

However, the results of the first round of anthropometry were very important in documenting that there is a significant range of variation within the sample. The following data from the seven to nine year old children in our sample shows this clearly.

Table IV. Height- and Weight-for-Age Distribution of Girls in Sample. Age 7 - 9. N= 42

	Height (Standard Deviations)				
	>3	-3/-2	-2/-1	-1/x	x/+1
Weight					
>3	-	-	-	-	-
-3/-2	1	1	1	-	-
-2/-1	3	9	7	2	-
-1/x	-	1	8	7	1
x/+1	-	-	1	-	-

Note: None of the 42 girls in the sample are above +1 standard deviation on height or weight for age.

V. Height- and Weight-for-Age Distribution of Boys in Sample. Age 7-9. N = 39

	Height					
	3	-3/-2	-2/-1	-1/x	x/+1	+1/+2
Weight						
-3/-2	-	-	-	1	-	-
-2/-1	1	5	3	3	-	-
-1/x	1	3	4	7	1	1
x/+1	-	1	1	4	2	1

Note: There are no boys below 2 standard deviations on weight and none are above one standard deviation.

Summarizing the results of the two tables, we find that 12 of the 81 children are below one standard deviation on height only, while five are below one standard deviation on weight only. Ten children in the sample are below one standard deviation on height and weight. Twenty four children are below two standard deviations on height only, while one child is below two standard

deviations on weight alone, but not height. Two children fall below two standard deviations on both height and weight. In all, more than 25% of the sample are below two standard deviations on one or more measures of height-and weight-for-age.

Several conclusions important conclusions emerge from these distributions:

1) There is clearly a wide range of variation <u>within</u> the sample on these important measures of nutritional status.

2) There are a significant number of children with growth deficits, suggesting that the sample is appropriate for the investigations of marginal malnutrition.

3) There are a significant number of children well within the normal range for height and weight, suggesting that the type of controlled comparison envisioned in the original design will be feasible. It should be added that the identification of populations in rural Mexico (and other developing countries) with a sizeable group of apparently well-nourished children, as judged by anthropometry, is not necessarily readily accomplished. Earlier we rejected a number of possible fieldsites because it appeared doubtful that we would find a sufficient number of children in the normal range to provide a reasonable base for comparison with the marginally malnourished.

4) A comparison of Table IV with Table V shows important differences between boys and girls on height- and weight-for-age distributions. These appear to be more dramatic with respect to height than to weight, as can be seen in Table VI.

This finding suggests further interviewing may be necessary to identify some dimensions of the causal factors involved. In future analysis we will be able to identify some of the household characteristics associated with height and weight achievement, including examining the hypothesis that girls with the poorest growth record will come from families in which parents express low aspirations for their daughters' futures.

Table VI. Height- and Weight-for-Age Distributions of Boys and Girls in the Solis Sample

	GIRLS	BOYS
Height		
<-1 S.D.	22	9
>-1 S.D.	20	30
Weight		
<-1 S.D.	24	13
>-1 S.D.	13	26

MORBIDITY

As one of the major "outcome" dimensions the research area classified under the heading of morbidity involves a number of components. During the period covered by this report much progress was made, although serious staffing problems presented a continuing problem. Staffing problems occurred at both the professional level and with the auxilliary staff.

With respect to the former, we found it very difficult to recruit health care professionals (doctors and nurses) to work in a rural area. Employment opportunities for nurses in the large metropolitan areas, particularly Mexico City, are currently excellent. Employment opportunities for laboratory technicians also appear to be very good, and the perceived advantages of urban life are a further deterent to recruiting skilled laboratory workers.

While employment for physicians may be more problematic, the social conditions, including concern about future professional activities, apparently has led to a situation in which very few young physicians feel it is in their best interests to commit themselves to a rural research project.

The lure of the city also affects the retention of local personnel. As described in previous reports, a thorough training program for "health assistants" was developed during Phase I. These community residents, young women with secondary education, have important responsibilities in data collection, in helping to maintain rapport, and in various tasks of assistance to the professional staff. Recognizing the potential risk of losing these assistants following the training period a system of

incentives was put into place. However, despite these efforts to sustain interest in continued employment on the project, many of the young women hired as project workers left the project following their training to seek employment in the city.

Inspite of these persistent staffing problems, which consumed considerable time and energy of senior project staff, a great deal was accomplished during the first six months of Phase II. Morbidity monitoring, on a weekly basis, was carried out not only in families in the sample, but in a larger community sample as well. The inclusion of a larger sample made it possible to accumulate a large body of data very quickly, so that analysis of the data collection procedures could be assessed before many months of data collection had transpired.

As reported at the SCB meeting in May and in the June 1 memo, there appear to be serious discrepancies between morbidity episodes, as reported to community health workers, and clinic records. This finding is in line with the experiences of other epidemiological projects, and there are a number of factors involved in the explanation, including the issue of "cultural perception" of symptoms. Several suggestions for improving the morbidity monitoring were developed as a result of the analysis of data from the first months of Phase II data collection.

A major incentive for families to participate in the study is a discount for services at the Solis health clinic. During the beginning of Phase II, identification cards, with photographs of family members, were issued to all participating households. These identity cards, together with a wall calendar announcing

that the households was participating in the study, proved to be very effective as a public relations gesture.

Urine testing, for the purpose of identifying pregnancy was surprisingly well-received, despite the unfortunate coincidence of the initiation of a major national family planning campaign with the first round of urine sample collection. Although the rumor spread that the urine testing was associated with this campaign, nearly all women were willing to give urine samples when a satisfactory explanation for the request was provided.

The samples were not only analyzed for evidence of pregnancy but also infection. The results showed a striking incidence of urinary tract infection, and reinforces the view that, to the fullest extent possible within logistic and financial constraints, laboratory tests should be a part of the data collection process with respect to the morbidity area.

Delays in the arrival of equipment, as well as unresolved questions concerning the "core" measurements of immunological testing, affected progress in the immune function area of morbidity. Decisions taken by the SCB at the May meeting helped to resolve these questions, and this area should move ahead during the second half of 1984.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

Prior to the initiation of Phase II, the staff for the "cognitive/psycho-social" area was recruited and trained. During the period covered by this trip report an impressive amount of data was collected. The majority of the adults and of the seven-nine year olds in the sample were tested with the battery of cognitive tests developed during Phase I. These tests were

remarkably well received by project families, who generally appeared to enjoy the challenge of these unique tasks.

Once the bulk of the cognitive testing of adults and school children was completed, work began on the playground observations. The rating system developed by Barrett and Yarrow, which was used very successfully in another Latin American context, could be adapted to the Mexican rural situation, with a minimum of modifications. The end of the school year brought a temporary halt to data collection, but this will resume with the start of a new school term in the fall.

Both cognitive testing and psycho-social measurement with toddlers proved to be a difficult and serious challenge. A major problem was the extreme shyness of the children, which resulted in great difficulties in eliciting responses to the psychological tests. Several visits to the family had to be made before the children were comfortable enough to even begin testing procedures, and it was rarely possible to complete an instrument in one testing session. The logistic and scheduling problems presented by this situation were formidable. Revisions of protocols, developed in collaboration with Dr. Field and her assistant during their visit to Solis, should prove to be extremely helpful in resolving some of these problems.

ACTIVITY PATTERNS AND RMR MEASUREMENT

The activity recall protocol, which was developed and pre-tested extensively during Phase I, was put into full-scale operation during the first months of Phase II. At the beginning of Phase II the interview focussed wholly on the activities of

the "key" adult -- the male and female household heads. In February a second component was added to the interview in order to obtain data on performance of household tasks by individuals other than those being interviewed. Thus, it became possible to analyze the activities of individuals in relation to household task allocation.

The schedule of data collection yields two days per month for each adult. Thus, the data can be aggregated and analyzed by three month intervals (or three month "moving averages") in strict parallel to the food intake data. Considerable work in the analysis of data took place during the period covered by this trip report. The data can be analyzed from two perspectives: time allocation to culturally or socially-defined activities and time allocation converted into estimates of energy expenditure.

The first type of classification requires coding data into specific categories, such as "feeding animals" or "making tortillas." These can then be combined into larger classifications, such as "household maintenance activities," "child care activities," "socializing activities," and so on.

This type of analysis, with a subsample of women in the case study households, revealed wide differences among families. The following data on ten women are illustrative. In this table percent of time devoted to particular classes of activities is designated as "high" or "low" based simply on the distributions on each of the activities, with the upper five cases labelled "high" and the lower half "low."

Similarly, the designation of caloric intake as "high" or "low" is simply the relative rank of the ten women, using the

three month average (January-March, 1984)

Table VII. Activity Patterns of Ten Case Study Women
(Percent of Time Devoted to Selected Categories)

Case Number	Caloric Intake	Housework	Animal Care	Resting/ Eating	Social Activity
1	low	low	high	low	low
2	low	low	-	high	low
3	low	high	low	high	low
4	low	low	high	high	low
5	low	low	low	high	high
6	high	high	low	low	low
7	high	high	low	low	high
8	high	high	low	high	high
9	high	low	high	low	high
10	high	high	high	low	high

While the pattern in these ten cases is very striking, the sample is so small (and likely not to be representative) that it would be a mistake to attempt to draw any conclusions, however intriguing these preliminary results appear to be.

Alternatively, data on task and time allocation can be analyzed in terms of estimated energy expenditure. For such analyses it would be ideal to establish local (Solis Valley) estimates. However, without these it is possible to proceed, using established task-energy expenditure estimates, such as those of Durnin. Analytic work with these data is continuing.

Serious delays in the delivery of equipment to the fieldsite, due in part to difficulties with shipment and customs, delayed the full scheduling of RMR measurements. However, using borrowed equipment it was possible to begin RMR measurements on adults in the sample. These were carried in the homes of subjects, after careful prior preparation for the procedure. As with psychological tests, the initial response was quite positive; in particular, the men and women were generally pleased

to have immediate "feedback" and interpretation of the results of the test.

When the Beckman Metabolic Cart is reliabily operational at the Solis clinic, RMR measurement will be shifted to the clinic site and, in accordance with CRSP schedule, will be combined with clinical and laboratory data collection.

SOCIO-CULTURAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA COLLECTION: INTERVENING AND BACKGROUND DATA

As described in earlier reports, the careful pretesting and ethnographic work of Phase I led to the development of interview protocols that were well tolerated by families and that yielded important data. Under the excellent guidance of the area head for this aspect of the study (Ms. Luzmaria Meneses) data collection proceeded quickly and efficiently.

The initial household interview, a short schedule to obtain basic household data, was completed at the time of recruitment to the study. This was followed, somewhat later, with a more extensive investigation of household characteristics.

As specified in the data collection schedule, the first part of the productivity interview (which focusses on the harvest period of the previous agricultural cycle) was completed for nearly all of the families in the sample. The only exceptions were long-term migrants away from the Solis Valley.

When these data became available we began work on the development of coding forms, a time-consuming effort since it involves checking and rechecking through the original interviews. Preliminary analysis, particularly in the form of plotting frequency distributions were also undertaken, in order to test

the validity of the assumptions that were made in constructing scales.

These forays into methodological analysis were very important in identifying details and confounding issues that had not been identified during Phase I. For example, we found that in one of the settlements (communities) many families, at different levels in the economic statification of the community, had sewing machines, a pattern of ownership that did not appear in the other settlements. On further inquiry it appears that the sewing machines were acquired by households a number of years ago in connection with a community development project and are thus not a good differentiator in the "package" of material possessions. This type of detailed item by item investigation is essential to the development of effective composite variables.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMMUNICATION TASKS

As a principal investigator, large amounts of time, in the field (as well as at one"s home university) are spent in administrative and communication activities. On-going discussion with senior field staff, as well as with other staff members is essential for maintaining rapport and flow of information i n any project, but it is particularly important in a multi-disciplinary, cross-national project.

As noted above, the communication tasks extend beyond the project itself to include scholars and visitors to the host country. Occasionally one is in the position of serving as a communication link between non-project personnel within the host country institution and visitors from abroad.

One of the most time and energy-consuming activities in the period covered by this trip report could be classified as "general administration." Some of the tasks classifiable under this heading are recurrent and predictable, such as those associated with budgeting.

Others are tasks that appear to be routine but take unexpected and often frustrating directions. Ordering and importing equipment on this AID project without an AID mission to assist us has proven to be very difficult. The following example illustrates the way in which precious time is lost in bureaucratic activities.

In accord with previously worked out agreements, a shipment of equipment from the University of Connecticut to INN was preceded by an official letter, with multiple signatures of University of Connecticut officials. The list of equipment extended from the first page (typed on university letterhead) to a second page, typed on blank paper, as is the American custom. I translated the letter into Spanish and the translation was typed on official INN stationary before being sent through that system for signatures, the latter itself a time-consuming practice.

Several details of the letter were displeasing to the customs officials, who called for various revisions and clarifications. To obtain all of the additionalinformation required the equivalent of several days. (It should be noted that this was not the first shipment of equipment and we followed a procedure identical to the earlier one but, for reasons that

are unclear to me, these same procedures were not acceptable to this particular customs official.)

Eventually the request was resubmitted and we presumed that permission to bring in the equipment would then be granted. A new snag appeared. Because the second page of the original English version was not on letterhead, the letter was unacceptable. Since the second page contained signatures of people at the University of Connecticut the letter had to go back to Storrs for retyping and signing. Needless to say, each of these steps not only created a delay in the field, but required time on my part -- for discussion, advice-seeking, and letter-writing.

The foregoing example is not a unique incident but typical of the types of problems that occur regularly and take energy and time away from more important activities. In our original proposal and budget we had a position for a U.S. administrative directorto be resident in Mexico. However, at some point, quite early in the CRSP organization this position was cut from our budget. The lack of this position continues to be a serious handicap for our project.

THE SCB MEETING AND COMMUNICATION WITH BROADER CRSP ORGANIZATION

During the six months covered by this trip report, another major category of my activity involved the larger CRSP organization. Apart from the preparation of those aspects of the semi-annual report that dealt with the field situation, the preparation for the SCB meeting involved several weeks of work, including preparation of data; extensive typing of the case studies, and so on. The meeting itself, of course, took some time. Following the meeting there was another period of intensive

activity which culminated in the report of June 1st outlining a proposed schedule of activities through the end of Phase II data collection. Of course, these activities are essential to the maintenance of a collaborative program.

IN CONCLUSION

During the first six months of Phase II data collection an impressive consolidation of the research staff took place as the organization for smooth operation of this massive project moved into high gear. The efforts of all staff members to establish and maintain good rapport with people in the communities and with the families in the sample are impressive. The research environment in this transition era is not an easy one: There are constant demands from participants for further explanation of particular data collection activities and their rationale. During this period, the families who had agreed to participate were, for the most part, remarkably cooperative. Thus, very impressive quantities of data were collected. On the other hand, during the first six months of 1984 a number of aspects of data collection did not fall into place. In view of the budgetary constraints, the difficulty of recruiting personnel, bureaucratic and administrative constraints and the general conditions and challenges presented by the fieldsite itself, it is difficult to see how these delays could have been avoided.

AUGUST 15, 1984